

**Differences In Positive Youth Development Between Boy Scouts and Non-Scouts In Lebanon**

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**By**

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**Differences in Positive Youth Development between Scouts and non-Scouts in Lebanon**

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*To Mahdi Yaghi*

*who gives meaning to words*

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine differences between Scouts and non-Scouts on variables that are known as key elements in positive youth development, namely, commitment to school, attitude towards employment, future orientation, self-efficacy and empathy. Participants (N=200), between the ages of 11 and 16, were male students enrolled in private schools in Lebanon that offered an after-school scouting program. The study relied on a self-report method, where participants filled in a questionnaire that consisted of demographic information, in addition to five different scales, each measuring a particular variable. T- test and ANOVA were used for data analysis. Results from the study revealed a significant difference between Scouts and non-Scouts on the attitude towards employment and empathy level, where Scouts' scores were significantly higher on both scales, while no significant differences were found between Scouts and non-Scouts when compared on the remaining three scales, i.e. commitment to school, future orientation and self efficacy. The results of this study highlighted the importance of the Scouting Movement with regard to the development of certain character-traits that are known to be key factors in positive youth development.



## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Differences in Positive Youth Development (PYD) between Boy Scouts and non Scouts in Lebanon**

Many people believe that instilling values in adolescents is important for building a healthy, constructive society. This, however, is not an easy task for parents, caregivers or educators. There are many reasons that stand in the way of transmitting values and teaching principles to youth and adolescents today (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010). For instance, families have traditionally been the main providers of character training for their children; however, due to three major repressors, the families' essential role in raising their children with values they deem necessary, has become a grand challenge (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010). The initial of the three repressors is that of time, and the lack thereof, due to new age commitments such as jobs for both parental figures, social obligations, and even the decline in the quality of the time that children spend with their parents, mostly due to their elevated interest in media and social media (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010).

Second, some schools in the Arab World lack the designated programs necessary to develop varied values among students due to emphasis on coverage of assigned official curricula,

and continuous prominence of academic achievement with less significance given to the development of talents and skills required for personal growth (Harb, 2010).

Third, changes within family structure such as increase in the rate of divorce and the continuous economic pressures have created additional stress on parents thereby negatively influencing their authoritative abilities, making it more difficult for them to emphasize desired values required for character building, such as honesty, self-confidence and respect for differences, for their children (Jang, Johnson & Kim, 2010).

In addition to these major challenges in raising young people, adolescence itself is a sensitive developmental period in a young person's life that can easily be influenced by a variety of social factors whether positively or negatively. For example, a range of research has shown that economic hardship is associated with dysfunctional families and this sort of stress is likely to have a negative effect on parenting thereby imposing a range of difficulties for adolescents, including increase in risk-taking behavior and decrease in development of competencies that protect them from those risks (Conger, 2010).

Furthermore, due to the increased influence of media and social media, adolescents are exposed to many different messages that may not align with the values of their families (Conger, 2010). As a result, many parents need additional support systems to reinforce positive character development among their children, as they cannot do it alone (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010).

The participation of youth in structured out-of-school activities has become of increasing interest to families, counselors, and educators. Out-of-school activities are of a significant benefit for youth and adolescents on both the social and emotional levels. These activities involve sports, school clubs, school-based and community-based after school programs, all which can benefit

youth and adolescents socially, emotionally, and academically (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005). Some studies even suggest that these activities have the greatest benefits for youth who are at risk of academic or social problems (Mahoney, 2000).

The above literature suggests that such organized out of school activities promote positive youth development through involving youth in constructive, beneficial activities during their non- school hours. Hence, the interest in studying the influence, if any, of the scouting experience on the psychological and social development of youth and adolescents, emerged. This study addressed the suggested role of organized out of school activities, but specifically focused on the scouting experience, in positive youth development. In other words, the author chose to investigate the possibility of a similar role for scouting, since the scouting movement is aimed at encouraging the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual development of young people (<http://www.scout.org/>)

### **Background of the Study**

Beyond the traditional agents of socialization, namely parents, peers, and schools, organized out-of-school activities have become increasingly recognized for their growing influence on adolescent development (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005). Many scholars have stressed the growing importance of these out of school social experiences in the promotion of positive youth development (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005).

Positive Youth Development, or PYD, refers to intentional efforts of other youth, adults, communities, governmental agencies and schools to provide opportunities for youth to enhance their interests, skills and abilities into their adulthoods (University of Minnesota, 2010).

Furthermore, PYD programs are usually developed with the objective of encouraging the development of protective factors that protect youth from getting involved in risky behavior that would constitute frequent engagement in both physical conflict and age inappropriate sexual involvement- or in substance abuse, ultimately promoting that of transitional roles specific to those such as academic achievement and employment (Lerner, 2005).

Among the greatest key elements of Positive Youth Development is the enhancement of supportive relationships, especially in pertinence to those among families and schools, which is manifested within the sense of belonging to families and schools that youth experience (Mahoney, 2000). Another key factor is adolescents' sense of worth which is enhanced when adolescents actually feel that they do contribute to their society; that is through a sense of being useful to their families and to their community.

According to Damon (2008), Positive Youth Development is based on the premise that when adults support and enable youth to control and motivate themselves, youth are most likely to harness and internalize their potential for prosocial behavior. In other words, once provided with the appropriate experiences to do so, young people become self-motivated or start taking initiative by confronting challenging tasks, thereby demonstrating a core quality of positive youth development (Damon, 2008).

On the other hand, scouting has been said to help youth achieve many of the above values and skills. A scouting experience gives youth the chance to interact with real-world communities rather than their internet communities, thereby improving their social skills (Mullin, 1996). It teaches them values of community, work ethics and leadership which cannot be achieved in many schools and home (Mullin, 1996). In addition, scouting offers young people the chance to

pursue and achieve certain scouting ranks and to engage in prosocial behavior such as helping others and participating in volunteer work, all of which reflects on their sense of worth, self-esteem and self-efficacy, thus positively influencing the emotional and psychological well being (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010).

Moreover, the scouting movement in Lebanon has been significantly growing since its establishment in 1912 by two teachers, Abdul Satar and Abdul Jabar El Khairi. Currently, the scouting movement involves more than a 100,000 scouts, (Lebanese Scouting Federation, 2013), which is quite encouraging taking the size and population of Lebanon into account; it is estimated to be around 4.3 million in 2010 (<http://www.escwa.un.org/>). Furthermore, there are 30 different scouting associations registered in the Lebanese Scouting Federation. (Lebanese Scouting Federation, 2013)

Based on the aforementioned findings, the interest in a study that would explore whether scouting promotes positive youth development emerged. Besides, very few studies, if any, were conducted in the Middle East and the Arab world, specifically Lebanon, to learn about the characteristics of scouts in comparison to non scouts.

A major study conducted by Jang, Johnson, & Kim, in 2010, entitled "Merit Beyond the Badge" collected data through a survey that involved a sample of 2,512 adult males and findings revealed that scouts when compared to non-scouts, are more likely to have higher levels of planning and preparation skills, be goal-oriented, be in a leadership position at their place of employment or local community, have closer relationships with family and friends, volunteer for religious and non-religious organizations, donate money to charitable groups, and collaborate with others to improve their neighborhoods (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010).



### **Statement of the Problem**

Based on the conclusions and recommendations of this major study, the researcher of the current study became interested in further investigating the cruciality of positive youth development among Lebanese youth, in light of their scouting experience. More specifically, the aim of this study was to explore characteristics of youth involved in a scouting experience (minimum of one year in a scouting organization) in comparison to non scouts. Several demographic variables, such as the length of time spent in scouting and type of scouting program, were explored to determine if a scouting experience promotes positive youth development. Furthermore, youth was classified into two categories: Scouts versus non-scouts, and both groups were compared based on the variables that have been defined as promoters of PYD, namely, sense of belonging to school and community, attitude towards employment, self-efficacy, future aspirations and empathy.

The study conducted by Jang, Johnson, & Kim in 2010 focused on the influence of scouting on prosocial behavior in youth as well as on Eagle Scouts in particular and compared them to non scouts and to other scouts that have achieved a specific Eagle Scout rank during their scouting experience. This present study compared scouts to non scouts in general, regardless of the scouting association they belong to. In addition, the survey that was used in the current study consisted of different scales than those used in the study that was conducted by Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010, and that was mainly because the variables of interest in the current study were relevant to positive youth development in general rather than prosocial behavior, and to the development of Lebanese youth in particular.

In conclusion, the following five hypotheses were proposed:

1. Scouts experience a higher level of commitment to school than non-Scouts.
2. Scouts have a more positive attitude towards employment than non-Scouts
3. Scouts are more goal and future oriented than non-Scouts.
4. Scouts have a higher level of self- efficacy than non-Scouts.
5. Scouts have a higher level of empathy than non-Scouts.

### **Significance of the study**

One of the main goals of this study was to help parents find a way to develop their children's skills and competencies which would nurture their protective factors and minimize their risk-taking behavior. Parents often find themselves confused, unable to satisfy their desire to improve the quality of life for their children. By exploring possible alternatives to promote positive youth development, parents will have more choices at hand to enhance their children's character development, and they can therefore help their children become better people and better citizens.

Moreover, clinical psychologists, school counselors and educators can also benefit from this kind of study because if findings suggest that scouting promotes positive youth development, then counselors and clinicians will be able to help a vast number of adolescents facing problems related to effective communication, be it with their families or with fellow students in school. As a school counselor myself, this study is of relevance to my career because if the hypotheses are

proven true, then scouting will be utilized as an intervention to help students overcome a variety of problems that mainly root from low self-esteem, inability to socialize and lack of the sense of belonging to school.

The aim behind this study is to come up with helpful solutions for students to improve their overall sense of well-being, to bring them closer to their families and friends, to raise their self-esteem which reflects on their academic performance. In addition, by exploring possible promoters of positive youth development, parents, care-givers, educators and psychologists will have more insight into how these aforementioned factors impact young people's development and well-being.

### **Overview of Methodology**

This study explored the specific character traits, if any, which scouts- when compared to non scouts- acquire through their scouting experience that, in turn, are suggested to promote positive youth development. Several demographic variables were explored: 1) Scouts versus non-scouts, 2) the number of years spent in scouting and 3) the type of scouting program, which mostly depends on the age of the scout. Positive youth development was classified into five different variables and therefore, five different scales were used to measure each one of them: The scales used were the following: 1) Commitment to School—Rochester Youth Development Study, 2) Attitudes toward Employment—Work Opinion Questionnaire, 3) Future Aspirations —Peer Leader Survey, 4) Self-Efficacy, and 5) Empathy—Teen Conflict Survey.

The five scales along with a demographic sheet were distributed to around 200 boys between the age of 11 and 16. The choice of this particular age group was primarily because the

assessment tools used are most appropriate for youth within this age group. Moreover, the study was restricted to Boy Scouts only, to control for gender differences.

Five private Lebanese Schools that offer an after-school Scouting program were approached for the administration of the surveys to ensure the distribution and collection of data. A minimum of 40 students from each school were selected to maintain similar socio- cultural backgrounds for both samples. Each school selected a grade level in which the surveys were administered according to the schools' convenience. A letter of request for participation was delivered to all the participating schools and Scouting Organizations in order to obtain their consent. The participating schools and organizations remained anonymous for confidentiality reasons as requested by the majority of schools and Scouting Organizations.

### **Delimitations of the study**

The current research had two main limitations that caused the findings to lack generalizability. First, participation in the study was limited to schools that have an after school scouting program, which implied that the results cannot be generalized to all the Lebanese Scouting organizations as well as to all Lebanese schools. Second, not all the schools that do offer an after school scouting program accepted to participate in the study, which limited the study to schools that gave consent only.

**Definition of key terms**

**Scouting:** A scouting experience is aimed at training young people through a variety of outdoor activities to replace self with service in order to make them individually efficient, morally and physically, with the object of using that efficiency for the service of the community. “Scouting aims to teach the boys how to live not merely how to make a living” (Powel, 1989).

**Positive youth development:** Positive youth development is an approach to a variety of services and programs that support young people in developing a sense of a competence, usefulness, belonging and empowerment (Lerner, 2005).

**Commitment to school:** Commitment is defined as a high level of attachment to an organization. It is the process through which people become willing to give their loyalty and energy to a particular social system. Student commitment to school is the emotional bond between the student and the school. Commitment refers to students’ motivation to work hard in school (Cohen, 2003).

**Attitude towards employment:** A student’s attitude towards employment comprises an individual’s self confidence in one’s ability to take responsibility and succeed in work. It is an internal feeling of motivation for work that constitutes a positive incentive towards a work environment (Deckers, 2010).

**Future orientation:** an active engagement in future thinking and future-related behavior that facilitates acquaintance with prospective events, experiences, and options and makes the

future psychologically closer, more real, and amenable for planning. For developmental psychologists, future orientation is related to adolescence more than to any other developmental and it is considered as an essential adolescent developmental mechanism (Seginer, 2009).

***Self-Efficacy:*** Self-efficacy is the extent or strength of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. By determining the beliefs a person holds regarding his or her power to affect situations, it strongly influences both the power a person actually has to face challenges competently and the choices a person is most likely to make (Bandura, 1977).

***Empathy:*** Empathy is a potential psychological motivator for helping others in distress. Empathy can be defined as the ability to feel or imagine another person's emotional experience. The ability to empathize is an important part of social and emotional development, affecting an individual's behavior toward others and the quality of social relationships (Zahn-Waxler et al. 1992a).

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of this study was to study the influence of the scouting experience on the positive youth development among young adolescents. To be able to evaluate the effects of the scouting experience, scouts as well as non-scouts were used in this study. To provide a rationale for the predicted hypotheses, this chapter starts with a history of the scouting movement, followed by the foundations of the positive youth development theories, and finally ends with the educational significance of structured outside school activities including the scouting experiences.

#### **Defining scouting**

Scouting is an educational movement that contributes to the education of young people through a system of continuous, progressive self-educational programs that are based upon a value system. This system is meant to empower individuals, so that they are able to achieve their full potential, and become independent, supportive, responsible and determined individuals. It is a global movement that aims at producing a generation of youth who are strong, enlightened, and decent. This is achieved through nurturing young people's values and competences thereby preparing them for the future (Powel, 1989).

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled and are able to perform a constructive role in society (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000).

Scouting is not merely a leisure activity; it works on developing the skills and competencies of youth and adolescents with the intention of helping young people achieve personal goals, thus enhancing their development and quality of life. The Scouting Movement focuses on character building and emphasizes individual strength with the aim of individual development and the development of the society as a whole (Zaidi, 1999, p. 15).

### **Overview of the history of the Scouting Movement**

Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941), a soldier, artist, actor and free-thinker is known as the Founder of Scouting. In, South Africa during the Second Boer War, Baden-Powell was besieged in the small town of Mafeking by a much larger Boer army during a period known as the Siege of Mafeking. During the Siege, Powell assigned a group of youth in a mission in which they supported the troops by carrying messages, which freed the men for military duties and kept the boys occupied during the long siege ([www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)).

The group of young boys performed well, and helped in the defense of the town as well. Inspired by the initiative shown by this group of boys under pressure, Powell realized that young people had huge potential that was often left untapped and this was one of the main factors that motivated Powell to establish the Scouting Movement (Wild Scouts, 2010).

In year 1907, Baden-Powell held a camp on Brown Sea Island to try out his ideas. He brought together 20 boys from a variety of backgrounds. The success of the camp motivated him on to finish what would become a classic book of the 20th century, "Scouting for Boys". His book was published in 1908 and it turned out to be a huge hit. What had been intended as a training aid for existing organizations became the handbook of a new Movement (WOSM, 2002).

In its first census in 1910, Scouting had almost 108,000 participants; over 100,000 were young people. After 100 years, this scouting movement has developed to have around 28 million Scouts from all over the world ([www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)). Every year representatives of these Scouts celebrate the launching of the scouting movement on the same land where it was initially established. They gather to celebrate, to support the development of the scouting movement and to opt for a better future in order to fulfill the needs of youth ([www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)).

On the 1st of August, year 1907, the first scout movement in the world was launched. The idea of this movement was brought to existence by Baden Powel who was in the British army and needed to find a way to reconnect with his army after it was divided and separated by rivals from South Africa. He believed that young people were able to help in this operation so he trained and prepared them to take over this mission (Powel, 1989). The young boys made it and Powel was able to re-unite his army which led to the collapse of the rivals. This incident allowed Powel to realize the strength within these young people which eventually lead to the establishment of the Brown sea camp. Later on, in 1908, Powel wrote a book on Scouting,

namely, "Scouting for boys", that broke the sales record and served as the basis for the founding of the scouting movement on a global scope ([www.scoutingresources.org](http://www.scoutingresources.org)).

Lebanon was the first country in the Arab world to receive and apply the scouting movement in 1912. The first scouting organization in Lebanon was established in 1914 by Abdel Jabbar Khayri, a school teacher, who learned about the scouting movement in England. Khayri was impressed by the movement's principles and consequently, he came back to Lebanon and applied the Scouting Method, which soon spread to different schools and educational institutions (Lebanese Scouting Federation, 2013).

### **The Scout Mission**

The Scout Mission is driven by specific values accounted for in the Scout Law and Scout Method, which are mostly based on training youth to build their skills and to prepare them for the future. The scout mission is intended to enable youth to have a constructive role in society which would make the world a better one (Powel, 1989).

The scout movement is based on an untraditional method of learning through training and exploration. It provides youth and adolescents with a chance to enhance their physical, cognitive, spiritual, and social abilities and that is to create an independent, collaborative and responsible individual, through a set of programs that lead youth to acquire certain skills and competences (Zaidi, 1999, p 2-5).

### **Principles of the Scouting Movement**

One of the main goals of the scouting movement is to emphasize public service, a goal that is achieved through emphasizing individual strength for the sake of the whole society. In other words, scouting aims at developing youth's strengths and abilities on the social, spiritual, physical and cognitive levels to make them better citizens in their local, national, and global communities (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000).

As a result, the scouting movement carries upon its shoulders a significant responsibility towards the youth it serves, towards the families that believe in it and towards the whole world (Arab Scouting Federation, 2002).

The scouting movement, driven by its clear goals and its mission is based on three main principles, all of which emphasize the significance of brotherhood, collaboration and values (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000). These principles draw the main guidelines that constitute the following:

The first principle is "duty towards God", which is a principle that fulfills the duty to hold on to faith, to spiritual values and to religion. Moreover, it implies the acceptance and fulfillment of the duties that come with such commitments. This lies in the exploration of spiritual values and in living in line with these values (Powel, 1989).

The second principle is "duty towards others", which is a principle that is concerned with individual relationships and from a wider perspective; it involves one's responsibility towards anything other than himself/herself. In other words, it involves understanding the significance of 'others' in one's life, to realize that one cannot live in isolation, for it is a basic human need to belong to larger group and to socialize with them. This also involves showing respect to others

and performing a specific role in the society as well as being ready to provide help when needed (WOSM, 2002).

The third principle, "duty towards oneself" of the scouting movement, is a call for every individual to be unique and that entails a personal responsibility towards developing oneself on the physical, cognitive, emotional and social levels and to live one's life respectfully. Moreover, this principle implies appreciating one's health, rights and benefits. To achieve this, one must explore his/her strengths and weaknesses, needs and wishes in order to relate to people on a higher level of responsibility and appreciation (Arab Scouting Fed, 2000).

### **The Scout Method**

The Scout Method is a non-formal self-education system and a key element of Scouting. The Scout Method is composed of seven different elements which are interconnected and interrelated in such a way that these elements function together to provide a diversity of dynamic activities. These activities maintain an environment that makes learning interesting and fun for youth (Ghandour, 2008). The Scout Method includes the following main key elements:

**The Scout Promise and Law.** The Scout Law is a solid and practical way to understand the values of Scouting. The Scout Promise is a personal oath for the individual scout to do his/her best to live according to those values. This personal pledge or oath is made in the presence of a group of peers once a person decides to participate in the scouting method and to become a scout. The Promise and Law are considered as one element because they are closely linked and both are strongly related and emphasized in each of the other six elements (Almahdi Scouts, 2002).

The Scout Law provides a simplified method on how to help new members become aware of the personal goal that scouting will help them achieve. It also provides an opportunity to explore the different perspectives of the scout law and method in one's personal life which is mainly achieved through experience (Ghandour, 2008).

In addition, the Scout Law also represents a set of rules for collective behavior, for it acts as the Law by which the small groups of youth abide. The Scout Law ensures that each member beholds the same rights and duties towards himself/herself as well as towards others in the group. Thus, the scout law represents the basis on which this smaller society of scouts stands, which reflects on the members' sense of belonging, collaboration, and participation (Almahdi Scouts, 2002).

**Learning by doing.** Learning by doing is a form of education that depends on learning that is acquired as a result of practical involvement and experience rather than as a result of the traditional learning method, basically attained through theoretical instruction (Powel, 1989, P. 20).

Learning by doing is a form of active learning, where a set of skills and competences are developed through a practical approach, which defined the Scouting practical approach to education (WOSM, 2002). This untraditional and active form of education allows everyone in the Scout patrol (or team) to actively engage with the process and take ownership, with the assistance of their peers and adult volunteers. (Powel, 1989).

In other words, Scouts do not acquire knowledge, skills and competences through a theoretical perspective that is not connected to their everyday life, but instead, they learn a specific skill through an experience that requires them to fulfill a particular need. For example, a

scout may learn how to stitch not for the mere sake of learning how to stitch, but due to the need to fix a ripped costume (Ghandour, 2008).

**The Patrol/Team System.** The patrol represents the basic organizational unit in Scouting. Scouts are divided into groups and they are classified according to age. Each group, usually consisting of around six to eight youth members, function as a team with one of the members acting as team leader. The Scouts within each group or patrol organize their life as a group and share certain responsibilities.

Moreover, each team takes upon its shoulders, with the support of assigned adults, the responsibility to decide upon, organize, carry out and evaluate their activities (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000).

One of the numerous advantages of having small groups is to help members feel and experience a sense of belonging and to promote efficient communication and bonding between group members which enhances their ability to work as a single unit. It is worth mentioning here that each group is given specific tasks that are age-specific and appropriate for their particular period of development (Ghandour, 2008).

**Symbolic Framework.** The symbolic framework in the Scout Method is intended to make Scouting activities more effective and more appealing to scouts as they build upon the Scout's imagination. A symbolic framework also provides a sense of identity for an individual and a sense of solidarity for the group as a whole (Wild Scouts, 2010).

Symbolic Framework is the formalization of a process that happens naturally within a society. In a society things are given meaning by people and this meaning greatly effects how people think about a given concept (Wild Scouts, 2010).

A Symbolic Framework refers to all those elements in the scouting method that has a particular a meaning such as the name of a section, the uniform, badges, songs, stories and ceremonies. All the elements mentioned above, assist in the formation of a setting or an environment that holds the values of the Scouting Organization (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000).

The educational purpose of scouting would fall short if the meanings behind the symbols were negative. In order to avoid the attachment of negative meanings, scouting provides a set of positive meanings for its messages. The meanings are designed to be both attractive to young people and consistent with scouting values (Wild Scouts, 2010).

In addition, every age group within the Scouting movement has its own particular symbolic framework which is expressed as a main idea inspired by children books or from a specific period in history or simply inspired by an imaginary story that reflects self-worth and other values that scouting works on developing in youth such as self efficacy, empathy and planning (Almahdi Scouts, 2002).

Moreover, a symbolic framework is a set of elements which represent concepts which scouting seeks to promote. The purpose of the symbolic framework is to build on young people's capacity for imagination, adventure, creativity and inventiveness. It is a way to make activities cohesive and fun and to understand the values of Scouting. The scouts' uniform for example, is one of the elements of the symbolic framework which represents discipline, uniqueness, cleanliness, and belonging, all of which have great significance in a scout's life (Wild Scouts, 2010).

**Personal Progression.** Personal progression involves helping each individual to be consciously and actively involved in his or her own development. It enables scouts to progress in their own individual way and at their own pace to gain confidence and to recognize the progress being achieved. The progressive scheme, a set of goals for each age group, is the main tool used to support this element of the Scout Method (Zaidi, 1999, p. 22).

Scouting requires that individual Scouts take responsibly of making their own decision and learning through experimenting their plan and bearing the consequences. Powel believed that this was the appropriate method of learning and growing up (Powel, 1989). Powel mentions in his famous book, *Scouting for boys*, that "a Scout should paddle his own canoe: facing the future, paddling and steering by himself " (Powel, 1989).

Given the responsibility to decide on and to plan their steps, encourages scouts to believe in their strengths and abilities and raises their self- confidence. It motivates youth to work up to their full potential to stand up to their leaders' expectations (Powel, 1989).

A keystone of the Scout method is to make it clear to the Scouts that they can accomplish a given task and to monitor their progress but without direct intervention. Therefore, even though the Patrol is supervised by the Patrol Leader, group members are free to develop their own plans and make their own decisions; this allows personal growth and maturation (Almahdi Scouts, 2002).

Personal progression in the scouting method maintains the requirement for scouts to learn by themselves and not by following direct instructions from the Scoutmasters. This requires that Scouts have the desire and motivation to learn. In order to fulfill this requirement, a variety

of activities are made available for Scouts to select from, according to their personal interests (WOSM, 2002).

The Personal Progressive system is based on badges, mainly the Merit Badges. The Merit Badges are intended to motivate and encourage Scouts to become skilled at a certain subject which would be identified as the Scouts' hobby. This subject often covers many different types of topics and activities that may even be unrelated to Scouting. The significance of this system is that every scout makes a personal progress towards a subject of personal interest and through this journey the scouts proves his/her capabilities and their independence (Wild Scouts, 2010).

**Nature.** The natural environment represented by trees, sea, and mountains, provides an ideal setting in which the Scout Method can be applied. It is also appropriate for developing ones physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potential. It involves the development of constructive contact with nature and making full use of all the unique learning opportunities provided by the natural world (WOSM, 2002).

Many Scouts believe that Nature is the best thing about Scouting. It is the setting where the Scouts are experience a sense of authority through which they have to make the proper decisions to help them reach their goal (Almahdi Scouts, 2002). These real-life experiences boost the self-confidence and sense of responsibility of youth. In addition, participants learn to trust other members in the group and to fulfill their duty towards those others and towards the group as a whole (Wild Scouts, 2010).

Numerous key elements of the Scouting Method can be translated in a Scouting game in nature. Nature provides many possibilities for personal development and encourages Scouts to collaborate well within the patrol or team. Outdoor life also teaches young people the

significance of taking care of nature and our environment. Even though many Scouts are of the opinion that outdoor life is the best thing about Scouting, it is only one of many methods we use to reach our bigger goal: to create a better society and give young people the opportunity to grow together (Arab Scouting Federation, 2000).

In Scouting, nature represents the school, the educational platform on which the learning process takes place. Scouting takes place mostly in Nature because it is an environment with challenges and adventures, in which Scouts strive to triumph. Nature is the place where youth learn to take up the challenges, overcome difficulties, and make their own decisions. According to Baden-Powell, the Scouts can become aware of the presence of God in Nature when they realize the complexity and beauty of Nature (Powel, 1989).

**Adult Support.** Scouting, being a movement mainly for youth, is an opportunity for young people to participate in a variety of activities with the support and guidance of adults. The adults in Scouting are activity leaders, educators and group facilitators. In other words, the role of those adults is to ensure that youth members or Scout are involved in meaningful activities that facilitate and promote the development of the individual Scout as well as the group as a whole (Almahdi Scouts, 2002).

This role is carried out by acting as an older brother/sister and not through taking up a judgmental, authoritative role. Adults in Scouting help to encourage a sense of self-security, confidence, and trust in young people, unlike other settings where adults sometimes become overprotective or unaware of the potential and strength of young people. In the scouting setting, adults represent a source of support and encouragement to the individual scouts in their persuasion and experimentation of the given responsibilities and goals (WOSM, 2002).

One of the significant key elements in the educational role of the scouting movement is the personal figure of the leader. The Scout is inspired and impressed by the leader due to several factors such as experience, knowledge, and position. From a Scout's point of view, the leader is a popular figure, a role model and leadership is an attractive goal, thus the learning process becomes an interesting one and modeling behavior is a main element in this educational process (Zaidi, 1999, p.35).

The influential role indicated above thus adds on to the responsibility of the adult leader who is highly influential in the lives of scouts and this significance is not given by appealing speeches or lectures but by evident deeds and actions (Ghandour, 2008).

In some books, especially in early books on scouting a scout leader is referred to as a Scoutmaster, a name that is indicative of the characteristic traits of the adult that plays the role of the scout leader. "I had stipulated that the position of Scoutmaster was to be neither that of a schoolmaster nor of a commander Officer, but rather that of an elder brother among his boys, not detached or above them individually, able to inspire their efforts and to suggest new diversions when his finger on their pulse told him the attraction of any present craze was wearing off." (Powel, 1989)

In Sum, the intention behind applying the aforementioned key elements in the Scouting Method is to ensure that scouts benefit from the scouting activities, not only for the sake of the success of their scouting experience, but more importantly for the sake of making them more successful people who will contribute to the well-being of their society, community and humanity as a whole. "Try to leave the world better than you found it" (Powel, 1989).

## Theoretical Foundations of Positive Youth Development

Before we connect the scouting experience with the positive youth development, as is the purpose of the study, the following section sheds light on the meaning and significance of PYD and how this new concept emerged.

Adolescence spans the second decade of life (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). Adolescence may be defined as the life span period in which most of an individual's biological, cognitive, psychological, and social attributes are changing in an interconnected way from what is considered child-like to what is considered adult-like. When most of a person's characteristics are in a state of change, then this person is an adolescent (Lerner, 2002).

Since the founding of the scientific study of adolescent development, the predominant conceptual frame for the study of this age period has been one of "storm and stress" (Lerner, 2005). Typically, these deficit models of the characteristics of adolescence resulted in descriptions of youth as "broken" or in danger of becoming broken (Benson, et al., 2006), or as "problems to be managed" (Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, & Foster, 1998). In fact, if positive development was discussed in the adolescent development literature, at least prior to the 1990s, it was totally or plainly regarded as the absence of negative or undesirable behaviors such as substance abuse, age-inappropriate sexual behavior or delinquency (Benson, et al., 2006). An adolescent who was seen as displaying behavior indicative of positive development was depicted as someone who was not taking drugs or being involved in age-inappropriate sexual behavior or not participating in crime or violence (Lerner, 2005).

Positive youth development, or PYD, is a recently emerged concept of youth. This orientation to youth resulted from the work of developmental psychologists and biologists in the process of exploring the plasticity of developmental processes that arose from the combination of biological and contextual levels of organization (Lerner 2005). This interest in the developmental system perspective and in the assessment of interventions applied within community-based, youth serving programs provided the basis for the evolution of the positive youth development concept which contradicts previous theories that dominated in the past six decades regarding the developmental period of adolescence (Damon and Lerner, 2008). This dynamic model of human behavior and development originated from the researchers' growing interest for understanding the significance of relations between individuals and their real-world environmental settings (Lerner, 2005).

However, to understand this dynamic model of human behavior and youth development, it is essential to be reminded that adolescent development involves adjustments to changes in the self pertinent to puberty, such as, cognitive and emotional characteristics, and social expectations, in addition to alterations in family and peer group relations, as well as institutional changes such as the structure of the schools within which adolescents are enrolled or the rules imposed on them during community service (Lerner & Steinberg, 2004). Not all young people undergo these transitions in the same way, with the same pace, or with similar outcomes. Individual differences are therefore a key part of adolescent development, and are caused by differences in the timing of connections among biological, psychological, and societal factors (Damon and Lerner, 2005).

In other words, a major source of diversity in the developmental course of adolescence is the nature of relationships that adolescents maintain with significant people and institutions in their social context; that is, their family, peer group, school, workplace, neighborhood, community, society and culture (Lerner, 2002). So, the key process within this period, as is the case as well throughout the life span, is a relational one involving mutually influential relations between the developing individual and the numerous levels of the environmental contexts of human development (Lerner, 2006).

### **Defining Positive Youth Development**

Positive Youth Development is a perspective that emphasizes providing services and opportunities to support all young people in developing a sense of a competence, usefulness, belonging and empowerment (Damon and Lerner, 2008). While individual programs can provide youth development activities, the youth development approach works best when entire communities including young people are involved in creating a range of services and opportunities that youth need in order to grow into happy and healthy adults (Damon, 2008).

Youth Development strategies focus on giving young people, all young people and not only the “troubled ones”, the chance to form relationships with caring adults, build skills, and exercise leadership, which will enhance their abilities, skills and competences thereby assisting their smooth transition into adulthood (Damon & Gregory, 2003).

Perceiving youth as a valued and respected asset to society, establishing programs that focus on developmental needs of youth and adolescents, involving parents, families, and other

youth in the supporting programs and engaging youth in character building activities, are all key factors in the positive youth development perspective (Lerner et al., 2004). After all, adolescents represent, at any point in history, the group of people that must be prepared to assume the quality of leadership of self, family, community, and society that will maintain and improve human life (Damon and Lerner, 2008).

### **Main features of the PYD perspective**

The positive youth development approach recognizes that all adolescents have strengths and that youth and adolescents will develop in positive ways when these strengths are aligned with resources for healthy development within the various settings in which adolescents live and interact, i.e. home, school, and community (Lerner, et al., 2005).

A key element for the significance to the PYD perspective, is the interest that exists in defining the nature of the resources for positive development that are present in youth programs, as in the significant number of the after-school programs delivered either by national organizations such as Girls Clubs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or by local organizations (Lerner, 2004).

Developmental scientists have suggested that positive youth development encompasses psychological, behavioral, and social characteristics that reflect what they call the “Five Cs.” Those “Cs” are competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring/compassion. An adolescent who develops each of these “Five Cs” is considered to be successful (Zarrett & Lerner, 2008).

According to Lerner (2006), the "Five Cs" are defined as follows: Competence is related to the positive view of one's actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, health, and vocational. Confidence is defined as an internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy. Connection, on the other hand, refers to the development of positive bonds between an adolescent and his or her peers, family, school and community where both parties contribute to the relationship. The fourth "C", Character, is described as respect for societal and cultural norms as well as the possession of standards for correct behaviors which is delivered through a sense of right and wrong and honesty. Finally, Caring and Compassion refer to a sense of sympathy and empathy for others (Lerner, 2006).

Finally, research indicates that the more youth and adolescents are given the opportunity to have access to positive resources and experiences, the more likely it is that they will develop positively. Therefore, physical and institutional resources in the social environment, such as, family activities, structured outside school activities and many others, are as essential for promoting positive youth development as are the individual skills and competencies. These resources provide adolescents with opportunities for learning, recreation, and engagement with individuals and their communities (Eccles et al., 1999).

### **After school Programs and PYD**

Since very few published studies tackled the importance of scouting as a specialized organized activity that affects the healthy psychological development of young people, the author

of this study chose to include first a discussion of the benefits of after school activities to show, at least, the significance of participating in structured educational programs.

The term "out of school activities", or OST, refers to structured, organized out of school activities such as school clubs, sports, community programs in which youth become involved and spend their time constructively, after school (Mahoney, Eccles and Larson, 2004).

Researchers propose that after school activities that aim at promoting positive youth development ought to be supervised, high quality programs that address social competences and social bonding, in order to be effective. Structured out of school activities provide a setting for youth to learn and apply prosocial behavior which in turn positively influences their development (Eccles et al., 1999).

Findings by Eccles and colleagues in 2003 revealed that youth who participated in organized out of school activities were less likely to be involved in substance abuse and more likely to be committed to school till the end of their high school year (Eccles et al., 2003).

Research findings have also suggested that positive relationships between youth are highly influential in the development of adolescents (Mahoney, Eccles and Larson, 2004).

After school programs have been identified as means for a number of beneficial factors for youth and adolescents. For instance, Mahoney and colleagues (2004) reported that findings from a number of experimental studies indicated that organized out of school activities are associated with a decrease in school drop-out, a decrease in the likely hood of experiencing depression, and a decrease in anxiety which may be due to the increase in social relationships, an increase in the sense of belonging , a decrease in delinquency and substance abuse, in addition

to an increase in self confidence and prosocial behavior, all of which eventually lead to the positive development of involved youth (Mahoney, Eccles and Larson, 2004).

Previous research by Lerner and colleagues in 2005, demonstrated a strong relationship between structured out of school activities and positive youth development. The study was carried out in order to understand the factors that lead young people towards a healthy developmental course (Lerner, 2005).

Findings suggest that effective contributions to the self, family, community, and society are the main promoters towards an idealized adulthood (Lerner, Dowling, et al., 2003). Findings also revealed that the Five Cs exist as underlying constructs that account for variance in several desirable tangible traits. Competence, for example can be assessed by measures of academic, social, and vocational abilities (Lerner, 2005).

Compared with unstructured after-school activities, structured activities are associated more often with indicators of positive development (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005). After-school programs exist in unique social, cultural, and physical ecologies that impact individual motivation and engagement and provide different opportunities and resources for youth (Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005).

### **Scouting and PYD**

In fact, it is the process of mutual relationship between contextual opportunities and individual characteristics that influences youth behavior and development (Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005). Many aspects of organized activities are linked to PYD, including physical and psychological safety, supervision and guidance by unrelated adults, contact with pro-social peers,

support for efficacy, and opportunities for skill building (Larson, 2000). One of such organized and structured activities are the scouting experiences.

Previous research has focused on looking for academic and behavioral differences between scouts and non-scouts. For instance, a group by the name of "Wilder Research" in partnership with St. Paul Public Schools and the Northern Star Council Boy Scouts of America carried out a study in 2008 in which the researchers examined the school outcomes of boys participating in the Scouting Movement in comparison to boys who were not part of that Movement. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to explore whether scouts performed better in school on the academic and behavioral levels than non-scouts ([www.wilderresearch.org](http://www.wilderresearch.org)). Researchers found that 8th grade students who had participated in Scouting programs for at least two years were more likely to receive an average or above average score on the reading tests than their non-Scout counterparts. However, in this study no significant differences were found between Scouts and non-Scouts when they were compared on school attendance and suspension rates ([www.wilderresearch.org](http://www.wilderresearch.org)).

Another study worth mentioning here was the study performed in 1995 by Harris & Associates on the behalf of Boys Scouts of America, entitled 'The Values of Men and Boys in America'. The study was carried out over the course of two years and it concluded that Scouting has a significant positive impact on the attitudes and opinions of Scouts. Moreover, findings from the study revealed that a long-term Scouting experience (5+ years) can still be influential on the Scouts' lives many years later. Additional findings suggested that in a single year, the Scouting program helps develop and nurture six critical areas that are key factors in healthy youth development, namely, strong personal values and character, positive sense of self-worth

and usefulness, caring and nurturing relationships, productive and creative use of time, social adeptness and a desire to learn (Harris and Associates, 1998).

In addition, the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) (2012) launched a more recent study to explore the impact of participation in Girl Scouting on the lives of adult Scouts years after their Scouting experience. Findings were significant to the organization and other youth organizations as well. The study entitled 'Girl Scouting Works: The Alumnae Impact Study' reported that women who were involved in Girl Scouting earlier in their lifetime showed higher positive life outcomes than women who were not involved in Girl Scouting. The outcomes included positive impact on different psychosocial areas such as sense of self, participation in community service, educational achievement, and income. In this study, three thousand women across the country participated in the survey which revealed that all Girl Scout alumni had higher levels of participation in community service and volunteer work than non-alumni, regardless of the number of years they had spent in Girl Scouting. However, the Girl Scout alumnae, who were involved the longest in the Girl Scouting activities, reported the highest levels of positive outcomes and satisfaction (<http://www.girlscouts.org/research>).

Moreover, the 4-H longitudinal Study of Positive Youth Development that was conducted in 2003 by Lerner and his colleagues, supported by a grant from the National 4-H Council, was designed to test the role of developmental assets and individual actions in the promotion of PYD, as represented by the "Five Cs" of Positive Youth Development (competence, confidence, connection character, and caring). Lerner and his colleagues found a significant relationship between organized and structured out of school activities, scouting included as an example of

such activities, and positive youth development, where the activities emphasized the 'Five Cs'(Lerner, 2005). Although the developmental assets within the family were found to be the best predictors of PYD within the subsample of the 4-H Study, evidence was also found for the association between community-based programs and PYD (Lerner et. al, 2005).

Studies that focused on analyzing community-based activities that are available in the lives of youth, came up with a list of 18 different structured after-school activities and programs that participants were engaged in, which, in turn, they categorized into four groupings: 1. Youth development (YD) programs (e.g., 4-H, YMCA/YWCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters); 2. Sports; 3. Arts (e.g., music, drama, dance); and, 4. Other after-school clubs. Results revealed that participation in the first two groups positively correlated with positive youth development (Lerner et. al, 2005; Eccles et. al., 1999).

Finally, a major study performed by Jang, Johnson and Kim in 2008 entitled 'Merit beyond the badge' involved around 2500 adult male participants who responded to questionnaires that included 55 questions. The purpose of the study was to find out whether youth participating in Scouting receive character-building advantages over youth that have not participated in Scouting. Moreover, the purpose of the study was to explore the possibility that Eagle Scouts, because of the additional commitment and effort required to reach this rank, experience additional positive attributes that provide advantages and benefits to them over non-Scouts as well as other Scouts who never attain the rank of Eagle. Findings from the study revealed that when compared to non-Scouts, Scouts exhibit significantly higher levels of health

and recreation, connection, service and leadership, environmental stewardship, goal orientation, planning and preparedness, and character.

In conclusion, based on the above-discussed review of literature, the following research hypotheses were predicted:

1. Scouts experience a higher level of commitment to school than non-Scouts.
2. Scouts have a more positive attitude towards employment than non-Scouts
3. Scouts are more goal and future oriented than non-Scouts.
4. Scouts have a higher level of self- efficacy than non-Scouts.
5. Scouts have a higher level of empathy than non-Scouts.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Method**

This study explored the differences between Scouts and non Scouts in positive youth development in terms of self-efficacy, attitude towards employment, commitment to school, future orientation and empathy. The following chapter provides information about the research context, participants, instruments used, and procedures employed for data collection and data analysis.

#### **Research Context**

The study took place in the classrooms of Private Lebanese Schools from where students for this study were recruited. It covered a period of 3 months, from April 2014 to June 2014. The Schools that were selected were chosen because they had an after school scouting program. This enabled us to have a sample from each category (Scouts/ non-Scouts) conveniently but at the same time ensured that the participants shared similar socio-economic and cultural back grounds.

Seven schools were approached with a letter of request for distributing the surveys but only five schools gave consent. A sample of forty students was taken from each school while confidentiality was emphasized and the schools were reassured that they will remain anonymous.

## **Participants**

Students from grade 6 to grade 12 participated in the study. Their ages ranged between 11 and 17 with the average age being 14. Every school chose its sample from one or two grades according to the schools' convenience. The total number of the participants was 200 (N= 200). During the data collection 15 surveys were incompletely answered. Hence, the response rate was 93%. Henceforth, the statistics provided under this heading and the forthcoming results in the chapter relate to the remaining 185 students and 5 schools only. Only boys participated in the study, therefore the gender distribution was 100% boys.

To maintain confidentiality, the schools which were included in this study, were labeled with numerical numbers.

## **Materials**

The participants were given a questionnaire that included the instruments of this study, in addition to the demographic information sheet.

In the demographic information sheet, participants were asked to specify their age, educational level, religious affiliation, and whether or not they were/ are part of the Scouting movement. In addition, those who reported that were/are scouts were requested to report the

period of time they have spent in the Scouting Organization and to rate the significance of the scouting experience to their lives.

In addition to the demographic part, the survey included another section which enclosed five scales that measure five different variables: commitment to school, attitude towards employment, future orientation, self-efficacy and empathy.

### **Commitment to School—Rochester Youth Development Study**

This scale measures youth's attitude towards school and the importance of school work. The assessment tool consists of ten items which measures the youth's agreement about the importance of school work. It has an internal consistency of 0.81 and it was developed by Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth & Jang in 1991. This scale is most appropriate for youth between the ages of 11 to 18. Four of the ten items are reverse coded, then all values are summed and divided by the total number of items. Intended range is 1-4, with a higher score indicating greater commitment to school.

### **Attitudes toward Employment—Work Opinion Questionnaire**

This assessment tool consists of eight items. The items measure self-confidence and motivation for work. The target groups are student between grade 6 and grade 12. The Internal consistency is 0.54 and this assessment tool was developed by Johnson, Messe, and Crano in 1984. Participants are asked to check the response that best corresponds with their beliefs. Items 1, 4, 5, 6 and 8 should be reverse coded. Point values are summed for each respondent and the

sum is then divided by the number of items. The intended range of scores is 1-4, with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude toward employment.

### **Future Aspirations—Peer Leader Survey**

These six items measure future and career orientation and aspirations. This tool has an internal consistency of 0.60 and was developed by the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research in 1995 and was later on adapted by the Houston Community Demonstration Project in 1993. Respondents are asked to indicate how important it is that they achieve six future goals.

Point values are summed for each respondent; then the obtained figure is divided by the total number of responses. Blank items should not be counted in the number of responses. Higher mean scores, ranging from 1 to 4, indicate stronger aspirations in a variety of education, career, and social domains. Lower mean scores indicate lower and less diverse future aspirations.

### **Self-Efficacy**

This assessment tool consists of seven items. These items measure one's confidence in attaining educational and career goals and in avoiding fights. The scale is intended for youth between the age of 11 and 16. The Internal consistency is 0.70 and it was developed by Prothrow-Stith in 1987; Additional items were developed by DeJong, Spiro, Brewer-Wilson, et al; in 1992. Point values are assigned as indicated above. Values are summed for each respondent and divided by the number of items. The intended range of scores is 1-4, with a higher score

indicating a greater confidence in one's ability to finish school, get a job, and avoid violent encounters. Items 4-7 can be treated as a separate scale.

### **Empathy- Teen Conflict Survey**

These items measure an individual's ability to listen, care, and trust others. The target group are youth between the age of 11 to 16. This assessment tool has an internal consistency of 0.62. It consists of five items and it was developed by Bosworth & Espelage in 1995. Youths are asked to indicate how often they would make several statements. According to their response, the scale provides a measure for youths' ability to listen, care, and trust others. Scores are derived by summing all responses, with possible scores ranging from 5 to 25. Higher scores indicate higher empathy.

### **Procedure**

Before conducting the research, the investigator of this study held a separate meeting with the principal of each school, to explain the purpose of the research, to obtain the principals' consent and schedule the data collection at each school. Prior to administering the questionnaires, the researcher provided information about positive youth development to the students, explained the purpose of the study, and answered questions posed by the participants. To maintain confidentiality and to safeguard against student bias in filling the questionnaires, students were asked to answer the questions anonymously.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

This chapter provides an overview of the results of the current study, including the reliability testing of the scales used.

#### **Reliability Testing**

The following scales were used in this study and the internal reliability of these scales was determined by calculating the Chronbach alpha for each scale: Commitment to School-Rochester Youth Development Study; Attitudes toward Employment- Work Opinion Questionnaire; Future Aspirations- Peer Leader Survey; Self-Efficacy Scale and the Empathy-Teen Conflict Survey (see Table 1). The Chronbach alpha of all the scales, except for the Self-efficacy and Empathy scales, was considered acceptable in comparison to previous studies. The two scales with the lower reliabilities could be due to translation errors, since the scales were translated from English to Arabic, or due to a misunderstanding of a particular question, or it could even be due to cultural differences, since the original scales were meant to be used in the United States and Latin America (see Table 1).

**Table 1****Chronbach alpha of the Commitment to School, Attitudes toward Employment, Future Aspirations, Self-Efficacy and Empathy Scales**

Scale	Previous Chronbach alpha	Current Chronbach alpha
Commitment to School	0.81	.848
Attitudes toward Employment	0.54	.594
Future Aspirations	0.70	.735
Self-Efficacy scale	0.60	.403
Empathy- Teen Conflict Survey	0.62	.443

**Hypothesis Testing**

To find out whether a significant difference between scouts and non-scouts existed on the proposed key factors in positive youth development, independent t-tests were conducted (tables 2 and 3).

Hypothesis 1: Scouts have a higher level of commitment to school than non-scouts.

Hypothesis one was not confirmed, as the results of the independent t-testing and ANOVA revealed that the mean differences between scouts and non scouts was not significant,  $t=1.544$ , at  $p= .125$  (table 3).



**Table 2****Group Statistics of Scouts and non Scouts on all the variables**

	Yes/No				
	Scouts	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Commitment To School	1 Scouts	89	2.9593	.45997	.04876
	2 Not Scouts	81	2.8225	.68261	.07585
Attitude towards employment	1	89	3.0016	.29490	.03126
	2	81	2.8466	.46936	.05215
Future orientation	1	89	2.4652	.41206	.04368
	2	81	2.5062	.45397	.05044
Self efficacy	1	89	3.1846	.43352	.04595
	2	81	3.1834	.47177	.05242
Empathy	1	89	17.2247	1.97572	.20943
	2	81	15.1728	2.07840	.23093

**Table 3****Comparison of Scouts and non Scouts on all the variables**

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Diff	
							Lower	Upper
Commitment To school	Equality of variance assumed	1.544	168	.125	.13674	.08858	-.03813	.31161
	not assumed	1.517	138.308	.132	.13674	.09017	-.04154	.31502
Attitude Towards employment	Equality of variance assumed	2.603	168	.010	.15504	.05956	.03745	.27264
	not assumed	2.550	132.287	.012	.15504	.06080	.03478	.27531
Future orientation	Equality of variance assumed	-.617	168	.538	-.04100	.06642	-.17213	.09012
	not assumed	-.615	162.099	.540	-.04100	.06672	-.17276	.09076
Self efficacy	Equality of variance assumed	.017	168	.987	.00117	.06943	-.13590	.13824
	not assumed	.017	162.800	.987	.00117	.06971	-.13648	.13882
Empathy	Equality of variance assumed	6.598	168	.000	2.05188	.31101	1.43790	2.66586
	not assumed	6.582	164.530	.000	2.05188	.31175	1.43633	2.66743

Hypothesis 2: Scouts have a more positive attitude towards employment than non-scouts.

This hypothesis was confirmed as the results from the t-test analysis imply. The mean difference

between scouts and non-scouts on the attitude towards employment scale was found to be significant,  $t = 2.603$  at  $p = .010$  (see table 3).

Hypothesis 3: Scouts have a higher level of future and goal orientation than non-Scouts. This hypothesis was not confirmed for the mean difference between scouts and non-scouts that was computed using independent t test analysis was not found to be significant,  $t = -.617$  at  $p = .538$  (table 3).

Hypothesis 4: Scouts have a higher level of self-efficacy than non-scouts.

The third hypothesis was not confirmed since the independent t- test analysis revealed that the mean differences between scouts and non-scouts on the self-efficacy variable is not significant,  $t = .017$  at  $p = .987$  (table 3).

Hypothesis 5: Scouts have a higher level of empathy than non-Scouts.

This hypothesis was confirmed because a significant difference was found between scouts and non-scouts when compared on their level of empathy using the independent t test analysis,  $t = 6.598$  at  $p = .000$  (table 3).

### **Additional research**

Further analysis of the results displayed some important points. In addition to the significant difference between scouts and non scouts on the attitude towards employment and empathy level, an additional significant difference was found between two groups of scouts. The first group is represented by those who have been scouts for less than one year and the second group represents those who have been scouts for more than two years. Scouts for more than two years, group two, were found to have a more positive attitude towards employment than scouts for less than a year, while both groups of scouts have a more positive attitude towards employment than non-scouts (see tables 4 and 5)

Moreover, responses to the questionnaire by Scouts for less than year revealed that they displayed a higher level of empathy than Scouts for more than two years, while both groups of scouts displayed a higher level of empathy than non-scouts (See tables 4 and 5).

**Table 4**

**Analysis of Variance for Attitude Towards Employment and Empathy level between the two groups of Scouts ( Scouts < 1yr; Scouts>1yr)**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Attitude towards employment</b>	Between Groups	1.034	2	.517	3.418	.035
	Within Groups	25.262	167	.151		
	Total	26.296	169			
	Within Groups	677.398	167	4.056		
	Total	867.624	169			

**Table 5****Differences in Attitude employment and Empathy level between two groups of scouts**

Dependent Variable	(I) scouts	(J) scouts	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<b>Attitude towards employment</b>	scouts less than a year	non scouts					
	scouts more than a year	non scouts	.16149	.06323	.035	.0086	.3144
<b>Empathy</b>	scouts less than a year	non scouts	2.77160	.52481	.000	1.5024	4.0408
	scouts more than a year	non scouts	1.86941	.32743	.000	1.0776	2.6612

\*.The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion**

The present study focused on the differences between Scouts and non-Scouts on variables that are key factors in positive youth development in order to explore the possible effect of a scouting experience on the development of youth and adolescents. Several noteworthy results can be pointed out from this study.

The current study hypothesized that Scouts will have a higher level of commitment to school than non-Scouts. However, obtained results showed no significant difference between Scouts and non-scouts with regard to their commitment to school. One possible explanation is that in the Middle East in general and in Lebanon in particular, academic achievement is quite a significant issue for both parents and youth and, it also represents a key factor for parental closeness and communication with the children (Harb, 2010). This is probably why both groups, Scouts and non-Scouts, displayed a high level of commitment to school.

In addition, previous literature also describes the Lebanese culture as a family-oriented, authoritarian, and patriarchal culture, such that parents are quite involved in the lives of their children and the whole family members for that matter (Wasl, 1991, Sarouphim, 2011, Silver, 2007). Even though similar to the western culture in several perspectives, the Lebanese, in general, are not as individualistic as many western societies, but rather their family members

behave like a whole, single unit (Wasl, 1991). Therefore, disappointing the parents, by not committing to schools, becomes an unacceptable thought for most Lebanese students.

According to Wasl (1991) the school tuition in Lebanon is equivalent to a large percentage of the income of Lebanese families, which implies that academic achievement is significant for both parents and students, taking into account here that the annual income for majority of the Lebanese families is rather low. According to Wasl, this influences the attitude of both parents and students towards school and school work (Wasl, 1991).

The second hypothesis in the current study proposed that Scouts will have a more positive attitude towards employment. This hypothesis was confirmed since a significant difference was detected between Scouts and non-Scouts in this regard. Lebanese youth have the lowest income among other employees from other age groups (<http://www.undp.org.lb/>).

Young graduates in Lebanon, be it of universities or schools, encounter difficulties in trying to find a job and even when they find one, it may not be in line with their field of study. This reflects on the attitude of youth and adolescents towards employment due to the large discrepancy between the income earned by new entrants to the labor market, and the big responsibilities confronting them as in establishing themselves in the job, securing the financing needed to set themselves up, or in trying to become independent from their parents and starting their own family (<http://www.undp.org.lb/>).

In this connection, youth are considered to be the main victims of the absence of an appropriate employment policy, since becoming independent and starting out in a place of their

own is almost impossible for a large segment of Lebanese youth who come from middle class or low-income families (<http://www.undp.org.lb/>).

Scouts, however, display a more positive attitude towards employment and that is probably due to the fact that the Scouting Movement emphasizes sincere commitment to anything a Scout does during the scouting experience, be it a scouting activity, helping a fellow Scout or achievement of a particular scouting rank. In addition, Scouts do not seek the materialistic reward, which is represented by income in real-life employment, but they rather seek a spiritual and a moral reward (<http://www.scouting.org>).

A scouting experience reflects on a real life employment situation where the Scout's personal satisfaction does not completely depend on the materialistic pay back, income, but also depends on factors like appreciation by employer, colleagues or even the fact that one is working for the benefit of his/her community and society (Jang, Johnson, & Kim, 2010).

The third hypothesis suggested that Scouts will have a higher level of future orientation and goal planning than non-Scouts. This hypothesis was not confirmed since results detected no significant difference between Scouts and non-Scouts on the level of future orientation and goal planning. Both groups displayed a low level of future orientation. The results go in parallel with previous findings from previous literature regarding the Lebanese youth. Several of such studies suggested that youth and adolescents in the Middle East have a more negative perception of the future in comparison to youth and adolescents in the west and that is due to the negative implication of wars in their countries and in the region, such as the Lebanese civil war that lasted for more than a decade (Silver, 2007, Dhillon and Yousef, 2009, Abdo & Alamuddin 2010 ).

Moreover, according to Silver (2007), one of the many drawbacks from the Lebanese war is evident in the association that is made by many Lebanese youth between "future" and "death".

In addition, literature shows that the Middle East's youth are continuously struggling with maintaining significant milestones in their transition to adulthood, mostly because the educational systems in the region have failed to prepare young people for the changing roles in economy. Consequently, this explains, to a certain extent, the high rates of unemployed youth as well as of another group of youth who are employed youth but endure low-quality jobs (Dhillon and Yousef, 2009). The above explanations, therefore, imply that within these circumstances, youth in the Middle East will most likely have a low level of future orientation consistent with the economical and political situation that dominate the majority of countries in the Middle East today and this applies to Lebanon as well.

The fourth hypothesis suggested that scouts will have a higher level of self-efficacy when compared to non-scouts. This hypothesis was not confirmed since no significant difference was found when the two groups of participants were compared on this variable. The results revealed that both groups, scouts and non-scouts, have a high level of self-efficacy. One possible explanation could be that the Lebanese youth distinguish themselves from youth in the Arab World, for instance. They feel superior in the quality of education they receive, their linguistic and social skills, in addition to their similarity to youth in the west while at the same time maintaining strong family and social bonds that have deteriorated in the west (Sarouhim, 2011). This belief in the 'special' character and traits is likely to boost the self-efficacy of youth thereby minimizing the effect of the scouting experience in this regard.

The fifth and final hypothesis in this study suggested that scouts have a higher level of empathy than non scouts. This hypothesis was confirmed and a significant difference was detected between scouts and non scouts in this regard. The results obtained are in parallel with previous research and studies that propose that organized and structured out of school activities provide youth the chance to interact in a positive, healthy manner which in turn emphasizes prosocial behavior by emphasizing positive developmental psychological attributes, one of which is empathy (Lerner et al., 2005).

Moreover, findings from research on Girl Scouts that compared girls in the scouting movement to girls not involved in the scouting movement, strongly suggest that scouting aspires positive behavior in youth and this inspiration is mostly evident in the quality of collaborative, ethical and empathetic interaction between fellow scouts as well as the interaction between adult leaders and new scouts in an attempt to make a positive change in their society, community and the world (GSRI, 2012). In fact, this motive, to leave the world a better place than you found it, is a significant Motto that scouts believe in and live by, for it is one of the most popular sayings of their chief and supreme Scout leader, Baden Powel (Powel, 1989).

### **Additional Findings**

One of the questions in the demographic section targeted the number of years that scouts spent being scouts, specifically, more than two years or less than two years. Regarding the two hypotheses that were confirmed in this study, a significant difference was actually found, as

reported in previous studies, between scouts themselves depending on the length of time spent in the scouting movement. For instance, concerning the attitude towards employment, it was found that those who were scouts for more than two years had a more positive attitude towards employment than those who were scouts for less than two years, noting that both groups of scouts had a significantly more positive attitude towards employment than non- scouts.

These findings are in parallel with what has been reported in the study by Jang, Johnson, & Kim (2010) in which it was found that Scouts were more prepared to handle a job than non-Scouts. In addition, the authors also found that the longer the period of time that a scout engages in the scouting movement, the more prepared he becomes along with a more positive attitude towards employment (Jang, Johnson & Kim, 2010).

As for the second confirmed hypothesis which stated that scouts have a higher level of empathy than non-scouts, it was found that those who were scouts for less than two years were more empathetic than those who were scouts for more than two years, noting that both groups of scouts altogether displayed a higher level of empathy than non-scouts. A possible reason for this could be that after a certain period of time, desensitization takes place and scouts become less sensitive to the scouting experience; however the desensitization is controlled in such a manner that even though the level of empathy declines, it does not reach to the level of non-scouts; on the contrary, the level of empathy for both groups of scouts, less than and more than two years, remains significantly higher than the level of empathy of non-scouts.

### **Clinical and Educational Implications**

The results of this study provide important implications for parents, clinical psychologists, school counselors, educators, and administrators working in the educational field. In addition, the results are significant for individuals who design Scouting Programs that are intended to develop the character of youth. For instance, the role of particular programs and activities incorporated within school hours and during after-school activities should be considered as important factors that influence youth's healthy development and should therefore be carefully designed in order to benefit students and promote their positive development which, in turn, would positively influence their community and society in general.

The study revealed that a scouting experience enhances the attitude of youth towards employment and helps in making them more empathetic towards others in their surroundings. Hence, this implies that school counselors, educators, scouting leaders working on the development of prevention and/or intervention programs must take this into consideration when they attempt to help youth and adolescents struggling with issues related to employment and empathy.

### **Delimitations**

This study has certain delimitations that need to be taken into consideration. First, the findings lack generalizability since the participant students were selected restrictively from private schools that offer an after-school scouting program, noting that samples were taken from some and not all of the schools that offer a scouting program. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to all Lebanese schools and/or scouting organizations.

In addition, the school factor was not controlled for, in this study. In other words, the school environment could be a confounding variable since participants were taken from different schools and this may have had an influence on the students' responses.

### **Future Directions**

For future studies, the opportunity for research on how scouting does influence youth and adolescents is broad. First, research on a larger sample of participants from more schools and scouting organizations might be able to provide a clearer picture of the differences between scouts and non-scouts and an insight into the variables that influence the development of youth.

Moreover, more research needs to be done to understand better the relationship between time spent in scouting and the strength of each desired variable.

In addition, it would be interesting to know why empathy level declines as the time spent in scouting increases while other variables such as the attitude towards employment improve as the scout spends more time in scouting.

Finally, the reliability was low for two of the scales, namely future orientation and empathy. Future research may focus on how to improve the reliability of these scales and to explore whether the results related to these scales would change.

## **Conclusion**

This study investigated whether Scouts are different from non- Scouts on five different variables that are known to be key elements in positive youth development. Results from the study revealed that Scouts do not differ from non-Scouts on the level of commitment to school, future orientation and goal planning, and on the level of self- efficacy. However, Scouts were found to be significantly different from non-Scouts on their attitude towards employment and their level of empathy. In other words, Scouts were found to have a more positive attitude towards employment than non- Scouts and they were also found to be more empathetic than non-Scouts. The findings provide school counselors, educators and psychologists with additional intervention techniques that are aimed at helping youth who have a negative attitude towards employment and those who are not empathetic, be it with their peers or with others in their surroundings.

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## Appendix A: Demographic Information

### PART I

1. Age ( )

2. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- € less than high school graduate
- € high school graduate
- € trade/technical/vocational training

3. What is your religion/sect?

- € Muslim Sunni
- € Muslim Shiite
- € Druze
- € Christian Maronite
- € Christian Catholic
- € Christian Protestant
- € Christian Orthodox
- € Nonreligious/ Secular
- € Other ( )

4. Typically, how often do you attend religious services?

- € more than once a week
- € once a week
- € once a month
- € major religious holidays
- € other

5. Were you ever a member of a Boy Scout?

€ Yes

€ No

**IF YES, CONTINUE TO QUESTION 6. IF NO, GO TO PART II**

6. To what scouting organization do/did you belong ( )

7. For how long were you a member of the boys scout?

€ 6 months

€ 1 yr

€ more than 2 yrs

8. Please rate how important being a part of the Boy Scouts was in your life.

€ Not very important

€ Very important

€ Don't Know

## Appendix B : scales

### Part II

**Check the response that most closely reflects your beliefs**

**Strongly Agree (4)   Agree (3)   Disagree (2)   Strongly disagree (1)**

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

4   3   2   1

1. I like school a lot.

2. School is boring.

3. I do poorly at school.

4. I don't really belong at school.

5. Homework is a waste of time.

6. I usually finish my homework.

7. Getting good grades is very important to me.

8. Sometimes I do extra work to improve my grades.

9. I am not quite ready to handle a part-time job. 4 3  
2 1

10. I have enough skills to do a job well. 4  
3 2 1

11. I know I can succeed at work. 4 3  
2 1

12. I would take almost any kind of job to get money. 4 3 2  
1

13. I admire people who get by without working. 4 3  
2 1

14. The only good job is one that pays a lot of money. 4 3 2  
1

15. Working hard at a job will pay off in the end. 4 3  
2 1

16. Most jobs are dull and boring. 4 3  
2 1

17. If a person is not a success in life, it is his own fault. 4 3  
2 1

18. Even with a good education, I'll have a hard  
2 1  
time getting the right kind of job. 4 3
19. People like me don't have much of a chance in life  
2 1 4 3
20. Whether I get into trouble is just a matter of chance.  
2 1 4 3
21. I can pretty much decide what will happen in my life.  
2 1 4 3
22. I will graduate from high school.  
2 1 4 3
23. I will finish college.  
3 2 1 4
24. I will get a job I really want.  
3 2 1 4
25. I am confident in my ability to stay out of fights 4 3 2 1
26. If someone called me a bad name,  
I would ignore them or walk away. 4 3 2 1

27. I don't need to fight because  
1

4 3 2

there are other ways to deal with anger.

4 3 2 1

28. I can get along well with most people.

4 3 2 1

**Check the response that most closely reflects your beliefs**

Never (1) Seldom (2) Sometimes (3) Often (4) Always (5)

29. I can listen to others.

1 2 3 4 5

30. Kids I don't like can have good ideas.

1 2 3 4 5

31. I get upset when my friends are sad.

1 2 3 4 5

32. I trust people who are not my friends.

1 2 3 4 5

33. I am sensitive to other people's feelings,  
even if they are not my friends.

1 2 3 4 5



## Appendix C: Arabic version of Survey

الجزء الاول

## العوامل الديموغرافية

(1) العمر .....

(2) ما هو اعلى مستوى تعليمي حصلت عليه ؟

اقل من ثانوي ثانوي مهني 

(3) انتمائك الديني / المذهبي

مسيحي كاثوليكي مسيحي بروتستانتى مسيحي اورثوذكسي غير متدين / علماني مسلم سني مسلم شيعي درزي مسيحي ماروني جواب آخر 

(4) انت تشارك في المراسم الدينية

اكتر من مرة في الاسبوع مرة واحدة في الاسبوع

مرة واحدة في الشهر

في المناسبات الدينية الرئيسية

جواب آخر

(5) هل كنت / لم تزل عضوا في الكشاف

نعم  كلا

\* اذا كان جوابك (نعم)، اكمل الاجابة على الاسئلة التالية (من 6-8)

\* اذا كان جوابك (كلا)، انتقل الى الجزء الثاني من هذه الاستمارة.

(6) الى اي جمعية كشفية انتميت/ تنتمي

(7) ما هي الفترة الزمنية التي قضيتها في الكشاف ؟

سنة اشهر

سنة واحدة

اكثر من سنتين

(8) برأيك، ما هي اهمية انتمائك الى الكشاف في حياتك؟

غير مهم

مهم جدا

لا اعلم



3	4	8- انا اقوم بجهد اضافي احيانا لاحصل		1	2
		على علامات افضل			
3	4	9- انا لست مستعدا لاستلام وظيفة ما		1	2
		بدوام جزئي			
3	4	10- لدي مهارات كافية للقيام بعمل		1	2
		جيد			
3	4	11- انا اعرف انني استطيع النجاح في		1	2
		العمل			
1	2	3	4	12- ممكن ان اقبل باي فرصة عمل	
				للحصول على المال	
1	2	3	4	13- انا معجب بالذين يتدبرون معيشتهم	
				بدون عمل	
1	2	3	4	14- العمل الجيد هو الذي يؤمن المال	
				الوفير	
1	2	3	4	15- العمل بجد واجتهاد لا بد ان يثمر	
				في نهاية المطاف	
1	2	3	4	16- معظم الوظائف مملة ومضجرة	
1	2	3	4	17- تقع مسؤولية عدم النجاح في	
				الحياة على الشخص نفسه	
1	2	3	4	18- حتى مع تحصيل مستوى علمي	

جيد، سيكون من الصعب ان احصل على

عمل جيد

19- امثالي ليس لديهم الكثير من

فرص النجاح

20- امكانية وقوعي في مشكلة ما

هي مجرد صدفة

21- الى حد كبير، يمكنني ان اقرر

ما سيحدث في مستقبلي

22- سوف اتخرج من الثانوية

23- سوف اتخرج من الجامعة

24- سوف احصل على الوظيفة

التي اريدها

25- انا اثق بقدرتي على تجنب

المشاكل

26- اذا شتمني احدهم، فانني

سوف اتجاهله وامضي

27- لست بحاجة للدخول في

القتال او العراك، هناك طرق

بديلة للتعامل مع الغضب

28- يمكنني التواصل بشكل

جيد مع معظم الناس

أنت تردد العبارات التالية على النحو التالي:

	(1) ابدأ	(ب) نادراً	(ج) احيانا	(د) في اغلب الاحيان	(هـ) دائماً
1 - يمكنني الاستماع للآخرين	أ	ب	ج	د	هـ
2. - قد يمتلك الاولاد الذين لا أحب، أفكار جيدة	أ	ب	ج	د	هـ
3. - أتضايق عندما يحزن اصدقائي	أ	ب	ج	د	هـ
4. - أثق بمن هم ليسوا اصدقائي	أ	ب	ج	د	هـ
5. - أنا حساس تجاه مشاعر الآخرين حتى من هم ليسوا اصدقائي	أ	ب	ج	د	هـ