

## Altruism among University Students: A Study of Transactional Analysis Ego States and Life Satisfaction

Durmus Ummet<sup>1</sup>, Halil Eksi<sup>2</sup> and Mustafa Otrar<sup>3</sup>

*Faculty of Atatürk Education, Marmara University, Istanbul, 34722, Turkey*

*E-mail: <sup>1</sup><dummet@marmara.edu.tr>, <sup>2</sup><h.eksi70@gmail.com>, <sup>3</sup><motrar@marmara.edu.tr>*

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**ABSTRACT** The aim of this study is to determine whether or not university students' Transactional Analysis (TA) Ego States and life satisfaction predict their altruistic behaviors. Accordingly, *Altruistic Behavior Scale*, *TA Ego States Scale* and *The Satisfaction with Life Scale* were used in data collection. The sample of the study consisted of 299 female and 237 male students studying at the different faculties of Marmara University. Results indicated that only the Nurturing Parent Ego States, one of the TA Ego States, significantly predicted the altruistic behavior of students, whereas the other ego states had no effect on prediction. Also, life satisfaction of students predicted their altruistic behaviors. When Nurturing Parent Ego States and life satisfaction came together, they strongly predicted altruistic behavior. Finally, this study discusses the collected data within the related literature, and some suggestions are put forth.

### INTRODUCTION

All interactions with other people that human beings have had from birth until death are shaped by the family first, and then environmental variables, and these shaped interactions are reflected to others concentrating on each person differently. It is obvious that there are many different factors lying at the core of these differentiations, yet the notion of "value" is seen as one of the most important. Many researchers define "value" in different ways. Schwartz (1996) defines value as criteria used by people for evaluating other people, including themselves, and for selecting actions and legitimizing those actions.

According to Schwartz and Bilsky (1987), values are beliefs. However, these beliefs cannot be completely objective and separated from feelings; when they become active, they intertwine with feelings. Being a fairly important notion in both human life and society, values have meanings when they are altered into behaviors and reflected to others. Altering these values into behaviors result in the notion of pro-social be-

havior. Therefore, it is highly important to examine pro-social behaviors both for societies and individuals. The value of thinking of others, which is characterized by pro-social behaviors, is a phenomenon that is developed as the result of interaction of individuals with their environment, especially with their family or school environment (Haski 2009). Carlo et al. (2001) classified pro-social behaviors into four categories: altruistic, compliant, emotional, and public. Altruistic pro-social behaviors are voluntary actions that are performed according to internalized norms, which are based on the principle of helping others, with the motive of caring about the needs and well-being of other people stemming from feelings of sympathy.

Mateer (1993) described altruism as a form of behavior that consists of goodness and benefits to others without expecting any kind of reward. Leeds (1963) describes altruism as a behavior that is beneficial to at least one person, performed voluntarily, with no immediate reward sought for performing the behavior. Altruism as a notion has various definitions. The value of helping and sharing reciprocally is defined as altruism. Altruism includes many pro-social behaviors such as helping, taking on responsibilities, and donating. Although help given for reciprocity and cooperation for profit-making are defined as pro-social behaviors, they are not altruistic behaviors. That is, although helping behaviors performed for reciprocity affect the other party positively, they are not identified as altruistic behaviors (Akbaba 1994; Gints et al. 2003).

*Address for correspondence:*

Dr. Durmus Ummet  
Faculty of Atatürk Education,  
Department of Psychological  
Counseling and Guidance,  
Marmara University,  
Göztepe Campus, Istanbul, Turkey  
*Telephone:* +905052947907  
*Fax:* 0216 338 80 60  
*E-mail:* dummet@marmara.edu.tr

As a pro-social behavior, personality traits play an important role in altruistic behavior, especially in unplanned and long-term helping behavior (Graziano and Eisenberg 1997). Transactional Analysis Theory is an important theory that explains an individual's personality traits. Berne (1964) asserted that three ego states form personality traits: Parent, Adult, and Child Ego States. Under certain circumstances, people behave according to one of these ego states. For instance, sometimes an individual communicates with other people by thinking and acting like parents, adults, or children. Each ego state has distinctive language, attitudes, emotion, and behavior associated with it. Even though an individual feels one of these ego states under certain circumstances, many individuals mostly feel one (or two) ego states. This ego state(s) is defined as the "dominant ego state". Since every person has a different and independent personality, the five ego states; Critical Parent, Nurturing Parent, Adult, Free Child, Adapted Child, function at different levels of amount and balance in every person (Ari 1989; Alisinanoglu 1995).

Another issue which needs to be pointed out in altruistic behavior of the individual is life satisfaction. The question of the interaction between one's relationship with other individuals and the satisfaction one gets from life or the communication one builds with the help of life satisfaction is another prominent problem in this survey. It has been thought that life satisfaction increases pro-social behaviors, motivates a person to put in effort for other people and to contribute to other individuals' lives, and to do all this without looking for personal benefits whatsoever, which increases the individual's sense of contentment. The concept of life satisfaction, which was put forward for the first time by Neugarten in 1961, is a state or a result obtained from comparing what people expect (what do they want) and what people possess (what do they have). It includes cognitive judgments and evaluations in respect to life in general. Life satisfaction is one of the most important factors affecting the mental health and social relationships of the individual. When life satisfaction is mentioned, one should understand overall satisfaction in life, not a satisfaction regarding a specific situation (Diener 1984; Neugarten et al. 1961; Özer and Karabulut 2003). In conducted studies, it was stated that life satisfaction, which is the cognitive side

of subjective well-being, was identified with obstacles in daily life, financial situations, life events, individual objectives, personal characteristics, and other such factors (Diener and Seligman 2004; Rask et al. 2002).

According to other researches like, Seligman and Mather (2002), there is a mutual decisiveness between altruism and life satisfaction. Their studies explored whether altruism brings about life satisfaction, or whether feeling happier pushes one to think about others. Some of the students they interviewed stated that they felt much happier as they helped, and some stated that they displayed behaviors connected to helping others depending on how happy they felt. Carlson and Miller also asked 21 university students in which emotional state they display behaviors connected to helping others, and from among the answers 'angry,' 'unhappy,' and 'happy', participants expressed that they were more likely to perform a helping behavior when they were happy. Lacerata and Macis (2008), in the qualitative surveys they conducted with blood donors, asked participants when they participate in voluntary activities the most. The most common response given was that whenever they felt at ease, both materially and spiritually, they were more likely to perform pro-social behaviors. In his survey with people who struggle with schizoid personality disorder, schizophrenia, physical ailments, and people with no psychological or physical problem at all, Colarelli (2009) also showed that the most altruistic group of people were those who did not suffer from any problems.

The communication an individual establishes with others can be identified as the reflection of his or her personality, and our behaviors are affected by our perception of life and satisfaction with life in a parallel way. It is not possible to avoid the teachings of our family upbringing, which then form the doctrines of a culture when developing our attitudes and behaviors towards people. Each person is the offspring of their own culture and cannot be explained by other cultures' doctrines or discourses. In this context, an Altruistic Behavioral Scale that suits Turkish culture was developed within this survey. Examining the altruistic behaviors of university students within the context of Transactional Ego states and life satisfaction are the primary objectives of this study. Within the scope of these objectives, each sub-dimension of altruistic be-

haviors of the students (participating in voluntary activities, financial aid, aid under traumatic situations, aid to patients and the elderly, aid based on physical strength, aid in the educational process, aid based on intimate feelings) is covered within the context of their TA Ego States and life satisfactions.

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The sample group of the study consisted of 299 female and 237 male students, or 536 students in total, studying at different faculties of Marmara University. The average age of the students was  $\bar{x}=20.9$  (Table 1).

### Data Collection Tools

#### *Altruistic Behavior Scale*

An Altruistic Behavior Scale, developed by the researcher, was used to determine the students' altruistic behaviors. 584 students studying at Marmara University were interviewed for the study. A 5-point scale type was used for the interview (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree). Exploratory factor analysis was used for the validity process of the test. The results of the factor analysis showed that a 38-item scale was accumulated into seven sub-dimensions (Participating in Volunteer Activities, Financial Aid, Aid Under Traumatic Situations, Aid to Elderly People or Patients, Aid Based on Physical Strength, Aid in the Educational Process, Aid Based on Intimate Feeling). All sub-dimensions were grouped logically. In studying the validity of the scale, inter-

nal consistency was measured separately for every factor with the following results: 0.815 for participation in volunteer activities, 0.776 for financial aid, 0.757 for aid under traumatic situations, 0.760 for aid to elderly people and patients, 0.743 for aid based on physical strength, 0.696 for aid in the educational process, and 0.659 for aid based on intimate feelings. The total internal consistency of the scale (Cronbach Alpha) was calculated at 0.931.

#### *Transactional Analysis Ego States Scale*

The Ego States Scale was developed by Williams (1978) and adapted to Turkish culture by Ari (1989). The scale is a list consisting of 95 adjectives that characterize an individual. Participants were asked to select the adjectives that describe them and that they regard as a part of their personality by a free selection technique. Each adjective on the scale had five different values ranging from 0 to 4 for each ego state. Five different total scores (Nurturing Parent, Critical Parent, Adult, Free Child, Adapted Child) were found by adding the value of each adjective for the five ego states. The test-retest validity study was conducted on the Turkish version of the scale and between these two tests, an  $r=0.87$  approximate reliability coefficient was found.

#### *The Satisfaction with Life Scale*

In the study, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Deiner et al. (1983) was used for measuring individuals' life satisfaction. The scale is a five-item and seven-point (1: Strongly disagree – 7: Strongly Agree) Likert-type. Deiner found the reliability of the scale to be Cronbach Alpha=.87 in the original study. Criterion-related validity was found to be .82. This

**Table 1: Data about the structure of participants**

| Faculties  | Gender |       |      |      | Total |      |
|--|--------|-------|------|------|-------|------|
|  | Female |       | Male |      | n     | %    |
|  | n      | %     | N    | %    |       |      |
| Faculties of Education (Atatürk Faculty of Education and Technical Teaching) | 106    | 35.5  | 96   | 40.5 | 202   | 37.7 |
| Faculty of Theology  | 83     | 27.8  | 29   | 12.2 | 112   | 20.9 |
| Faculty of Health Sciences (Nursing, Midwifery, Medicine Faculties)          | 90     | 30.1  | 51   | 21.5 | 141   | 26.3 |
| Faculty of Engineering   | 20     | 6.7   | 61   | 25.7 | 81    | 15.1 |
| Total  | 299    | 100.0 | 237  | 100  | 536   | 100  |

criterion was applied to the Turkish population by Yetim (1993). In this study, the reliability of the scale was found to be fairly high at  $\text{Alpha}=.86$  and test-retest reliability was found to be  $.73$  (Yetim 2001).

### Data Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis was used in order to determine whether or not the university students' transactional analysis ego states predict their altruistic behaviors (with its sub-dimensions), Simple Regression Analysis was used to evaluate whether their life satisfactions predict

their altruistic behaviors, and Hierarchical Regression Analysis was used to test whether their TA Ego States and Life Satisfaction scores predict their altruistic behavior scores.

## RESULTS

### 1. Findings on Whether Students' TA Ego States Predict Their Altruistic Behaviors

The results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to determine whether or not students' TA Ego States predict their altruistic behaviors are stated in Table 2.

**Table 2: The results of multiple regression analysis regarding ta ego states of university students predicting their altruistic behavior**

| To be predicted                       | Which predicts | B       | Standard error | B     | t        | R    | R <sup>2</sup> | F         |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------|----------------|-------|----------|------|----------------|-----------|
| Total Altruism Score                  | Critical pa.   | 33.966  | 20.270         | .407  | 1.676    | .255 | .065           | 7.366***  |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 71.483  | 21.795         | .583  | 3.280*** |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adult          | -.286   | 21.794         | -.002 | -.013    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Free child     | 14.068  | 20.347         | .172  | .691     |      |                |           |
| Participating in Voluntary Activities | Critical pa.   | 30.813  | 35.742         | .212  | .862     | .197 | .039           | 4.285***  |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 81.710  | 38.431         | .383  | 2.126*** |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adult          | -25.032 | 38.430         | -.083 | -.651    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adapted child  | -21.098 | 37.198         | -.107 | -.567    |      |                |           |
| Financial Aid                         | Free child     | -3.816  | 35.878         | -.027 | -.106    | .249 | .062           | 7.005***  |
|                                       | Critical pa.   | 39.025  | 28.966         | .328  | .328     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 86.995  | 31.145         | .498  | .498***  |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adult          | 8.207   | 31.144         | .033  | .033     |      |                |           |
| Aid Under Traumatic Situations        | Adapted child  | 20.449  | 30.145         | .126  | .126     | .195 | .038           | 4.117     |
|                                       | Free child     | 26.936  | 29.076         | .231  | .231     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Critical pa.   | 6.507   | 25.486         | .063  | .255     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 39.600  | 27.403         | .261  | 1.445    |      |                |           |
| Aid to Elderly People/Patients        | Adult          | -5.611  | 27.402         | -.026 | -.205    | .209 | .044           | 4.843     |
|                                       | Adapted child  | -8.666  | 26.523         | -.062 | -.327    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Free child     | 3.677   | 25.582         | .036  | .144     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Critical pa.   | -4.192  | 18.722         | -.055 | -.224    |      |                |           |
| Aid Based on Physical Strength        | Nurturing pa.  | 18.304  | 20.131         | .164  | .909     | .278 | .077           | 8.855***  |
|                                       | Adult          | -23.397 | 20.130         | -.148 | -1.162   |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adapted child  | -17.823 | 19.485         | -.172 | -.915    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Free child     | -21.366 | 18.793         | -.286 | -1.137   |      |                |           |
| Aid in Educational Process            | Critical pa.   | 18.524  | 22.865         | .195  | .810     | .255 | .065           | 7.366***  |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 60.399  | 24.585         | .434  | 2.457**  |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adult          | -20.916 | 24.584         | -.107 | -.851    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adapted child  | -4.781  | 23.796         | -.037 | -.201    |      |                |           |
| Aid Based on Intimate Feeling         | Free child     | -4.805  | 22.951         | -.052 | -.209    | .296 | .088           | 10.171*** |
|                                       | Critical pa.   | 33.966  | 20.270         | .407  | 1.676    |      |                |           |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 71.483  | 21.795         | .583  | 3.280*** |      |                |           |
|                                       | Adult          | -.286   | 21.794         | -.002 | -.013    |      |                |           |
| Aid Based on Intimate Feeling         | Adapted child  | .418    | 21.095         | .004  | .020     | .296 | .088           | 10.171*** |
|                                       | Free child     | 14.068  | 20.347         | .172  | .691     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Critical pa.   | 15.285  | 23.261         | .158  | .657     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Nurturing pa.  | 59.073  | 25.010         | .415  | 2.362*** |      |                |           |
| Aid Based on Intimate Feeling         | Adult          | -24.874 | 25.010         | -.124 | -.995    | .296 | .088           | 10.171*** |
|                                       | Adapted child  | 1.840   | 24.208         | .014  | .076     |      |                |           |
|                                       | Free child     | 3.220   | 23.349         | .034  | .138     |      |                |           |

\*\*\* $p<.001$  \*\* $p<.010$  \* $p<.050$

The table reveals that only Nurturing Parent Ego States significantly predicted the students' altruistic behavior total score and sub-dimensions such as participating in voluntary activities, financial aid, aid based on physical strength, aid in educational process and aid based on intimate feeling. It was found that none of the ego states predicted aid under traumatic situations and aid to older people/patients. The other ego states did not significantly predict the altruistic behavior with its sub-dimensions.

## 2. Findings on Whether Students' Life Satisfaction Predicts Their Altruistic Behavior

The results of simple regression analysis conducted to determine whether students' life satisfaction predicts their altruistic behaviors or not are stated in Table 3.

An examination of the table shows that, life satisfaction significantly predicted the students' total altruism score and sub-dimensions such as financial aid, aid based on physical strength, aid in the educational process, and aid based on intimate feeling. However, life satisfaction did not predict participation in voluntary activities, aid under traumatic situations, and aid to elderly people or patients.

## 3. Findings on Whether Transactional Analysis Ego States and Life Satisfaction of the Students Predict Their Altruistic Behaviors

Upon examining the regression analysis conducted to find out whether the students' TA Ego

States alone predicted their altruistic behaviors, it was found that only Nurturing Parent Ego States significantly predicted altruistic behavior. Therefore, only Nurturing Parent Ego State was set at the first place in the hierarchical regression analysis, while personality variance and life satisfaction variance were set at second place. The conducted data is given in the Tables 4 - 11.

An examination of Table 4 shows that, nurturing parent ego state significantly and statistically predicted altruistic behavior ( $F=41.442$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis showed that nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted altruistic behaviors ( $F=24.517$ ,  $p<.001$ ). While Nurturing Parent Ego State by itself explains 7.2 percent of total variance of the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 8.4 percent of total variance on the second phase.

An examination of Table 5 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted participation in voluntary activities, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=13.610$ ,  $p<.001$ ). From the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, it was determined that nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of participating in voluntary activities ( $F=7.914$ ,  $p<.001$ ). While Nurturing Parent Ego State by itself explains 2.5 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing par-

**Table 3: The results of simple regression analysis regarding life satisfaction of university students predicting their total altruistic behavior**

| To be predicted                       | Which predicts | B    | Standard error | B       | t     | R    | R <sup>2</sup> | F         |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|---------|-------|------|----------------|-----------|
| Total Altruism Score                  | Life S.        | .428 | .135           | .135*** | 3.159 | .135 | .018           | 9.979***  |
| Participating in Voluntary Activities | Life S.        | .064 | .036           | .078    | 1.802 | .078 | .006           | 3.248     |
| Financial Aid                         | Life S.        | .074 | .029           | .109**  | 2.523 | .109 | .012           | 6.367**   |
| Aid under Traumatic Situations        | Life S.        | .064 | .036           | .078    | 1.603 | .069 | .005           | 2.568     |
| Aid to Elderly People or Patients     | Life S.        | .026 | .019           | .060    | 1.387 | .060 | .005           | 1.923     |
| Aid Based on Physical Strength        | Life S.        | .067 | .023           | .124**  | 2.897 | .124 | .015           | 8.391**   |
| Aid in the Educational Process        | Life S.        | .054 | .020           | .114**  | 2.651 | .114 | .013           | 7.027**   |
| Aid Based on Intimate Feeling         | Life S.        | .102 | .023           | .184*** | 4.333 | .184 | .035           | 18.777*** |

\*\*\* $p<.001$  \*\* $p<.010$  \* $p<.050$

**Table 4: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their total altruistic behavior**

|                       | Predictor variable | Total altruism |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                    | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent   | 0.072          | 0.072                 | .268 | 6.438 | 41.442*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent   | 0.084          | 0.012                 | .258 | 6.193 | 24.517*** |
|                       | Life satisfaction  |                |                       | .111 | 2.688 |           |

\*\*\* $p < .001$ **Table 5: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior - participating in voluntary activities**

|                       | Predictor variable | Participating in voluntary activities |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                    | R <sup>2</sup>                        | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent   | 0.025                                 | 0.025                 | .158 | 3.689 | 13.610*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent   | 0.029                                 | 0.004                 | .152 | 7.389 | 7.914***  |
|                       | Life satisfaction  |                                       |                       | .063 | 3.537 |           |

\*\*\* $p < .001$ 

ent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 2.9 percent of total variance on the second phase.

An examination of Table 6 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted financial aid, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=30.958$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of financial aid ( $F=17.721$ ,  $p < .001$ ). While Nurturing Parent Ego State by itself explains 5.5 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 6.2 percent of total variance on the second phase.

An examination of Table 7 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted aid under traumatic situations, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=17.597$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of aid under traumatic situations ( $F=9.569$ ,  $p < .001$ ). While Nurturing Parent Ego State by itself explains 3.2 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 3.5 percent of total variance on the second phase.

According to Table 8, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted aid

to elderly people or patients, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=15.634$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of aid to elderly people or patients ( $F=8.354$ ,  $p < .001$ ). While Nurturing Parent Ego State by itself explains 2.8 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 3.0 percent of total variance on the second phase.

An examination of Table 9 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted aid based on physical strength, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=34.348$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of aid based on physical strength ( $F=20.293$ ,  $p < .001$ ). While nurturing parent ego state by itself explains 6.0 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 7.1 percent of total variance on the second phase.

According to Table 10 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted aid in the educational process, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=25.500$ ,  $p < .001$ ). According to the results

**Table 6: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior – financial aid scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Financial aid  |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.055          | 0.055                 | .234 | 5.565 | 30.958*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.062          | 0.008                 | .226 | 7.759 | 17.721*** |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                |                       | .087 | 5.361 |           |

\*\*\**p*<.001**Table 7: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior–aid under traumatic situations scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Aid under traumatic situations |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | R <sup>2</sup>                 | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.032                          | 0.032                 | .179 | 4.195 | 17.597*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.035                          | 0.003                 | .174 | 4.062 | 9.569***  |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                                |                       | .053 | 1.235 |           |

\*\*\**p*<.001**Table 8: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior–aid to elderly people or patients scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Aid to elderly people or patients |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | R <sup>2</sup>                    | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.028                             | 0.028                 | .169 | 3.954 | 15.634*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.030                             | 0.002                 | .164 | 3.839 | 8.354***  |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                                   |                       | .044 | 1.036 |           |

\*\*\**p*<.001**Table 9: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior–aid based on physical strength scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Aid based on physical strength |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | R <sup>2</sup>                 | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.060                          | 0.060                 | .246 | 5.861 | 34.348*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.071                          | 0.010                 | .236 | 5.631 | 20.293*** |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                                |                       | .102 | 2.433 |           |

\*\*\**p*<.001**Table 10: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior–aid in the educational process scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Aid in educational process |                       |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | R <sup>2</sup>             | R <sup>2</sup> change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.046                      | 0.046                 | .213 | 5.050 | 25.500*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.054                      | 0.009                 | .205 | 4.835 | 15.347*** |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                            |                       | .095 | 2.237 |           |

\*\*\**p*<.001

of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of aid in the educational process ( $F=15.347$ ,  $p<.001$ ). While nurturing parent ego state by itself explains 4.6 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 5.4 percent of total variance on the second phase.

An examination of Table 11 shows that, nurturing parent ego state statistically and significantly predicted aid based on intimate feeling, a sub-dimension of the altruistic behavior scale ( $F=40.011$ ,  $p<.001$ ). According to the results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis, it was determined that nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction significantly and statistically predicted the behavior of aid based on intimate feeling ( $F=28.082$ ,  $p<.001$ ). While nurturing parent ego state by itself explains 7.0 percent of total variance on the first phase, nurturing parent ego state with life satisfaction together explain 9.5 percent of total variance on the second phase.

## DISCUSSION

It is demonstrated that only TA Nurturing Parent Ego State has a positively significant predictive effect in total on the altruistic behaviors of the students and in helping behavior based on participating in voluntary activities, financial aid, aid based on physical strength, aid in the educational process, and aid based on intimate feelings. It was seen that in the behaviors of aid under traumatic situations of the students, no ego states have a significantly predictive effect. Also, in the behaviors of aid to elderly people or patients of the students, only Nurturing Parent Ego State has a positive effect which was not at a significant level.

When the obtained data was examined, it was found that only TA Nurturing Parent Ego state significantly predicted the total and sub-dimension altruistic behaviors of the students. This obtained data shows consistency with the scholarly literature and various studies that were conducted. In her study on examining the relation between altruistic behaviors of children and of parents, Bhalotra (2001) found that the altruistic behavior of children increases at a significant level as the altruistic behavior of parents increases, and explained this situation by the fact that children take their parents' affective behaviors as a model for themselves. Nurturing Ego state is based upon parents' nurturing, protective, understanding, receptive, friendly, relevant, faithful, helpful, dependable attitudes and behaviors. These kinds of behaviors are developed and shaped in the process of a child taking his or her parents as a model. Children growing up with these sorts of attitudes and behaviors can repeat the same pleasing attention lines towards their own children and other people; they can be helpful and draw the same defensive borders in the future.

People with dominant Nurturing Ego State, while nourishing the love and respect between people, will try to maintain relationships, and they are perceived as helpful, faithful, responsible people who are likely 'to be consulted' (Akkoyun 1995; Bacanlı 2002; Berne 1964; Dusay 1977; James and Jongeward 1993).

In the study conducted by Alisinanoglu and Köksalin (2000), emphatic ability levels of individuals were examined within the context of their TA Ego states and their genders. According to the results, there was a positive correlation between Nurturing Ego State and emphatic abilities of individuals. Therefore, with reference to the fact that empathy is an important variance in altruism, it can be asserted that the data obtained

**Table 11: The results of hierarchical regression analysis regarding ta nurturing parent ego states and life satisfaction of university students predicting their altruistic behavior-aid based on intimate feeling scores**

| Predictor variable    |                   | Aid based on intimate feeling |              |      |       |           |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|------|-------|-----------|
|                       |                   | $R^2$                         | $R^2$ change | B    | t     | F         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.070                         | 0.070        | .264 | 6.325 | 40.011*** |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase | Nurturing parent  | 0.095                         | 0.026        | .249 | 6.013 | 28.082*** |
|                       | Life satisfaction |                               |              | .161 | 3.885 |           |

\*\*\* $p<.001$

in the present study was expected and parallel to the findings of Alisinanoglu and Köksal (2000). In their study, [Avci et al. \(2013\)](#) reported that there was a positive correlation between empathy and altruistic behaviors.

Looking into further studies on the subject, it can also be observed that there is a relationship between Nurturing Ego state and reliable behavior. In her study, [Gökçen \(2009\)](#) examined whether TA Ego states of social drinkers and alcohol addicts are differentiated or not. The results of the study showed that the group which had the least alcohol addiction point average consisted of people possessing dominant Nurturing Ego states. Therefore, it may be claimed that altruistic behavior, which is a pro-social behavior, is expected to become prominent in individuals whose Nurturing Ego states are dominant.

An examination of the data obtained in the present study showed that life satisfaction levels of university students predicted altruistic behavior. To put it differently, it was observed that as life satisfaction increases, helping behaviors towards people also increase in a parallel way. The data obtained shows consistency with other academic studies. It is difficult, because of human nature, to establish a cause and effect relationship in social sciences such as psychology. As for acquiring behaviors, especially affective behaviors, there is not likely to be only one specific factor involved, nor would it be fair to possess a stern determinist perspective. In this regard, would an individual be happier as they become altruistic, or would one get more altruistic as the life satisfaction they receive increases? In the same framework, [Seligman and Mather \(2002\)](#) interviewed a group of university students. Some students asserted that life satisfaction pushes them to become altruistic, while others stated that they felt happier as they displayed altruistic behavior. Similarly, in [Carlson and Miller's 1987](#) study, a qualitative survey was done by interviewing 21 university students, who noted that they were more likely to perform helping behaviors as they felt happier.

In the study [Hay and Pawlby](#) carried out in 2003, the data they obtained showed that mothers possessing a high level of life satisfaction pass on pro-social behaviors significantly more than mothers possessing less life satisfaction; thus, life satisfaction is efficient in increasing pro-social behaviors. The study of [Lacetera and](#)

[Macis \(2008\)](#) also demonstrates a supportive attribution to this data. Volunteer blood donors were asked how often they participate in voluntary activities, and the responses given showed that participants performed voluntary deeds the most when they were feeling good financially and spiritually. In the study of [Lozada et al. \(2014\)](#), they stated that there was a relation between altruistic behaviors of children and emotional plasticity, safety and positive emotions of them. [Pehlivan and Lafçi \(2014\)](#) asserted that choosing their professions voluntarily is effective considering altruistic behaviors of nurses, in other words, the ones who are contented their professions are more altruistic.

Once again as, an analogous result, [Ngai and Cheung \(2009\)](#) revealed the negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and altruism within their study examining the relationship between emotional exhaustion, altruism, and idealism (desire to do a favor). In other words, as the level of emotional exhaustion increases, the level of altruistic behavior decreases. [Colarelli \(2009\)](#) studied altruism in daily life, altruism under unexpected circumstances, and altruism under life-threatening situations with individuals suffering from schizoid personality disorder, schizoids, people with physical ailments, and people with no psychological or physical problems, determining that individuals who possess the highest level of altruistic behaviors are those who do not have any physical or psychological problem. In the study [Diener et al.](#) conducted in 2009, the social parameters on subjective well-being were examined, and it was observed that as subjective well-being rises, divorce rates drop, while aid to NGOs and a sense of security increases.

Personality is an inherent factor that directly affects being a good person. Some people may look at life optimistically by nature, whereas some maintain pessimism as an ultimate perspective ([Yetim 2001](#)). Many studies have focused on the effect of personality in becoming a better person. It has been found that happy people display four basic personality traits: respect, a sense of personal control, optimism, and extroversion ([Myers and Diener 1995](#)). In the present study, the analysis was carried out by setting TA Nurturing Ego state, which is a personal variance, in the first place of a hierarchical regression, and setting life satisfaction in the second place. When both variances came together, a stronger structure which predicted total altruism and all its sub-dimensional behaviors was discovered.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to analyze whether the TA Ego status of the students and their life satisfaction has led to their altruism behavior. As for the results of this research, it has been found that both the egos of people and their life satisfaction have affected their altruism. Results show that, only the Nurturing Parent Ego States, one of the TA Ego States, significantly predicted the altruistic behavior of students, whereas the other ego states had no effect on prediction. Also, life satisfaction of students predicted their altruistic behaviors. When Nurturing Parent Ego States and life satisfaction came together, they strongly predicted altruistic behavior.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

When it is considered that the topic of the study is restricted, the fact that other researchers should have a look at this issue from different perspectives and should come up with their unique research results will make it easier for people to understand the topic in an efficient way. This has been stated beforehand that the altruism is a value and values are highly influenced by the cultural aspects. Therefore, more unique studies on altruism related to culture should be conducted. As a result of this, so as to present the issue more in detail other researchers should carry out studies by using qualitative or mixed research methods because only these attempts will make the issue more clear and understandable

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