



The Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Relationship Between Childhood Traumas and Prosocial Behaviors of Young Adults

Genç Yetişkinlerin Çocukluk Çağı Travmalarının Bireylerin Prososyal Davranışları ile İlişkisinde Duygusal Zekânın Rolü

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ABSTRACT: *The current study aims to investigate how prosocial behaviors in young adults are influenced by childhood traumas and how emotional intelligence functions as a mediator in this relationship. It demonstrates the critical influence that early trauma experiences have on people's conduct. A total of 238 participants, 153 women and 85 men between the ages of 20 to 30, were involved in the research for the study. The Revised Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale, the Adult Prosociality Scale, the Childhood Trauma Scale, and the Socio-demographic Information Form were filled out by the participants to collect the data. The software IBM SPSS 25.0 was used to analyze the data. First, we looked at the skewness and kurtosis coefficients to see if the scales were appropriate for a normal distribution. The data was then subjected to the Independent Sample T-Test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Pearson Correlation Tests. It was discovered that an individual's prosocial tendency was influenced by their age, gender, and educational attainment based on the sociodemographic data of the participants. The study's findings showed that the degree of young adults' childhood trauma experiences was negatively correlated with their level of adult prosociality and emotional intelligence, while the degree of adult prosociality and emotional intelligence was positively correlated. Regression analysis was also used to establish the mediating role that emotional intelligence has in the association between an individual's prosocial behaviors and childhood traumas.*

Keywords: *Childhood trauma, emotional intelligence, prosocial behavior*

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ÖZET: Çocukluk çağı travma deneyimlerinin bireylerin davranışları üzerinde önemli etkileri olduğu bilinmektedir. Mevcut araştırmanın amacı çocukluk çağı travmalarının genç yetişkinlerin olumlu sosyal davranışları ile ilişkisini ve bu bağlamda duygusal zekânın aracılık rolünü incelemektir. Araştırmanın amacı doğrultusunda, 20-30 yaş arası 153'ü kadın, 85'i erkek olmak üzere toplam 238 kişi araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Veriler katılımcılardan, Sosyo-demografik Bilgi Formu, Çocukluk Travması Ölçeği, Yetişkin Sosyallik Ölçeği ve Revize Edilmiş Schutte Duygusal Zekâ Ölçeği yoluyla elde edilmiş ve IBM SPSS 25.0 programıyla analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada, öncelikle ölçeklerin normal dağılıma uygunluğuna bakmak amacıyla çarpıklık ve basıklık katsayıları incelenmiş, ölçeklerin iç tutarlılık analizi yapılmış ve çalışmaya uygunluğu belirlenmiştir. Daha sonra verilere Bağımsız Örneklem T-Testi, Varyans Analizi (ANOVA) ve Pearson Korelasyon Testleri uygulanmıştır. Katılımcıların sosyo-demografik verilerine göre bireylerin cinsiyet, yaş ve eğitim durumunun prososyal eğilimlerini etkilediği tespit edilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre genç yetişkinlerin çocukluk çağı travma deneyimlerinin düzeyi ile yetişkin prososyallik ve duygusal zekâ düzeyi arasında negatif bir ilişki olduğu, yetişkin olumlu sosyallik düzeyi ile duygusal zekâ düzeyi arasında ise pozitif bir ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca bireylerin çocukluk çağı travmaları ile olumlu sosyal davranışları arasındaki ilişkide duygusal zekânın aracı rol oynadığı regresyon analizi ile belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Çocukluk çağı travmaları, prososyal davranış, duygusal zekâ

1. INTRODUCTION

Although the psychology-trauma relationship follows a fluctuating course, interest in the phenomenon of childhood trauma in psychology studies continues to increase both at the theoretical and empirical levels. Childhood traumas, which are common problem around the world, are summarized as situations that include abuse (emotional, sexual, and physical) and neglect, that harm the physical, sexual, and emotional integrity of the child, not by accident, and prevent the development of the body or spirit. (Stoltenborgh et al., 2015). Studies in the literature have indicated that individuals, who have experienced childhood trauma are at higher risk of experiencing psychological problems such as mood and anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and alcohol and substance use disorders (Helvacı Çelik and Hocaoglu, 2018). The field of psychology generally focused on the weaknesses of individuals and the improvement of these aspects, which paved the way for the variables included in the research in the literature to be selected in this direction. As an example, studies investigating childhood traumas have generally focused on the role of traumas in exacerbating negative outcomes, and it has not been given much space to reveal the effects on positive social behaviors, which are examples of positive aspects in the functioning of the individual (Yu et al., 2020). Positive social behaviors, also known as prosocial behaviors, are defined as a wide range of actions that are done voluntarily, aimed at helping others, including a series of emotional and behavioral elements such as empathy, sympathy, compassion, concern, comfort, helping, sharing, cooperation, volunteering, and donating (Radke-Yarrow et al., 1983). The characteristic of prosocial behavior is that aid is given purposefully and intentionally to provide benefits and is completely voluntary. Studies have positively associated prosocial behaviors with social skills, self-esteem, academic success, community service behaviors, and developing resistance to stress (Caprara et al. 2005; Laible et al., 2004; Raposa et al. 2016). Additionally, researchers have generally examined positive factors when explaining prosocial behavior. For example, the socialization process, personal needs such as self-improvement (Omoto and Snyder, 1995), and empathy have been examined as factors that may be the source of prosocial behavior. Suggestions have been made that negative factors such as traumatic life events may also be related to the tendency to show prosocial behavior (Vollhardt, 2009). Limited research in the literature reveals that childhood traumatic experiences have negative effects on individuals' prosocial behaviors (Prino and Peyrot, 1994; Yu et al., 2020). According to Smith and Lazarus (1990), stressors like abuse throughout childhood elicit a range of unfavorable feelings, which in turn influence an individual's conduct. Varying childhood traumas may have varying effects on prosocial behavior tendencies. This could be because different childhood traumas elicit distinct emotional reactions. As a result, emotional factors may mediate the association between childhood trauma and prosocial conduct.

Studies reveal that those who experienced childhood maltreatment have reduced empathy towards others in contrast to those who did not experience trauma (Bock, 2020). The capacity to comprehend and manage stressful conditions may be the adaptive stress response. Emotional intelligence

is the term used to describe this adaptive mechanism. In addition, the fact that empathy skill, which is the basis of prosocial behaviors, is also an important sub-component of emotional intelligence, suggests that prosocial behavior and emotional intelligence are related to each other. Emotional intelligence is defined as an individual's ability to evaluate him/herself and others' emotions, to distinguish emotions, and to use the information obtained from this process to direct the thoughts and actions of other people (Mayer et al., 1999). Negative emotional states and perspectives develop in people who have experienced trauma in childhood. People who have been exposed to childhood neglect and emotional abuse tend to self-harm and use substances, so they have difficulty using and regulating their emotional intelligence (Topal, 2016).

In summary, studies predict a relationship between trauma, prosocial behavior, and emotional intelligence separately. However, as far as I know, there is no empirical study has been found that directly investigates the mediating role of emotional intelligence between childhood traumas and prosocial behavior. It is unknown to what extent emotional intelligence may interact with childhood trauma experience in influencing prosocial behavior propensity to varying degrees among adults. Thus, this study aims to investigate the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between childhood traumas and prosocial behavior tendencies. In addition, the relationships between certain sociodemographic variables and childhood traumas, prosocial behavior, and emotional intelligence will be investigated. In this regard, the research has two main hypotheses: (i) Participants who experienced trauma will show a lower prosocial behavior tendency than participants who did not experience trauma. (ii) Participants' emotional intelligence level will play a mediating role in the relationship between childhood traumas and prosocial behavior tendencies. To conclude, there will be a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and childhood traumas and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and prosocial behavior.

2. METHOD

It is a thesis study that includes a total of 238 adult individuals, 153 of whom were female and 85 were male. Survivors of childhood trauma generally experience a variety of long-term detrimental effects that affect mental health, social relationships, and life goals (Jirsaraie et al., 2019). Using the online form, the non-random sampling technique known as the snowball sampling method was employed as the sampling strategy. Using the snowball sampling technique, reference subjects are chosen based on the study's topic, and it is through these subjects that further subjects are approached. The reason for choosing this method was the difficulty in reaching participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the period when the thesis study was conducted. In addition, T.R. Üsküdar University Non-Interventional Research Ethics Committee (61351342/2019-514) reported that the study is ethically appropriate.

2.1. Data Collection Tools

Sociodemographic Data Form: In the first part of the form, which consists of two parts, there are questions about the personal information of young adults, and in the second part, questions about the information about their parents. It includes demographic data such as age, education, and gender.

Childhood Trauma Scale: Bernstein et al. (1994) improved the scale to reveal the traumatic experiences of individuals when they were exposed before the age of 18. It was translated into Turkish by Aslan and Alparslan (1999). The scale includes 40 different items. As a result of the factor analysis, it was revealed that the scale consists of three sub-dimensions: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. In the content of the scale, neglect was analyzed together with emotional abuse. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.96, and the subscales were found to be between 0.94 and 0.96. There are 15 reverse questions in the scale, and the answer options are 5-point Likert type, as “(1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) very often”.

Emotional Intelligence (Revised Schutte) Scale: Schutte et al. (1998) developed the scale and it was translated into Turkish by Tatar and his colleagues (2011). Schutte's emotional intelligence scale includes 41 items and 3 sub-factors. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the whole scale is 0.82. The sub-dimensions of the scale consisted of optimism/mood regulation, evaluation of emotions, and use of emotions. There are 21 reverse questions in the scale and the answer options are 5-point Likert type “(1); strongly disagree, (2); disagree, (3); no idea, (4); agree, (5); strongly agree”.

Adult Prosociality Scale: Caprara et al. (2005) improved the prosociality scale with 16 items. A high score means that prosocial behaviors are high. There are 15 reverse questions in the scale, and the answer options are 5-point Likert type, as “(1) never, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) usually, and (5) always”.

2.1.1. Statistical Analysis

All statistical analyses were done with the IBM SPSS 25.0 program. In the research, firstly, internal consistency analysis was conducted for Childhood Trauma, Emotional Intelligence, and Adult Prosociality Scales. Then, the personal information of young adults and their parents was evaluated. Preference was given to parametric test techniques based on skewness and kurtosis coefficients. To identify the differences between the two groups, an independent sample t-test was employed. However, in cases where there were three or more groups, analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) analysis was employed. The Pearson Correlation test was utilized to investigate the relationships among the variables. The function of emotional intelligence in the link between young adults' childhood traumas and their prosocial behaviors was examined using regression analysis and the Bootstrap bias-corrected confidence interval (Bootstrap CI 95% CI) approach (Shrout and Bolger, 2002). The analysis's significance threshold was set at $p < 0.05$.

3. RESULTS

The analyses include a socio-demographic profile of the young adults, descriptive analysis for research variables, relationship between research variables, and regression analysis.

The frequency analysis of young adults' gender, age, education, mother/father's living situation, mother/father's cohabitation status, mother's education, father's education, marital status and income were examined. The distribution of personal data of the young adults included in the research is presented in Table 1.

The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 30, with 153 (64.3%) female and 85 (35.7%) male. Young adults were chosen for the study because they had enough time to have elapsed after their childhood traumas to partially fade but still be remembered. According to education distribution, 77.3% of individuals are university graduates. It is seen that 83.2% of the young adults are not married. When their income status is examined, 36.1% of individuals are in the range of minimum wage- 5000 TL.

Table 1. Frequency Analysis of Sociodemographic Data of Young Adults

Variables	Groups	n	%
Gender	Woman	153	64,3
	Man	85	35,7
	Total	238	100,0
Age	20-22	96	40,3
	23-25	89	37,4
	26-30	53	22,3
	Total	238	100,0
Education	Midschool	4	1,7
	Highschool	11	4,6
	University	184	77,3
	Postgraduate+	39	16,4
	Total	238	100,0
Marital Status	Married	40	16,8
	Single	198	83,2
	Total	238	100,0
Socioeconomic Status	Minimum wage and Below	67	28,2
	2000TL -5000TL	86	36,1
	5000 TL-10000TL	46	19,3
	10000TL and above	39	16,4
	Total	238	100,0

The descriptive and internal consistency analysis results in Table 2. were examined. A more accurate approach is to decide on the normality of the distribution by evaluating the skewness and kurtosis values" (Doğan and Başokçu, 2010, s. 65-66). Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) accept that the distribution is a normal distribution when the skewness and kurtosis values are between +1,500 and-

1,500. When the descriptive analysis results in Table 2. were examined; it was determined that all of the variables were within the specified ranges, there were no extreme values provided the assumption of normal distribution, and the applicability of parametric tests was concluded. Considering Cronbach's Alpha values, it shows that the scales are highly reliable (Özdamar, 1999). When the findings obtained from the reliability analysis of the scales were examined, it was concluded that the scales were reliable, young adults gave consistent answers and there was no obstacle to their use in the analysis.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Results

Scale	n	Min.	Max.	Avr.	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Childhood Trauma Scale	238	40,00	115,00	65,76	19,13	1,138	,472	,942
Emotional Abuse and	238	19,00	65,00	32,36	11,85	1,041	,387	,918
Physical Abuse	238	16,00	45,00	27,40	7,12	1,294	,844	,877
Sexual Abuse	238	5,00	7,00	5,46	,70	1,208	,078	,805
Adult Prosociality	238	2,19	5,00	4,24	,57	-,828	,348	,912
Emotional Intelligence	238	95,00	197,00	155,81	18,18	-,346	-,154	,872
Optimism/Mood Regulation	238	59,00	105,00	83,71	9,63	-,160	-,637	,822
Evaluation of Emotions	238	18,00	65,00	48,08	9,66	-,643	,138	,868
Use of Emotions	238	7,00	35,00	24,02	4,92	-,656	,818	,657

The result of the differentiation of sociodemographic data of young adults according to childhood traumas analysis shows that; the total scores of childhood trauma experiences, emotional abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, and physical abuse scores do not differ statistically according to young adults' gender, education, age, and educational status of their parents ($p>0.05$). Childhood traumatic experiences total scores and emotional abuse and neglect scores differ statistically significantly depending on whether the study participants' parents live together ($p<0.05$), and the childhood traumatic experiences and emotional abuse and neglect levels of young adults whose parents live together are lower than young adults in other groups. According to the marital status of young adults, sexual abuse scores differ statistically ($p<0.05$). Single young adults have higher rates of sexual abuse than those who are married. In addition, the income of the participants, and the total scores of childhood traumatic experiences, emotional abuse and neglect, and physical abuse scores differ statistically ($p<0.05$).

The result of the analysis of differentiation of sociodemographic data of young adults according to their prosociality and emotional intelligence scores show that adult prosociality scores of young adults

do not differ statistically significantly according to their parents' living together, their parents' educational status, marital status, and monthly income ($p>0.05$). Adult prosociality scores differ statistically significantly according to the gender of young adults ($p<0.05$). Adult prosociality tendencies of women were found to be higher than men. The result of the analysis has shown that adult prosociality scores differ statistically significantly according to the age of the participants ($p<0.05$). As the age of individuals increases, the prosociality scores increase. Adult Prosociality scale scores differ significantly according to the educational status of the individuals ($p<0.05$), and it was observed that the prosociality levels of young adults with a master's degree and above were higher than those with a university or lower education level.

The emotional intelligence scores of young adults do not differ statistically significantly according to their age, education level, living together with their parents, educational status of their parents, marital status, and monthly income ($p>0.05$). In addition, the scores of emotional intelligence and use of emotions differ statistically significantly according to the gender of young adults ($p<0.05$). Women's levels of adult prosociality, emotional intelligence, and use of emotions are higher than men's. However, the tendency of optimism/mood regulation and evaluation of emotions do not differ statistically ($p>0.05$).

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results

		1	2	3
Childhood Trauma	C.C.	1	-,200**	-,345**
	p		0,002	0,000
Adult Prosociality	C.C.		1	,479**
	p			,000
Emotional intelligence	C.C.			1
	p			

** $p<0.001$

As shown in Table 3., there is a negative low correlation between prosociality and childhood experiences and a negative moderate correlation between emotional intelligence and the level of childhood traumatic events of young adults ($p<0.05$). There is a moderate positive correlation between the adult prosociality level and the emotional intelligence level of young adults ($p<0.05$).

According to the results of the linear regression analysis to determine the effect of childhood traumas on emotional intelligence; firstly, this model is statistically significant, and childhood traumas can explain 11.9% of the variance of emotional intelligence ($R^2=.119$; $F(1,236)=31,859$, $p<0.001$). It was found that childhood traumas predicted emotional intelligence negatively and statistically significantly ($\beta=-0.345$, $t=-5.644$, $p<0.001$). The childhood trauma level of the young adults who make up the study group negatively affects their emotional intelligence levels. In addition, when other variables are held

constant, a one-unit increase in the childhood trauma level of young adults will result in a decrease of 0.328 in the emotional intelligence level.

Secondly, the results of the regression analysis performed to determine the effects of childhood traumas on prosocial behaviors; it is understood that this model is statistically significant and can explain 4.0% of the prosocial behavior variance of childhood traumas ($R^2=.40$; $F(1,36)=9.854$, $p=0.002$). According to the results found; childhood traumas predicted prosocial behaviors negatively and statistically significantly ($\beta=-0.200$, $t=-3.139$, $p=0.002$). In other words, the childhood trauma level of the young adults who make up the study group negatively affects their prosocial behavior levels. Also, holding other variables constant, a one-unit increase in the childhood trauma level of young adults will result in a 0.006 decrease in the level of prosocial behavior.

Thirdly, the results of the regression analysis to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on prosocial behaviors; it is seen that this model is statistically significant and emotional intelligence can explain 22.9% of the variance of prosocial behaviors ($R^2=.229$; $F(1.236)=70.157$, $p<0.001$). According to the results found; emotional intelligence predicted prosocial behaviors positively and statistically significantly ($\beta=0.479$, $t=8.376$, $p<0.001$). The emotional intelligence level of the young adults who make up the study group positively affects their prosocial behavior levels. Holding other variables constant, a one-unit increase in young adults' emotional intelligence will result in a 0.015 increase in prosocial behavior.

To evaluate the findings to determine the role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between childhood traumas of young adults and individuals' prosocial behaviors, a three-stage regression analysis recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) was conducted.

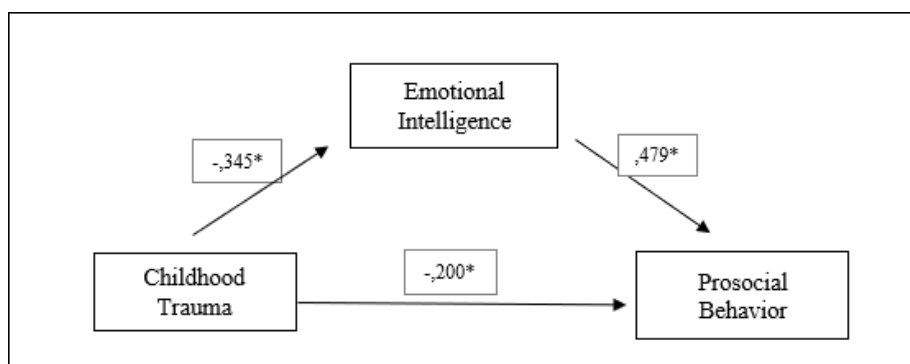
This technique states that "the independent variable must affect the mediating variable" as the first stage. "The independent variable must affect the dependent variable" is the second stage. It states that when the mediator variable is incorporated into the second step of the regression analysis, it can be regarded as partial mediation if the independent variable's regression coefficient on the dependent variable falls, and it can be regarded as full mediation if the independent variable's effect on the dependent variable vanishes. All the requirements are satisfied, and it is evident that the mediator variable affects the dependent variable, but it must have a sizable impact on the latter. Table 4. displays the results of the regression model that was developed once all three phases' requirements were satisfied.

Table 4. The impact of young adults' childhood traumas and emotional intelligence on prosocial behavior

	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			F	R ²
	B	Standard error	β	t	P		
Constant	2,038	0,361		5,648	,000		
Childhood Trauma (X_{CT})	-0,001	0,002	-0,40	-0,654	0,514	1,135	35,207**
Emotional Intelligence (X_{EI})	0,015	0,002	0,465	7,627	,000	1,135	
Dependent variable: Prosocial Behaviors (Y_{PB})							
Impact Examined	B	SE	Preloading		YD %95 CI		
			Lower Limit		Upper Limit		
ChildhoTraumas	-,001*	0,001	-0,004		-0,002		
Prosocial Behavior							
IndirectEffect(ab)	-0,005	0,001	-0,007		-0,002		
mediatorEmotional Intelligence							

** p<0.001 / * p<0.05, VWF: Variance Width Factor

The findings for the regression model created are presented in Table 4. Based on the findings of the regression analysis to ascertain how emotional intelligence and early trauma affect prosocial behaviors; it was found that this model was statistically significant and could explain 23.1% of the variance of childhood trauma and emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviors (R²=.231; F (2.235) =35.207, p<0.001). Emotional intelligence predicted prosocial behaviors positively and statistically (β =0.465, t=7.627, p<0.001), and childhood trauma predicted prosocial behaviors statistically (p<0.05).



*p<0.05

Figure 1. Mediation analysis coefficients

The second step's regression analysis, which included emotional intelligence, revealed that the impact of early traumas on prosocial conduct had vanished. The association between young adults' childhood traumas and their prosocial behaviors can be fully mediated by emotional intelligence, according to the third stage of the three-stage regression analysis developed by Baron and Kenny (1986). The significance of this mediation effect was tested using the bootstrap technique with 5000 resampling options at a 95% confidence interval (Gürbüz and Bayık, 2018). The results obtained are presented in Figure 1.

4. DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to determine the prosocial behavior tendency levels of young adult individuals with childhood trauma experiences and the mediator position of emotional intelligence in this relationship by associating them with socio-demographic variables.

As a result of the study, a significant relationship was found between the genders of individuals and prosocial behavior. The prosocial behavior tendency was determined to be higher in women than in men. The obtained findings are also compatible with the literature. Carlo and Randall (2002) conducted a study on a newly created multidimensional scale to measure the level of prosocial behavior in late adolescents. As a result of the research, it was found that women have more prosocial behavior tendencies than men. Based on the social role theory, Eagle and Crowley (1986) explained the relationship between gender and prosocial behavior through the roles assigned to women and men. According to this theory, the female gender role encourages caregiving and helping behavior. In addition to the current research, many studies indicate that women are more likely than men to show empathy and emotional support, which are prosocial behavior types, as a result of gender roles. (Aries and Johnson, 1983; Feshbach, 1982).

In the current study, prosocial behaviors and the age variable diverge significantly, and older age is better for prosocial tendency. There are studies in which the obtained findings are compatible with the literature. In the literature, Matsumoto et al. (2016) also conducted a study with commonly used behavioral tasks to measure prosocial behaviors in participants aged 20-59 years. As a result of the research, it was concluded that age was positively associated with pro-social behavior. The increase in the probability of exhibiting prosocial behavior as individuals get older is explained by the individual learning hypothesis. According to the individual learning hypothesis, it is known that individuals directly or indirectly observe the positive results of exhibiting prosocial behavior as a consequence of life experiences that accumulate with age, and as a result, they become more prone to prosocial behaviors as they get older (Matsumoto et al., 2016). As a result of the study, it was concluded that the adult prosociality scores differed statistically according to the education of the individuals and the prosocial behavior tendency increased as the education level increased. Consistent with the results of the research, Bekker and Graaf (2005), in their study investigating the various effects of education, found that people with higher levels of education are more likely to exhibit prosocial behavior than those with lower

education levels. In addition, positive social behaviors such as volunteering, donating blood, and organ donation were more common in individuals with higher education levels. It is thought that education is effective in promoting prosocial behaviors, improving the individual's personal qualities, improving communication skills, and facilitating access to channels that reinforce positive social behaviors (Bekker and Graaf, 2005).

According to the findings of the study, there is no relationship between the participants' marital status, income level, parents' educational status, and living separately or together with their prosocial behavior tendencies. In literature, these sociodemographic variables, which were not found to have any relationship with prosocial behavior in the current study, were also found to have a relationship between them in further studies. (Matsumoto et al. 2016; Jackson et al. 1995; Bandy and Wilhelm, 2012). While these differences seen in the studies explain the prosocial behavior tendencies, it suggests that there may be other factors such as family dynamics in addition to income level. In the present study, it was concluded that childhood traumas are negatively related to prosocial behaviors, and as the childhood trauma levels of individuals increase, their tendency to show prosocial behavior decreases. In addition, it was determined that childhood traumas predicted prosocial behavior in a statistically significant negative way. The findings are supported by various studies in the literature. Jirsaraie et al. (2019) conducted a study to reveal whether different variations of early life stress affect the relationship between prosocial behavior and age. The results of the study show that various kinds of early life stress, and exposure to particularly violent people and environments can reduce the tendency of prosocial behavior. In addition, it was concluded that emotional neglect also has long-term negative effects on prosocial behavior. Similarly, Prino et al. (1994) investigated children with a past of physical abuse or neglect in the context of their aggressive, reserved, and prosocial behaviors together with children who have not been abused or neglected. While the lowest level of prosocial behavior tendency was observed in physically abused children, prosocial behaviors were less common in neglected children than in children who had no negative experience. Yu et al. (2020), examined the relationship between childhood traumas and prosocial behavior tendencies with 897 adolescent students and found that maltreatment towards children and prosocial behavior tendencies of adolescents were negatively related. As a result of the study, it was seen that adolescents who have been abused in childhood exhibit less prosocial behavior and that the trauma experienced in the past negatively affects positive behaviors in the long term. Prosocial behaviors often emerge early in life, and children learn to behave appropriately during this period by interacting with their parents (Svetlova et al., 2010). Because children learn prosocial behaviors from their parents in relational ways, it is thought that childhood traumas may be a fundamental factor preventing the development of prosocial behaviors (Luke and Banerjee, 2012). On the other hand, in Canel Çınarbaşı and Doğan's study (2019), different results were obtained from the existing knowledge. According to the results, people who have experienced trauma tend to behave more prosocially. In

addition to this result; post-traumatic growth may play a mediating role in the relationship between post-traumatic stress and prosocial behavior tendency.

In the present study, it was observed that the emotional intelligence levels of the participants without a history of trauma were higher than those who experienced childhood maltreatment. In addition, it was found that childhood traumas predicted emotional intelligence in a statistically significant negative way. In parallel with this result, literature studies on emotional intelligence and emotion regulation and understanding emotion, which are important indicators of emotional intelligence, were examined. Süslü (2020) examined the effects of childhood traumas on emotional intelligence, life satisfaction, and interpersonal communication style of individuals aged 20-45. According to the research findings, there is a significant relationship between childhood traumas and emotional intelligence, and as individuals' childhood trauma reports increase, their emotional intelligence scores decrease. Shipman et al. (2005), on the other hand, examined emotion management skills such as understanding and regulating emotion in neglected children and the effects of neglect on the emotional development of these children. The findings showed that neglected children had more difficulty understanding negative emotions and were less developed in emotion regulation skills compared to their non-neglected peers. In another study by Shipman et al. (2000), the emotion management skills (understanding emotion, and emotion regulation) of 21 sexually abused female participants were examined to determine how the experience of sexual abuse affects emotional development. The findings showed that sexually abused women had a decreased ability to understand and regulate emotion compared to their non-experienced peers. Studies in the literature emphasize the importance of social contexts, such as growing up in an abusive environment, in developing individuals' emotion management skills (Shipman et al., 2000). It is thought that children may believe that it is not right to experience or express various emotions in the environment in which they are abused, and therefore, the development of self-control, including emotion regulation and impulse control, is negatively affected.

In the present study, a positive and statistically significant relationship was found between the emotional intelligence level of individuals and their prosocial behavior tendencies. As the participants' emotional intelligence scores increased, their prosocial behavior scores also increased. In addition, it was found that emotional intelligence predicted prosocial behavior in a statistically significant positive way. There are studies in the literature with similar results. Charbonneau (2002) evaluated 134 adolescent participants who attended a 6-week training camp in his study investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and gender factors and prosocial behaviors. While the prosocial behavior levels of the participants were evaluated by randomly selected peers, their emotional intelligence levels were measured through the emotional intelligence scale given by them. The findings showed that individuals' emotional intelligence levels were significantly related to their prosocial behavior tendencies. In addition, it was concluded that women's emotional intelligence levels and prosocial behavior tendencies were higher than men's. Probst et al. (2017) also examined the relationship between individuals'

emotional level and their intention to provide social support to a distressed person. Research results show that emotion plays an important role in providing support. Researchers suggest that there may be a relationship between emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviors since emotional intelligence is conceptually associated with empathy and empathy is associated with prosocial behaviors (Charbonneau, 2002).

As a result of this research, it was observed that childhood traumas predicted prosocial behavior and emotional intelligence negatively, and as the childhood trauma levels of young adults increased, there was a decrease in prosocial behavior tendency and emotional intelligence levels. Another statistically significant relationship was also found between childhood traumas and sociodemographic variables such as living together with parents and the income level of the individual. A positive and significant relationship was found between prosocial behavior and the emotional intelligence level of individuals. In addition, the gender, age, and education level of the participants were also related to prosocial behavior, and more positive social behavior was observed in women than in men. The emotional intelligence level of young adults differs significantly according to the gender of the individuals. The emotional intelligence scores of women were found to be higher than men. In addition to these, it has been determined by regression analysis that emotional intelligence has a mediating role in the relationship between childhood traumas and the prosocial behaviors of individuals.

Limitations and Suggestions

The fact that the thesis research included only 238 people between the ages of 20 and 30, in 2020, is open to criticism. Including participants from different age groups, in future studies may be beneficial for the generalizability of the results. On the other hand, since the data collection is provided over the Internet for thesis research, it causes uncertainty as to whether the participants correctly comprehended all the survey items. Moreover, the characteristics of post-traumatic growth in the relationship between trauma and prosocial behavior can also be investigated. It is considered important to include this concept more in future research in terms of understanding the motivations of prosocial behaviors and designing intervention programs to disseminate them.

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