

The Role of Altruism and Personality Traits In Explaining Attitudes Towards The Elderly: A Comparative Study on Different Occupational Groups*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the predictor role of altruism and personality traits in explaining the attitudes of candidates with the potential to work with elderly individuals. The sample of the study consists of 1419 university students studying in the programs of psychological counseling and guidance, elderly care and nursing. The study's data were collected using Personal Information Form, Attitudes Towards Older People Scale, Ten-Item Personality Inventory, and the Altruism Scale. The variance described for the dependent variable was 11% for PCG, 8% for elderly care, and 22% for nursing in regression models created for each occupational group. Among the independent variables, altruism level and conscientiousness personality trait are significant predictors in explaining attitudes toward the elderly in all three programs.

Keywords: Altruism, attitudes towards elderly, counselor, elderly care and nursing, personality traits

Yaşlılara Yönelik Tutumların Açıklanmasında Özgecilik ve Kişilik Özelliklerinin Rolü: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma

Öz

Dünya'da olduğu gibi Türkiye'de de nüfus içerisindeki oranı her geçen gün artan yaşlı bireylere hizmet sunan personelin onlara yönelik tutumları, hem hizmet kalitesinde hem de yaşlı bireylerin yaşam doyumları üzerinde belirleyici bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu durum yaşlılara yönelik tutum ile ilişkili olan değişkenlerin belirlenmesi ihtiyacını da beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı yaşlı bireylerle çalışma potansiyeli olan meslek adaylarının yaşlılara yönelik tutumlarının açıklanmasında özgecilik ve kişilik özelliklerinin yordayıcı rolünü incelemektir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu psikolojik danışmanlık ve rehberlik (PDR), yaşlı bakım ve hemşirelik programlarında öğrenim gören 1419 üniversite öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır.

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Çalışmanın verileri Bilgi Formu, Yaşlılara Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği, On-Maddeli Kişilik Ölçeği ve Özgecilik Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Her meslek grubu için oluşturulan regresyon modellerinde bağımlı değişkene ilişkin açıklanan varyansın PDR için %11, yaşlı bakım için %8, hemşirelik için ise %22 olduğu görülmüştür. Bağımsız değişkenlerden özgecilik düzeyi ile sorumluluk kişilik özelliği yaşlılara yönelik tutumları açıklamada ortak anlamlı yordayıcılardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Özgecilik, yaşlılara yönelik tutum, yaşlı bakım ve hemşirelik, kişilik özellikleri, yaşlılara yönelik tutum, psikolojik danışmanlık ve rehberlik.*

Introduction

One of the most distinctive characteristics of today is the increase in the elderly population. One of the most fundamental causes of this is the decrease in the rate of death as a result of improving health opportunities. The increase of elderly individuals in the population has raised many more questions, such as what role should older people play in today's sociological structures, whether their respected status in the past can be preserved, and what their needs are and how these needs could be met (Achenbaum, 2005; Angel & Settersten, 2011). Functional answers to these questions and the steps taken or to be taken in line with these questions have a significant impact on the quality of life and satisfaction of the elderly (Altun & Yazıcı, 2015). The fact that the elderly continue their lives in peace in a community is not only pleasing for the elderly, it is also important for the younger generations to be able to look hopeful to the future (Demir-Çelebi & Yukay-Yüksel, 2014). For this reason, the issue mentioned becomes an issue concerning individuals of all age groups.

The World Health Organization defines individuals whose chronological age is 65 and over as "elderly individuals" (WHO, 2013) and the decrease in the individual's ability to adapt to environmental conditions as "old age" (WHO, 1998). Old age that every individual who will reach by the age of 65, similar to other periods of life, is natural and valid for all people, but it is early or late, problematic or less problematic depending on the hereditary characteristics, nutrition, environmental conditions and cultural efforts of individuals (Yılmaz & Özkan, 2010). One of the natural problems that arise with old age is that older individuals get sick more often and live with chronic conditions. The elderly may encounter chronic diseases such as vision and hearing impairment, sleep disorder, walking problems, dementia, and dementia (Kurt et al., 2010) and mental illness problems such as learning and remembering difficulties, depression, anxiety, personality change, and sensitivity (Altun & Yazıcı, 2015). Additionally, the elderly may also face problems of economic and social cohesion, self-care, intergenerational distance and conflict, elder abuse and neglect (Kurt, 2008), adaptation to retirement, loneliness, and social isolation (Mancılık, 2015). In addition to these problems, the elderly also try to cope with the problem of positioning themselves in the new world order in line with the perspectives of other individuals towards them (Konak & Çiğdem, 2005).

Studies on the status of the elderly (Achenbaum, 2005; WHO, 2021) indicated that the problem of position in society experienced today was not seen as a problem in previous centuries. Cicero (1989), for example, states that older individuals have a respectable place in the moral views of the great religions of the last three millennia and are portrayed as a repository of wisdom. However, it is stated that young people respected the mentoring capacity of older individuals at that time and trusted their experience (Achenbaum, 2005). Today, both health and care and housing needs of elderly people whose status in society has changed cannot be met within the family in many countries, especially in developed and developing countries of the world (Angel & Settersten, 2011) and instead, it is tried to be eliminated with the services provided by state institutions or private institutions. Nursing homes, elderly counseling, elderly solidarity, elderly care and rehabilitation centers are some of these institutions (Gürer et al., 2019). The number of personnel working in these institutions and organizations continues to increase day by day (Tanman-Zıplar, 2015). It is clear that older individuals who are trying to cope with the problems brought about by old age will also be affected by the attitude and behavior styles of the personnel who work in these institutions and organizations that they apply to meet their needs. Attitude is defined as a mental and neural state of readiness that shapes the individual's reactions to objects and situations that he/she is organized through his/her experiences (Bordens & Horowitz, 2008). If we consider the fact that attitudes determine the nature of the behavior, at this point, in order to improve the quality of life of the elderly, it is necessary to determine the attitudes of other people, especially those who serve in or have the potential to do services for the elderly (Gürer et al., 2019; Yıldırım Üşenmez & Kaya, 2021) and to understand the factors that affect them. In this way, it is thought that efforts to increase the quality of life and well-being of the elderly can be contributed.

When the studies on the subject are examined, it is seen that the reasons affecting the attitude of other individuals towards the elderly vary. The socio-cultural structure (Çamur-Duyan et al., 2016; Yılmaz & Özkan, 2010), religion, ideological structure, historical influence (Johnson, 2005), received vocational education (King et al., 2013), experiences with elderly individuals (Mansfield-Green et al., 2015) and gender (Zambrini et al., 2008) are some of the factors that affect attitudes towards the elderly (ATE). In the related studies, it is stated that the reason for negative attitudes towards the elderly is the increase in the number of elderly patients in hospitals in parallel with the increase in their population and the lack of resources in the field of health (Ter Meulen and Ubachs-Moust, 2005) and the perception of elderly as a burden due to the increase in health and care problems and perception of the jobs related to the elderly as an undesired working area (Neville & Dickie, 2014). In addition to these, a limited number of studies conducted in recent years (Aguíyi & Okhakhume, 2012; Diren, 2018; Mansfield-Green et al., 2015; Yazdanian, Alavi, Irajpour & Keshvari, 2016; Yıldırım Üşenmez & Kaya, 2021) looked at the relationship between personality traits and attitudes towards the elderly. Defined as consistent patterns of behavior and intrapersonal processes resulting from the individual itself (Burger, 2016), it is

emphasized that personality plays an important role in attitudes towards the elderly in related studies.

It is seen that different classifications are used to reveal personality traits, and one of the most commonly used is the model of big five-factor personality traits (Şahin, 2017). In this study, personality traits were examined based on the model mentioned. The related model is based on the assumption that differences of individuals will be encoded in all languages in the world. It is argued that these codes will be reflected in the colloquial language as words and that a classification that can include the personality structure of the individual can be formed based on these words (Sommer and Goldberg, 1999). This model is based on a combination of lexical and statistical approaches (Larsen & Buss, 2010). In the model, personality traits are expressed in five sub-dimensions in the form of extraversion, neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. Each personality trait is examined on a two-pronged structure. For example, high extraversion is interpreted as lower introversion at the other end. When the sub-dimensions of the model are analyzed, in particular, it is thought that agreeableness that represents mercy, conscientiousness that represents work ethic, and neuroticism which has a large role in establishing positive relationships with other people, may be directly related to the attitudes of the personnel serving the elderly. It is also estimated that the relationships between the subdimensions of openness and extraversion, which represents individuals' enthusiasm towards new experiences, and attitudes towards the elderly are worth researching.

After the Big Five, another variable that should be mentioned in the study is altruism. It is one of the most important factors that we face in human relations and facilitates the maintenance of relationships in a healthy way (Tekeş & Hasta, 2015). The conceptual definition of altruism in literature was first made in the nineteenth century by Auguste Comte in his work "*Systeme de Politique Positive*" in the form of "*the tendency to live for others*" (Budd, 1956; Bykov, 2017; Mastain, 2006). However, Scott and Seglow (2007) state that altruism in its broadest sense is to protect the interests of *others*. Many studies have been done in different fields to reveal the reasons for individuals' altruistic behavior (Hoffman, 1981; Krebs, 1975; Mastain, 2006). With an evolutionary perspective, Hoffman (1981) states that altruism is an innate trait. Wilson (2000) similarly states that altruism is transmitted by genes and brought about by birth, and bases its evidence on studies of other living things. Psychologists who advocate the learning approach, on the other hand, argue that altruism can be provided to individuals with positive reinforcements and social role-playing methods (Taylor et al., 2003). Monroe (1996) states that the causes of altruism can be explained by factors such as the education the individual has received, the model of the individual's family, and their religious views. In addition to these, different studies (Çiftçi et al., 2022; Ghorbani et al., 2021) have shown that altruism can affect attitudes towards the elderly. As a result of the conceptual examination, it is thought that altruism levels will affect the individual's attitudes towards the elderly

and will have an important role in the services provided to them to improve the well-being and quality of life of the elderly.

In this study, it is aimed to determine the role of altruism, personality traits, age, and willingness to work in jobs related to elderly people after graduation in explaining the attitudes of university students. Presenting the results in a comparative manner according to the departments is also one of the main objectives of the study. Revealing the variables affecting attitudes towards the elderly will enable the quality of the service to be offered and, naturally, the life satisfaction of older individuals to increase. In addition, the study is expected to contribute to the employment policies of the personnel who will work in the service branches for the elderly.

Method

Research Design

This study was conducted using the correlational method within the quantitative research approach. The correlational method provides an opportunity to explain the relationship between variables and predict the results that may occur. In correlational research, researchers attempt to determine the level of relationship between statistical tests and two or more variables (Tekbıyık, 2015) without interfering with the variables (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Johnson and Christensen (2014) state that independent and dependent variables must be quantitative in correlational research.

Participants

The convenience sampling method was used to determine the working group. Convenience sampling is evaluated within non-probability sampling methods. Convenience sampling is a type of method where the researcher can include samples taken from volunteers or people easy to contact (Johnson and Christensen, 2014) when the non-probability sampling is difficult (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

The working group consists of a total of 1419 students who continue their studies at two different universities. Of these students, 1001 (70.5%) are enrolled in psychological counselling and guidance, 272 (19.2%) are enrolled in nursing and 146 (10.3%) are enrolled in elderly care programs. Of the students, 1037 (73.1%) were female and 380 (26.8%) were male. The ages of the students involved in the study ranged from 17 to 41 (Mean=20.28, SS=.042). However, 818 (57.6%) of the participants stated that they wanted to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation and 592 (41.7%) did not want to work in the related field.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form: It was developed by the researchers to determine the demographic characteristics of the students participating in the study. The form

includes questions about gender, age, department, and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation.

Attitudes Towards Older People Scale: It was developed by Kogan (1961). In this study, an adaptation made to Turkish by Duyan and Gelbal (2013) was used. The scale consists of a total of 34 items. In the validity analysis, it was found that the scale showed a two-factor structure. The factors were named respectively “negative attitudes” and “positive attitudes” in accordance with the original form of the scale. For the reliability analysis of the scale, the inner consistency coefficient has been examined. The reliability coefficients were found to be .79 for both sub-dimensions and .84 for the entire scale.

Altruism Scale: It was developed by Rushton, Chrisjohn and Fekken (1981) and adapted to Turkish by Tekeş and Hasta (2015). It is stated that with exploratory factor analysis, it is gathered under two sub-scales (helping: 14 items; philanthropy: 6 items). Internal consistency and test-retest reliability were examined for the reliability analysis of the scale. The internal consistency coefficient was found to be .81 and .70 for the sub-dimensions and .84 for the entire scale. The Test-retest reliability coefficient was .81 and .71 for the sub-dimensions and .83 for the entire scale.

Ten-Item Personality Inventory: The inventory developed by Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann (2003) and adapted to Turkish culture by Atak (2013) was prepared based on the Big Five Factor Personality Model. One of the main reasons why the scale is preferred in research is that it is in a shorter form than other personality scales. Analysis results for internal consistency and test-retest reliability were examined to determine the scale's reliability. The analysis showed that the internal consistency coefficient was .81-.86 and the test-retest reliability coefficient was .87-.89.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was carried out using the SPSS 23.0 program. The information about the research group and other variables of the research were reached using the techniques of descriptive statistics. Field (2013, p. 185) states that it is unnecessary to worry about normality in large samples. Although the sample group of the study was thought to be large enough ($n=1419$), when deciding which statistical technique to use for other analyzes, whether the data were normally distributed or not was examined. As a result of normality tests, it was found to be suitable for parametric procedures, as the coefficients of kurtosis and skewness are between +1.50 and -1.50 (Seçer, 2015).

Multivariate regression analysis technique was used to determine how the variables of altruism levels and big five-factor personality traits, age and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation (dummy variable) explain the attitude towards the elderly. Pearson moments multiplication correlation coefficient technique was used to determine if there are multicollinearity problems between variables without performing regression analysis.

Results

Multivariate regression analysis was used to determine the roles of the variables of altruism levels, big five-factor personality traits, as well as age, and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation in explaining the attitudes towards the elderly (ATE). First, the relationship between the independent variables was determined by examining the Pearson correlation coefficient to see whether there was a multicollinearity problem. The high level of relationship ($r=.90$ and above) between independent variables is expressed as multicollinearity (Pallant, 2016). When Table 1 is examined, the highest relationship between the variables was found to be $.52$ among the variables of conscientiousness, and agreeableness in the elderly care program students. This result reveals that there is not a multicollinearity problem in the established model.

Table 1.
Relationships between ATE and variables

Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
PCG	1.ATE	1						
	2.Alturism	.24**	1					
	3.Extraversiona s-f	.05	.21**	1				
	4.Neuroticism s-f	.05	.07*	.12**	1			
	5.Openess s-f	.05	.11**	.42**	.12**	1		
	6.Conscientiousness s-f	.11**	.1**	.41**	.33**	.30**	1	
	7.Agreeableness s-f	.13**	.14**	.16**	.15**	.23**	.29**	1
	8.Age	-.02	.03	.12**	.03	.07*	.02	-.02
Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Elderly Care	1.ATE	1						
	2.Alturism	.24**	1					
	3.Extraversiona s-f	.05	.11	1				
	4.Neuroticism s-f	.09	.22**	.02	1			
	5.Openess s-f	-.01	-.05	.28**	.14	1		
	6.Conscientiousness s-f	.16	-.01	.24**	.23**	.42**	1	
	7.Agreeableness s-f	.02	.12	.09	.24**	.38**	.52**	1
	8.Age	.20*	.18*	-.07	.14	.10	.10	.09
Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Nursing	1.ATE	1						
	2.Alturism	.36**	1					
	3.Extraversiona s-f	.02	.13*	1				
	4.Neuroticism s-f	.10	.01	-.02	1			
	5.Openess s-f	.17**	.08	.38**	.04	1		
	6.Conscientiousness s-f	.24**	.10	.27**	.24**	.32**	1	
	7.Agreeableness s-f	.11	.17**	.17**	-.02	.11	.35**	1
	8.Age	.20**	.10	.06	.01	.07	.02	-.01

*p<.05, **p<.01, ATE= Attitudes Towards Elderly, s-f= Sub-factor of Big Five Personality Theory.

In the regression analysis, the autocorrelation was examined by the Durbin Watson test and it was found that the values found (PCG=1.907, Elderly Care=2.074, Nursing=2.011) were within the limits of the expected value (1.5-2.5) (Kalaycı, 2010). The model established as a result of the analysis using the enter method was found to be significant for PCG, elderly care, and nursing departments respectively ($F_{(8,977)}=15.480, p<.001$; $F_{(8,132)}=2.490, p<.05$; $F_{(8,254)}=10.410, p<.001$). The variance of the altruism level, the big five-factor personality traits, age and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation which are selected as the predictive variable, in explaining the attitude towards the elderly selected as the criterion variable, is 11% for PCG, 13% for Elderly Care, and 25% for Nursing ($R^2_{PCG}=.11$; $R^2_{Elderly\ Care}=.13$; $R^2_{Nursing}=.25$). The variance explained by the established model for the dependent variable is 11% for PCG, 8% for Elderly Care, and 22% for Nursing ($\Delta R^2_{PCG}=.11$; $\Delta R^2_{Elderly\ Care}=.08$; $\Delta R^2_{Nursing}=.22$). The model summary of partition-based multivariate regression analysis is presented in Table 2 and the coefficients describing the dependent variable are presented in Table 3.

Table 2.

Program based multivariate regression model summary

Program	Model	R	R ²	ΔR^2	ESE	Change Statistics				
						ΔR^2	ΔF	df1	df2	p
PCG	1	.33	.11	.11	13.02	.11	15.48	8	977	.000
Elderly Care	1	.36	.13	.08	12.84	.13	2.49	8	132	.015
Nursing	1	.50	.25	.22	10.47	.25	10.41	8	254	.000

ESE= Estimated Standard Error

Table 3.

Program based multivariate regression for predicting attitudes towards the elderly

Program	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI
PCG	constant	104.73	6.77		15.47	.000	[91,44, 118,02]
	altruism	.22	.04	.19	6.02	.000	[.14, .28]
	extraversion	-.16	.16	-.04	-1.06	.29	[-.46, .14]
	neuroticism	-.06	.17	-.01	-.34	.73	[-.38, .27]
	openness	.004	.18	.001	.02	.98	[-.35, .36]
	conscientiousness	.53	.19	.10	2.7	.006	[.15, .90]
	agreeableness	.25	.18	.05	1.40	.16	[-.10, .61]
	age	-.27	.28	-.03	-.94	.35	[-.82, .29]
WWEG	-5.63	.86	-.21	-6.58	.000	[-7.31, -3.96]	
Program	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI
Elderly Care	constant	79.28	12.620		6.28	.000	[54.32, 104.25]
	altruism	.22	.09	.22	2.53	.013	[.05, .40]
	extraversion	.19	.35	.05	.54	.59	[-.51, .89]

	neuroticism	-.14	.39	-.03	-.37	.71	[-.90, .62]
	openess	-.24	.42	-.05	-.56	.58	[-1.07, .60]
	conscientiousness	.85	.42	.21	2.01	.047	[.01, 1.68]
	agreeableness	-.46	.49	-.10	-.95	.34	[-1.42, .50]
	age	.96	.51	.16	1.88	.06	[-.05, 1.97]
	WWEG	-4.08	3.08	-.11	-1.32	.19	[-10.17, 2.01]
Program	Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI
	constant	58.46	11.81		4.95	.000	[35.20, 81.72]
Nursing	altruism	.33	.06	.32	5.55	.000	[.21, .44]
	extraversion	-.54	.25	-.13	-2.19	.03	[-1.02, -.05]
	neuroticism	.29	.27	.06	1.06	.29	[-.25, .82]
	openess	.73	.31	.15	2.37	.019	[.12, 1.33]
	conscientiousness	.80	.290	.18	2.76	.006	[.30, 1.37]
	agreeableness	-.15	.29	-.03	-.51	.61	[-.72, .42]
	age	1.25	.49	.14	2.57	.011	[.29, 2.21]
	WWEG	-3.07	1.44	-.13	-2.13	.034	[-5.91, -.23]

WWEG= Willingness to Work with Elderly after Graduation, SE= Standard Error, CI= Confidence Interval

When Table 3 is examined, the variables of altruism level ($\beta=.19$, $p<.001$), the personality trait of conscientiousness ($\beta =.10$, $p<.01$) and willingness to work in jobs related to elderly after graduation ($\beta =-.21$, $p<.001$) are found to be significant predictors of PCG program students' attitudes towards the elderly. The variables of altruism level ($\beta=.22$, $p<.05$) and the personality trait of conscientiousness ($\beta =.21$, $p <.05$) are found to be significant predictors of the attitudes of elderly care program students towards the elderly and the variables of altruism level ($\beta=.32$, $p<.001$), extraversion ($\beta = -.13$, $p <.05$), openness ($\beta=.15$, $p <.05$), conscientiousness ($\beta=.18$, $p<.01$), age ($\beta=.14$, $p<.05$) and willingness to work in jobs related to elderly after graduation ($\beta=-.13$, $p<.05$) are found to be significant predictors of nursing program students' attitudes towards the elderly.

Discussion

The main aim of this study was to examine the role of altruism levels and the big five-factor personality traits of candidates with the potential to work with elderly individuals in explaining their attitudes towards the elderly. During the examination, each department was evaluated separately in order to reveal the differences or similarities between the departments. As a result of the analysis, in the three departments included in the sample group, altruism was found to be the strongest predictor in explaining the attitude towards the elderly. This shows that the role of altruism in attitudes towards the elderly is important. When looked at the literature, the number of studies in which altruism is dealt with in conjunction with attitudes towards the elderly is quite limited. For example, a quantitative study conducted in India (Alam, 2010) aimed to determine whether altruism is important in elderly care.

In the mentioned study, it has been proved by scales that altruistic behaviors are still high among the young and old populations. Nevertheless, it is stated that in order to spread altruism, great responsibilities fall to the people who are seen as leaders in society and to the educational institutions. This conclusion supports the findings of the current study. However, Kohara and Ohtake (2011) found that individuals who have altruistic feelings spend higher expenses to meet their parents' needs than those with low altruism levels. Some studies in the literature (Dilmaç & Ekşi, 2012) have shown that the level of altruism and positive attitudes towards the profession is associated with the occupational groups that require assistance. Although it is not directly in the professions related to the elderly, the result related to positive attitudes supports the findings of the current study. It is an expected finding that a positive social behavior such as altruism, expressed as unrequited help, predicts the attitude towards the elderly. However, within the professional groups in this study, the group in which altruism has the highest predictor effect is the nursing department. This result is thought to be due to the different priorities of the students in the research group to find employment in the related professions after graduation according to their departments. As a matter of fact, students studying in the elderly care program are in the first place to consider working in the professions related to the elderly after graduation, while PCG students are in the lower ranks because the employment rates in the relevant field are very low. One of the branches that nursing students can choose equally with each other is the departments related to the elderly.

As a result of the analyses conducted for the main aim of this study, the relationship between the big five-factor personality traits and the attitude towards the elderly and the fact that personality traits have remained weak in predicting students' attitudes is seen as a remarkable result. As a result of the related processes, it was determined that the sub-dimension of conscientiousness from personality traits was a significant predictor in all three departments. While other personality traits do not play a role in explaining the attitudes of PCG and elderly care program students, it was seen that the nursing department students' personality traits of openness and agreeableness significantly explain their attitudes towards the elderly. While these results are similar to some of the studies in the literature, where attitudes and personality traits towards the elderly are examined together, they also differ from others. For example, a study with elderly care workers (Diren, 2018) found that all sub-dimensions of personality traits significantly predict attitudes towards the elderly. Another study (Aguiyi & Okhakhume, 2012) was conducted to reveal the role of five-factor personality traits in predicting attitudes towards the elderly with university students in Africa. In the related study, conscientiousness and neuroticism were indicated in the sub-dimensions of personality with a significant relation to attitudes towards the elderly, while the dimensions of agreeableness, extraversion, and openness did not contribute to the model. This result supports the current study. A study conducted with nurses by Yazdanian et al (2016) found that the personality trait of neuroticism, as well as the agreeableness, are significant predictors of explaining

the attitude towards the elderly. The study's conclusion about the agreeableness sub-dimension is similar to the results reached in nursing department students in the sample of this study.

In their study, Mansfield-Green et al (2015) analyzed the attitudes of individuals towards the elderly according to Cattell's 16-factor personality model, which is evaluated within the distinctive feature personality theories such as the five-factor personality model. The results of the study showed that there was a significant positive relationship between personality traits of warmth, emotional stability, low tension, and attitudes towards the elderly. The results of the present study do not match the results obtained in the emotional stability dimension. It is stated in the literature that individuals with warmth dimension characteristics will have a structure that is loving, wary of others, and caring for other individuals (Şahin, 2017). With these characteristics, it is thought that warmth may be related to agreeableness, which is another name of compatibility in the five-factor personality model. In this respect, it is thought that the results of the study related to this characteristic coincide with the results of the analysis of nursing students in the current study.

Based on these results, it can be interpreted that attitudes towards the elderly have a strong relationship with the personality trait of conscientiousness. In other words, it can be said that these characteristics of individuals who have a positive attitude towards the elderly may result from having a conscientious personality structure. The related study (Şahin, 2017) also examined the attitudes of students towards the elderly based on their religious beliefs and concluded that students with Islamic beliefs had significantly more positive attitudes than those with Christian beliefs. Some of the factors that influence attitudes towards the elderly are reported to be associated with cultural, religious, and ideological structures (Johnson, 2005). It is highly likely that our sample, which is raised within the Turkish-Islamic cultural structure, was affected by this situation. As a matter of fact, Özmen (2013) emphasizes that an important element of Turkish culture is to respect the elderly. As a result of these, it can be said that individuals may feel responsible for older individuals, especially their parents.

In this study, it was observed that the willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation significantly explained the attitudes of undergraduate PCG and nursing students towards elderly people, while it was found that elderly care students had no significant contribution to the model. In studies examining the relationship between nurses' willingness to work with the elderly and their attitudes towards the elderly (Bulut & Çilingir, 2016; Liu et al., 2013), a positive relationship has been identified as in this study. However, there are also studies that found that nursing and medical school students who do not want to work with the elderly after graduation exhibit negative attitudes towards the elderly (Ayoğlu et al., 2014). The results of these studies coincide with the results of PCG and nursing students in the current study. It is thought that the outcome of the elderly care program students in

the current study may be due to the limited post-graduation preferences of the individuals concerned due to the department in which they are studying.

Finally, a positive correlation was found between the age variable and the attitudes towards older people scale scores of the elderly care and nursing students in this study. The main reason for this is thought to be due to the fact that the two departments in question contain courses aimed directly for the elderly in their curricula while the PCG department does not contain these courses. However, as a result of the analysis, age was found to be a significant predictor in explaining only the attitudes of the students in the nursing department. It is thought that the relevant result may have been due to the fact that the elderly care program lasts two years old and the nursing program lasts four years. A study examining the relationship between attitudes towards older people scale scores and students' age (Holroyd et al., 2009) found a positive relationship between age and total scores and found that students' attitudes towards the elderly people also improved positively as their age increased.

In summary, the results of this study showed that altruism level was the most significant predictor of attitude towards older people scale scores in PCG, nursing, and elderly care program students. While the sub-dimensions of extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness from personality traits significantly explain the attitudes of the students of the nursing department, for PCG and elderly care program students, only conscientiousness from five factors personality traits was found to be a predictor. The variables of age and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation have been found to had a positive effect on the attitudes towards older people scale scores of nursing and PCG students. However, it was found that elderly care program students' age and willingness to work in jobs related to the elderly after graduation did not explain their attitudes towards older people scale scores at a significant level. In accordance with the results obtained, programs for the development of altruism and personality traits may be recommended in the pre-service and in-service training syllabus of professional groups that will serve the elderly. Since the willingness to work with the elderly after graduation has a positive effect on the attitudes towards the elderly, it is considered useful to introduce the branches of work related to the elderly and even to offer internship opportunities in the undergraduate programs in the field of nursing and mental health. This study has some limitations. For example, only three occupational groups with the potential to provide services for the elderly were compared. It is considered important to examine the attitudes towards the elderly in different occupational groups in order to increase the quality of life of the elderly. In addition, only pre-service individuals were included in this study. Studies that allow pre-service groups to compare with those within the service can be designed. Finally, carrying out the study only by quantitative methods does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the results. For this reason, different studies can be carried out using mixed research methods in order to be qualitative or more functional.

Conflict of Interest and Ethics Statement

Since the study data was collected before 2020, it is exempt from the requirement to obtain ethical approval. Instead, scientific research permission was obtained from Karadeniz Technical University with letter no. 65975908-929-E.5131 dated 02.10.2017.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Dünya geneline bakıldığında yaşanan en temel durumlardan birinin yaşlı nüfusunda yaşanan artış olduğu görülmektedir. Dünya Sağlık örgütü tarafından 65 yaş ve üzerinde olduğu değerlendirilen yaşlı bireylerin hayattan alacakları doyum kendi huzurları için kıymetli olmakla beraber orta yaş ve genç bireylerin geleceğe dair umutlu bakabilmesi noktasında da büyük önem taşımaktadır. Yaşam süresinin uzaması, çekirdek aile ve bireysel yaşamın tercih edilirliğindeki artış yaşlılara yönelik hizmet sunan kurum ve kuruluşların yaygınlaşmasına sebebiyet vermektedir. Bu bağlamda nüfus içerisindeki oranı her geçen gün artan yaşlı bireylere hizmet sunan personelin onlara yönelik tutumları, hem hizmet kalitesinde hem de yaşlı bireylerin yaşam doyumları üzerinde belirleyici bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu durum yaşlılara yönelik tutum ile ilişkili olan değişkenlerin belirlenmesi ihtiyacını da beraberinde getirmektedir. Yapılan literatür taraması sonucunda bu ihtiyaç bağlamında yapılmış olan çalışmalarda sosyo-kültürel yapı, din, ideolojik yapı, tarihsel etki, alınan mesleki eğitim, yaşlı bireylerle yaşantılar ve cinsiyet gibi durumların yaşlılara yönelik tutumu etkileyen unsurlardan bazıları olduğu görülmüştür.

Başkaları için yaşama eğilimi, karşılıksız yardımseverlik, başkalarının çıkarlarını koruma eğilimi gibi tanımları yapılan özgecilik beşeri ilişkilerin sağlıklı bir şekilde yürütülebilmesi adına en önemli etmenlerden biridir. Bireyin kendisinden kaynaklanan tutarlı davranış kalıpları ve kişilik içi süreçler olarak tanımlanan kişilik de bireylerin temel yaşam alanlarında etkileme ve etkilenme durumlarını belirleyen en önemli unsurlardandır. Kişiliği açıklamak, tanımlamak, dışa nasıl yansıdığını ortaya koymak için ise farklı sınıflandırmalar yapılmaktadır. Mevcut çalışmada beş faktör kişilik kuramı esas alınmıştır. İlgili kuram kapsamında kişilik özellikleri dışadönüklük, duygusal dengelilik, deneyimlere açıklık, sorumluluk ve yumuşak başlılık şeklinde 5 alt boyut bağlamında değerlendirilmektedir. Bahsi geçen her iki değişkenin de bireylerin yaşlılara yönelik tutumunu etkileyeceği düşünülmektedir. Bu bağlamda mevcut çalışmanın amacı yaşlı bireylerle çalışma potansiyeli olan meslek adaylarının yaşlılara yönelik tutumlarının açıklanmasında özgecilik ve kişilik özelliklerinin yordayıcı rolünü incelemektir. Ayrıca yaş ve yaşlı bireylerle çalışma isteği değişkenlerinin yaşlılara yönelik tutum ile ilişkisini incelemek bu çalışmanın alt amacını oluşturmaktadır.

Çalışmada nicel araştırma yaklaşımı içerisindeki tarama ve nedensel karşılaştırmalı araştırma yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın örneklemi psikolojik danışmanlık ve rehberlik (PDR), yaşlı bakım ve hemşirelik programlarında öğrenim gören 1419 üniversite öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların 1037'si (%73.1) kadın, 380'i (%26.8) erkektir. Yaşları 17-41 arasında değişen öğrencilerin yaş ortalaması 20.28'dir. Öğrencilerin 1001'i (%70.5) rehberlik ve psikolojik danışmanlık, 272'si (%19.2) hemşirelik 146'sı (%10.3) ise yaşlı bakım programlarına kayıtlıdır. Son olarak katılımcılardan 818'i (%57.6) mezuniyet sonrasında yaşlılarla ilgili meslek kollarında görev yapmak istediğini, 592'si (%41.7) ise ilgili sahada çalışmak istemediğini belirtmiştir. Örnekleme yöntemi olarak rastgele olmayan yöntemlerden uygun örnekleme yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmanın verileri Bilgi Formu, Yaşlılara Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği, On-Maddeli Kişilik Ölçeği ve Özgecilik Ölçeği kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizi için SPSS 23.0 paket programından yararlanılmıştır. Analiz sürecinde verilerin parametrik işlemler için uygun olup olmadığını tespit etmek amacıyla normallik testlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Bu amaçla hesaplanan basıklık ve çarpıklık değerlerinin normallik şartlarını karşıladığı görülmüştür. Sonraki süreçte öncelikle değişkenler arasında çoklu bağlantı probleminin olup olmadığını tespit etmek amacıyla Pearson korelasyon katsayısına bakılmıştır. Problem olmadığı tespit edildikten sonra kurulan model çerçevesinde yaşlılara yönelik tutumun açıklanma düzeyini ortaya koymak amacıyla çoklu regresyon analizinden yararlanılmıştır. Meslek grupları arasındaki karşılaştırmayı yapabilmek adına ilgili analizler SPSS programının Split File özelliği kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Yapılan korelasyon analizi neticesinde en yüksek ilişkinin yaşlı bakım programı öğrencilerindeki yumuşak başlılık ve sorumluluk değişkenleri arasında .52 olarak bulunduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu sonuç kurulan modelde çoklu bağlantı probleminin

olmadığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu sonucun yanı sıra PDR'ye kayıtlı olan örneklem grubunda özgecilik, sorumluluk ve yumuşak başlılık, yaşlı bakım programı öğrencilerinde özgecilik ve yaş, hemşirelik programı öğrencilerinde ise özgecilik, deneyime açıklık, sorumluluk ve yaş değişkenlerinin bağımlı değişken olan yaşlılarak yönelik tutum ile anlamlı pozitif ilişki içerisinde olduğu belirlenmiştir. Regresyon analizinde oto korelasyon durumu Durbin Watson testi ile incelenmiştir. Bulunan değerlerin (PDR=1.91, Yaşlı Bakım=2.07, Hemşirelik=2.01) beklenen aralık olan 1.5-2.5 arasında olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Enter yöntemi kullanılarak yapılan analiz neticesinde kurulan modelin tüm bölümler için anlamlı olduğu görülmüştür. Her meslek grubu için oluşturulan regresyon modellerinde bağımlı değişkene ilişkin açıklanan varyansın PDR için %11, yaşlı bakım için %8, hemşirelik için ise %22 olduğu görülmüştür.

Bağımsız değişkenlerden özgecilik düzeyi, sorumluluk kişilik özelliği ve mezuniyetten sonra yaşlılarla ilgili işlerde çalışma isteğinin PDR programı öğrencilerinin, özgecilik ve sorumluluk kişilik özelliğinin yaşlı bakım programı öğrencilerinin, özgecilik, dışadönüklük, deneyime açıklık, sorumluluk, yaş ve mezuniyet sonrası yaşlılara ilişkin işlerde çalışma isteğinin ise hemşirelik programı öğrencilerinin yaşlılara yönelik tutumları üzerinde anlamlı yordayıcılar olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulgularının, yaşlılara hizmet sunma potansiyeli olan bireylerin eğitilmesi ve seçilmesinde öne çıkan kriterlerin belirlenmesi/revize edilmesinde fikir verebileceği düşünülmektedir.