

# INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHILANTHROPY LEVEL AND RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENT

<sup>1</sup>MESUT OZTURK, <sup>2</sup>ERCUMEND ERSANL

Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University , Ondokuz Mayıs university  
E-mail: <sup>1</sup>ozturkmmesut@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>ersanli@gmail.com

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**Abstract** - The purpose of this study was to analyse philanthropy level and religious attitude of university students. Descriptive analysis method was employed in this study. Universe of this study consisted on students in Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University, Education Faculty in 2017-2018 academic year. Sample of this study consisted of students in Psychological Counselling And Guidance Department (136), Turkish Education Department (96), and Social Science Education Department (90) selected with purposeful sampling method among the universe. As data collection tool, "Personal Information Form", "Religious Attitude Scale", and "Philanthropy Scale" developed by the researcher was adopted. Data were analysed with Pearson correlation test and Spearman rank correlation test. There was weak, positive, significant relationship between total scores of religious attitude level and philanthropy level of individuals ( $r = .219, p < .01$ ). It was determined that there were weak, positive, significant relationship between disinterestedness and sincerity dimensions of philanthropy and cognitive dimension of religious attitude ( $r = .141, p < .05$ ), love and unconditional acceptance of philanthropy and behavioral ( $r = .186, p < .01$ ), emotional ( $r = .240, p < .01$ ), relational ( $r = .220, p < .01$ ) sub-dimensions of religious attitude, and honesty sub-dimension of philanthropy and behavioral sub-dimension of religious attitude ( $r = .164, p < .01$ ). There was no significant relationship between other variables.

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**Index Terms** - Religious Attitude, Philanthropy, Pro-social Behavior, Attitude

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, humans that can form cities, civilizations, and cultures were slightly unsuccessful to develop positive behaviors towards each other. Philosophers, religious men, scientists have written various works to help humans have an ethical character that unconditionally helps and these people worked to increase positive social behaviors. Altruism, philanthropy, cooperation, friendship, and helping behavior can be given as example to these positive social behaviors [1]. On one side, humans are social beings and humans constantly have a communication need. Communication needed by humans to sustain healthy and happy life style within social environment is necessary to fulfil spiritual and bodily needs. At the same time, forming a social order and healthy execution of social laws and rules is based on communication. One of the biggest problems faced by people is often unsuccessful communication. Although humankind constantly involved in interaction and communication, this communication is often unhealthy. One of the most important reasons for weaknesses in this interaction network can be expressed as insufficiencies in positive social behaviors. Pro-social behavior (positive social behavior) can be defined as intentional behavior for the good of group, socially beneficial and good behavior opposite of no need attitude, and behavior that is beneficial to society or other people [1]-[3].

Some psychologists use helping behavior expression rather than pro-social behavior. Accordingly, pro-social behavior and positive social behavior expressions can be used synonymously [4]. Philanthropy as one of the positive social behaviors means doing work on voluntary basis and without expecting any return. In philanthropy behavior, main motivation is sincerity and sense of sacrifice rather than profit or interest. Philanthropy means willingness, and without any expectations [5]. Şentürk, defined philanthropy as doing well unconditionally, helping someone, doing something for God's sake, and opposite of self-interest [6]. According to Kayıklık, character of people who are non-philanthropist will be dominated by fear. Therefore, author stated that individual in contact will be individuals who act with fear since they fail to handle the events without love. It is also emphasised that this existing fear will create prejudice attitude, and people who live with prejudices will always have a mask on their personalities [7]. Religion concept, as another topic of this study, has various definitions. These definitions have different forms in philosophy, religion science, psychology, and sociology. Reference [8], stated that certain beliefs and application of religion are a structure connected to single ethical society and elements linked to this society. Freud expressed that religion is something that is unproven, an illusion, and delusion [9]. Another definition expressed that a being

transcendence and emotional and physical communication between human who believes this being [10].

We govern our behavior and activities based on our beliefs and attitudes. These behaviors may vary in work life, religious ceremonies, politics, and aggressions. Such important effects of these attitudes indicate that these are important factors to be considered while analysing social behavior of humans [11].

Like in all subjects in daily life, it is natural for humans to have certain attitudes within religious subject. Such attitude could be positive or negative. Individuals reach religious attitude via different level of effects of cognitive development, school, family, friends, religious information, and mass communication tools [12].

Purpose of religion is to add meaning to life and enable people to have a happy life. When these properties are analysed, it can be seen that religion is a subject related with humans. Therefore, religion is a subject and object of attitude. Individuals develop different attitudes for religion and subjects related with religion (worshipping etc.) [13]. Peker explained religious attitude as style of individuals to determine ideas, emotions, and behaviors of religion. This means religion phenomenon of individuals, related information and beliefs (cognitive element), being satisfied with a part or complete religion (emotional element), and behaviors related with religion phenomenon form religious attitude [14].

Various studies showed that positive social behavior (empathy, helping behavior, altruism etc.), religious attitude, and piety levels are related [15]-[19]. Participants of these national and international studies vary between 15-16 years old high school students to undergraduate or doctorate level individuals. Results show that more pious individuals and/or individuals with more positive religious attitudes were at higher level for positive social behaviors.

When all these statements are considered, importance and place of philanthropy in human and social life should be understood. It is known that pleasure from individual and social life are closely related with self-sacrifice without complaining or look for self-interest. Therefore, unhealthy determination of relationship between religious attitude and philanthropy is regarded as a main problem in social psychology and psychology and psychologic counselling areas.

## II. METHOD

### 2.1 Design

Descriptive research method was adopted to analyse to determine relationship between philanthropy levels and religious attitudes of university students for gender and department variables. Descriptive analysis

model analysis existing situation [20].

### 2.2 Universe and Sample

Universe of this study consisted on students in Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University, Education Faculty in 2017-2018 academic year. No incentives were given to students. Sample of this study consisted of students in Psychological Counselling And Guidance Department (136), Turkish Education Department (96), and Social Science Education Department (90) selected among Psychological Counselling And Guidance Department, Science Education, Turkish Education, Social Science Education, Computer Teaching Technologies, Mathematics Education, Fundamental Education, and Special Education departments with purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling enables selecting participants with rich information based on purpose of study and deep research. This method is preferred when researchers desires to work on situations with certain properties or more or multiple special events [21]. Students in Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, Turkish Education Department, and Social Science Education Department among 8 departments in Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University, Education Faculty were selected to compare three different groups studying in social science, grammar and consultancy, and communication skills. Individuals in 3rd and 4th class were preferred. This is because students know literature of related department as they have completed theoretical and practical classes of related departments. Before analysing the data, extreme values were determined with a box graphic and this condition was analysed whether it occurred due to incorrect data entry. Analysis showed that 20 data were at extreme end due to participants and these values were excluded from data set.

### 2.3 Data Collection Tools

#### 2.3.1 Personal Information Form

With information document that explained the purpose of this study and what is asked from participants, personal information form that asked department and gender of individuals were given.

#### 2.3.2 Philanthropy Scale

Philanthropy Scale was a 5-point Likert type scale with 25 items. After AFA, 25 item scale explained 42,286% of total variance. This scale consisted of 3 sub-dimensions which were disinterestedness and sincerity, love and unconditional acceptance, and honesty. When sub-dimensions were analysed for contribution to explained total variance, contribution of 1st factor was 24,039%, contribution of 2nd factor was 10,727%, and contribution of 3rd factor was 7,521%. Factor loads of scale items varied between .409 and .816. When compliance index of scale was analysed,  $X^2/sd=1.772$ , RMSEA= 0.05, GFI= 0.89,

AGFI= 0.87, CFI= 0.93, NNFI= 0.92, and IFI= 0.93 values were found. For each statement, answering system was in 5-point Likert scale with "Strongly Agree (5)", "Agree (4)", "Neutral (3)", "Disagree (2)", and "Strongly Disagree (1)". Each item was scored between 5 and 1. Inverse item scoring was 5=1, 4=2, 2=4, 1=5. Lowest possible score of Philanthropy Scale was 25 and highest possible score was 125. Lowest and highest range for 1st sub-dimension was 13-65, for 2nd sub-dimension was 8-40, and for 3rd sub-dimension was 4-20. As score for total score and each sub-dimensions increased, philanthropy total score and attitude level expressed by related sub-dimension increased. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients were 0,759 for total score, 0,749 for disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension, 0,702 for love and unconditional acceptance sub-dimensions, and 0,700 for honesty sub-dimension [22].

### 2.3.3 Religious attitude scale

Ok-Religious Attitude Scale consisted of 4 sub-dimensions as cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and relational and 8 items. Internal consistency coefficients of the scale were found as .81 and .91. Additionally, to determine criteria validity, it was determined that this scale had good criteria validity (.81 and .91) by adopting correlation of this scale with Francis Religious Attitude Scale for Christianity (Francis, Kerr, and Lewis, 2005) and Intrinsic Piety Scale (Allport and Ross, 1967). For each statement, answering system was in 5-point Likert scale with "Completely Agree (5)", "Mostly Agree (4)", "Agree in Half(3)", "Slightly Disagree (2)", and "Strongly Disagree (1)". Each item was scored between 5 and 1. Lowest total score from Ok-Religious Attitude Scale was 8 and highest score was 40. For each sub-dimension, lowest and highest values were between 2-10. Inverse item scoring was 5=1, 4=2, 2=4, 1=5. As total score increased, religious attitude level increased [23].

### 2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Philanthropy Scale, Religious Attitude Scale, and Personal Information Form of participants were analysed with SPSS20.0 package program. Based on normality results, Spearman Rank Difference Correlation was applied to measure cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude scale, and Pearson Moment Multiplication Coefficient was applied for other variables.

## III. FINDINGS

Table showing Pearson Moment Multiplication Correlation Test and Spearman Rank Difference Correlation Test results of total scores and sub-dimension scores to measure philanthropy level and religious attitude of university students was given below:

**Table 1: Pearson Moment Multiplication Correlation Test Results for Philanthropy and Religious Attitude Level of University Students**

		Philanthropy
Religious Attitude	r	.219
	p	.006*

Note: \* p < .01.

When Table 1 was analysed, it was seen that there was weak, positive, significant relationship between philanthropy level and religious attitude level total scores (r = .219, p < .01).

**Table 2: Pearson Moment Multiplication and Spearman Rank Difference Correlation Test Results for Philanthropy and Religious Attitude Scale Sub-Dimensions**

		Beh.	Emot.	Cog.	Rel.
Disinterestedness and Sincerity	r	.028	.024	.141	.048
	p	.627	.679	.014	.403
Love and Unconditional Acceptance	r	.186	.240	.093	.220
	p	.001*	.000*	.108	.000*
Honesty	r	.164	.042	.106	.089
	p	.004*	.467	.066	.122

Notes: \* p < .01.

\*\* p < .05.

It was determined that there were weak, positive, significant relationship between disinterestedness and sincerity dimensions of philanthropy and cognitive dimension of religious attitude (r = .141, p < .05), love and unconditional acceptance of philanthropy and behavioral (r = .186, p < .01), emotional (r = .240, p < .01), relational (r = .220, p < .01) sub-dimensions of religious attitude, and honesty sub-dimension of philanthropy and behavioral sub-dimension of religious attitude (r = .164, p < .01). Additionally, there were no significant relationship between disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension of philanthropy and behavioral (r = .028), emotional (r = .024), relational (r = .048) sub-dimensions of religious attitude; love and unconditional acceptance sub-dimension of philanthropy and cognitive (r = .093) sub-dimension of religious attitude; honesty sub-dimension of philanthropy and emotional (r = .042), cognitive (r = .079) and relational (r = .089) sub-dimensions of religious attitude (p > .05).

**Table 3: MANOVA and Kruskal Wallis Test Results for Relationship Between philanthropy Level and Religious Attitude of University Students for Department**

	X <sup>2</sup>	F	P
Wilks' Lambda	-	2,154	.008*
Kruskal Wallis	11,887	-	.003*

Note: \* p < .01.

When Table 3 was analysed, it was found that there was significant difference between philanthropy level and religious attitude of students for gender ( $p < .01$ ). It was found that there was significant differentiation in cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude for department ( $p < .01$ ). To determine which groups caused such differences, Mann-Whitney U test was applied for cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude and effect test was applied for other variables. Results of Mann-Whitney U test were given in Table 6 and results of effect test were given in Table 4.

**Table 4: Effect Test Results to Determine Which Dimensions Had Significant Differentiation**

Variable	df	Ave. Square	P
Religious Attitude Total S.	2	4,296	.694
Behavioral Sub-Dimens.	2	4,105	.096
Emotional Sub-Dimension	2	2,061	.388
Relational Sub-Dimension	2	.266	.825
Philanthropy Total Score	2	322,065	.036*
Disinterestedness and Sincerity Sub-Dim.	2	161,877	.021*
Love and Unconditional Acceptance Sub-Dimens.	2	1,560	.934
Honesty Sub-Dimension	2	16,161	.192

Note: \*  $p < .05$ .

When table above was analysed, differentiation was caused by philanthropy total score ( $p < .05$ ) and disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension ( $p < .05$ ). Among Tamhane T2 and Tukey test to determine among which groups did differentiation observed, Tukey test results were analysed. Tamhane T2 test is applied when variances are non-homogenous. Tukey test is applied when variances are homogenous [24]. Homogeneity results were as follows:

**Table 5: Homogeneity of Cognitive Sub-Dimension of Religious Attitude, Disinterestedness and Sincerity Sub-Dimension of Philanthropy, and Philanthropy Total Score**

Variables	F	P
Philanthropy Total Score	.186	.831
Disinterestedness and Sincerity Sub-Dimension	.415	.661

When Table 5 was analysed, it was seen that philanthropy total score and disinterestedness and

sincerity sub-dimension provided variance homogeneity assumption. Therefore, Tukey test results were analysed. For cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude, Mann-Whitney U test results were analysed.

**Table 6: Multiple Comparison to Determine Among Which Groups Did Significant Differentiation Occurred**

Variable	Test	Relation	P
Cognitive	Mann-Whitney U	PDR-Turkish	.167
		PDR-Social Science	.026*
		Turkish-Social Science	.001*
Philanthropy Total Score	Tukey	PDR-Social Science	.219
		Turkish-Social Science	.028*
Disinterestedness and Sincerity	Tukey	PDR-Turkish	.520
		PDR-Social Science	.146
		Turkish-Social Science	.017*

Notes: \*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

When Table 6 was analysed, there was differentiation between Turkish Education Department and Social Science Education Department for cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude ( $p < .01$ ), philanthropy total score ( $p < .05$ ), and disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension of philanthropy ( $p < .05$ ). philanthropy total score and average score of disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension of philanthropy was higher for student in Turkish Education Department ( $\bar{X}_{\text{cognitive}}=97.29$ ,  $\bar{X}_{\text{philanthropy}}=91.37$ ,  $\bar{X}_{\text{disinterestednessandsincerity}}=53.40$ ) than Social Education Department ( $\bar{X}_{\text{cognitive}}=81.53$ ,  $\bar{X}_{\text{philanthropy}}=89.10$ ,  $\bar{X}_{\text{disinterestednessandsincerity}}=50.73$ ) in terms of cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude. There was difference between PCGD and Social Science Education Department for cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude ( $p < .05$ ). Average of PCGD Department was 111.65 while average of Social Science Education Department was 99.24. There was no significant difference between religious attitude total score, behavioral, emotional, and relation sub-dimensions and love and unconditional acceptance and honesty sub-dimensions of philanthropy ( $p > .05$ ).

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Positive emotions such as unconditionally helping to other people are higher in individuals with higher religious attitude [25]-[30]. These positive attitudes could be altruism, empathy, pro-social behaviors. At this point, when it was considered that divine religions emphasise unconditional positive attitude towards

other people could lead higher relationship. Individuals may be struggling to show philanthropist attitude under current fast and pragmatic conditions. One of the most important resources to create internal motivation to show such attitude is belief. This situation explains significant relationship between religious attitude and philanthropy level. Another finding of this study was there was a relationship between cognitive sub-dimension of religious attitude and philanthropy total score and disinterestedness and sincerity sub-dimension of philanthropy for department of individuals. Especially positive behavior of individuals in occupation towards people and individuals studying these occupations are visible in this study and many other studies. This shows that there is a relationship between occupation selection and attitudes of individuals [18], [31], [32]. Occupations related with theology, psychologic consultancy, psychology, health services (for example nurse, doctor etc.), social service occupational groups have humanitarian aid elements. Therefore, higher positive social behaviors and attitudes are expected results for individuals training and working in these fields. Additionally, it is expected that individuals studying these departments are becoming more sensitive to humans and communication rules over time. When personal properties and occupational values that are towards understanding personality and world have an impact on occupation selection and career improvement are considered [33], it can be understood how philanthropy levels change in these departments. It is highly probably that individuals with relational and sincere personal properties are choosing occupations such as psychologic counselling, social services, and health services where positive social behaviors are commonly shown. Philanthropy Scale is a scaled developed in Turkey. This scale can be adapted to other cultures and differences between Turkish culture and other cultures can be measured. Additionally, it is believed that social experiments where philanthropy behavior is shown are important to determine philanthropy level of individuals and this is presented as recommendation for future studies.

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