

Triangulating Altruism: Gender Differences in Young Adults' Beliefs and Practices

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the depths of Altruism which remains a relatively unexplored area in the field. The overall analysis was done using triangulation through a combination of quantitative and qualitative inquiries. The quantitative analysis aimed to find if any gender difference exists in the levels of altruism exhibited. The quantitative data was gathered and examined using the altruism scale created by Rai and Singh in 1981. The qualitative analysis on the other hand aimed to understand altruism as a lived experience among college-going students in Delhi through Focus Group Discussions. The data was then combined and scrutinised. No significant difference was found between the Altruism level of the two genders. Through the FGDs, it was further established that altruism does exist as well as emerging adults conveyed their beliefs in the existence of altruism and inherent goodness in people.

Keywords : Altruism, Gender, Gender roles, Prosocial behaviour, Helping

INTRODUCTION

Whether it is the heroic acts in which ordinary citizens go as far as risking their own lives for the sake of others or a greater cause (Franco *et al.*, 2011), the general acts of kindness or the very prominent donations made by billionaires across the world (Team, 2022), prosocial behaviour and altruism are often heard and witnessed around us. Many researchers and social scientists debate over the cause of the behaviour that benefits others and at times also causes a risk to the one providing help (Jeya Bala *et al.* 2013; Maner and Gailliot, 2006). The emotional benefits of helping someone in need are universal, well-known and documented (Aknin *et al.*, 2015). The question is about what benefit is aimed out of it: other-oriented vs. self-oriented? That brings us to the question, 'What is altruism?'. The word altruism refers to the act of caring for the welfare of others without regard for one's own needs. It comes from the Latin expression "alteri," which means "other people." The term was coined in the 19th century by the French philosopher August Comte (Mathew *et al.*, 2016).

According to many sources (Barasch *et al.*, 2014; Batson, 1990; Feigin *et al.*, 2014), altruism is defined the desire to enhance the welfare of another person and is driven by a selfless care for others. According to the APA dictionary (2018), altruism is an ostensibly selfless act that serves others at the expense of the individual. The extent to which volunteering and martyrdom are genuine behaviours free from egoistic motives is up for controversy, yet it encompasses a broad spectrum of actions. As natural selection influences animal behaviour, it is challenging to comprehend how altruism may have developed in some species. However, altruistic organisms can profit if they assist their family members (kin selection) or if an altruistic act is thereafter followed by a reciprocating one (reciprocal altruism) (Darlington, 1978). Voluntarily benefiting others with one's intentional efforts is pro-social behaviour and acts as a social glue for the fabric of humanity (Wilson and Csikszentmihalyi, 2007). Prosocial behaviour is termed altruistic when the helping takes place with the main goal of supporting others in their needs, whereas when the intentions are to benefit oneself directly or indirectly the motives are called egoistic

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(Lay and Hoppmann, 2015). The construct of altruism has widely intrigued psychologists, sociologists and economists worldwide; various theories have been postulated to make sense of the acts of generosity. The well-known Charles Darwin theory of evolution establishes egoistic motives for altruism; after all, it is the ideal aim for organisms to expect their genes to be preserved (Darlington, 1978). According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology (2018), the act of helping in which an individual is selectively likely to help a family member which in turn directly or indirectly helps the individual is called kin selection. As the sacrifices made to oneself are covered up with the benefits received indirectly with their gene pool being passed on. Kin selection is the most beneficial when the kin receiving help is a young adult very close to reproducing (Darlington, 1978).

As noted by Darlington, evolutionists Darwin, Haldane, and Wright also believed in the existence of altruism which they believed could be explained by the Group Selection Theory (Darlington, 1978). The Group Selection Theory proposes, that the groups as a whole, are more important than individuals, therefore sacrifices from some individuals benefit the overall well-being of all the members of the group (Darlington, 1978). This way the general well-being of the group is ensured.

Another category of altruism is reciprocal altruism which is a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more individuals irrespective of their kinship (Darlington, 1978). In reciprocal altruism, both the individuals profit more than the altruistic costs; thus it is quite ubiquitous around us and can be noted between individuals of different species (Darlington, 1978). Statistically, altruism is almost always actually or potentially reciprocal, it was further mentioned that it is nearly natural for the altruistic individual to expect and/or receive direct or indirect gains (Darlington, 1978).

As per the Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis, acts of benevolence are motivated by feelings of empathy and compassion for others, which inspire an altruistic drive to improve their welfare (Batson, 1987). Batson (1990) has further mentioned that the counter to altruistic intentions is egotistic intentions, in which the helping behaviour intends to benefit the helper such as by reducing their negative affect, social recognition and the like.

The benefits of being altruistic have been a query of many experiments. There are significant associations between an individual's well-being, happiness, health, and

longevity as long as they are not overburdened with assisting responsibilities (Post, 2005). However, according to Schwartz *et al.* (2003), overly taxing altruistic tasks can have adverse health consequences. On comparing altruistic behaviour through different game experiments such as the ultimatum game and the dictator game, it was found that a small group of altruists can persuade a large group of egoists to cooperate, and a small group of egoists can persuade a sizable group of altruists to turn against them depending on the situation (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2003). Therefore, they (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2003) suggest that even in a setting where there is minimal evidence of cooperation, it is difficult to conclude that there are no altruistic people there.

According to Brar (2017), the level of altruistic behaviour or intention in male and female adolescent students did not differ significantly. Additionally, no discernible difference between adolescent students from rural and urban areas in terms of their level of altruism was found. Brar (2017) concluded that adolescents' altruistic behaviour and emotional development were significantly and favourably correlated.

Objectives:

- a. To understand the concept of Altruism.
- b. To understand the difference between Altruism and other related concepts.
- c. To understand the gender difference between college going male and female college students in relation to their Altruistic Behaviour.

Hypothesis:

There will be a significant difference between male and females in their altruistic behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

The current study focuses on levels of altruism as a function of gender and as a lived experience among college-going students in Delhi. To identify the above, the study was conducted in two phases with quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analysis consisted of 39 pairs of male and female young adults on whom the Altruism Scale questionnaire was administered. The observations from all the pairs were compiled and analysed using the independent t score. In the second phase, a qualitative study of four focus group discussions were planned and conducted in Lab 1 of the Psychology Department, Aryabhatta College, University of Delhi over

three weeks with the participation of second-year students of the Psychology Department of the College of 2022. According to the APA dictionary (2018), a focus group is a small group that usually consists of 8 to 12 members who share certain commonalities such as firsthand experience on a chosen subject to discuss it. The discussion is facilitated by a moderator who encourages transparent, open-ended discussion while staying connected to the topic. It further states, that focus groups were first employed in commerce to evaluate customer response to specific items. And they are currently used to establish typical responses, adaptations, and solutions to any range of issues, events, or themes, and are particularly associated with qualitative research. According to Eeuwijk and Angehrn (2017), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) are a type of qualitative research method and data-gathering approach where a professional, outside moderator leads a carefully chosen group of people in a detailed discussion about a particular topic or issue. They further added, that through interactions with other persons, participants' attitudes, views, knowledge, experiences, and practises are solicited through this method (Eeuwijk and Angehrn 2017).

A teacher supervised all the sessions as well as the duty of the moderator; while the note taker took down notes for the entire session. The moderator and note taker were two students assigned to each group. Ten questions were decided by the moderator, with the help of the teacher beforehand to ensure that the discussion was cohesive and focused majorly on the topic. The questions were also intended to provide cues for the participants to add to the discussion from their own life experiences and understanding through the theory classes conducted before the sessions. Additionally, mock focus group discussions were conducted to ensure that the moderators and note-takers were well-adjusted for their duties. For concluding the focus group discussions, the notes from each session were revisited, flow charts were drawn and combined, and a detailed analysis of the major themes and subthemes was done of the discussions. Students' experiences were drawn out of the discussions and connected to relevant research studies to form a comprehensive qualitative understanding of the subject.

Research Design:

The present is an empirical study within the positive psychological paradigm. The descriptive research method has been used for quantitative investigation. The

independent variable in the study was gender and the dependent variable was level of altruism. The aim of the study was, therefore, to assess the difference in the level of altruism in female and male participants. Their level of altruism was assessed using the Altruism Scale by S.N. Rai and Sanwat Singh (1981).

An exploratory qualitative study design has been used to understand the opinions of participants on the theme of altruism with the help of focus group discussions.

Tools: Altruistic Behaviour Scale-Revised:

The quantitative data was gathered and analysed using the altruism scale created by Drs. S. N. Rai and Sanwat Singh in 1981. The scale contains 30 items with three potential answers: altruistic, neutral, and egoistic.

Reliability:

100 students were given the altruistic scale to determine the reliability of the altruistic scale. The same sample was retested after a month. Being statistically significant the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.84 and the reliability index was 0.92. The scale therefore has good reliability and stability for assessing altruism in individuals.

Validity:

The correlation coefficient between the teacher's-cum-guardian's score and the scores of the altruistic scales subjects' was found to be 0.63 at a 0.01 level of significance. The results thus obtained indicate the valid measurement of the extent of altruism.

Norms:

Scores from a sample of 1000 students, 500 girls and 500 boys with their ages ranging from 10 to 19 years consisted of the norms for the practical. Boys' and girls' Z score norms have been established independently to convert norm scores into standard scores, and the same has been provided in the tables from which the findings were analysed.

Scoring:

The scoring is done based on the scoring table given in the manual. Each item is scored separately and is mutually exclusive and does not follow a pattern. After each item is scored individually, the raw scores are added and with respect to the norms they are converted into Z score and then compared. For the scale's altruistic,

neutral, and egoistic response items, scores of 2, 1, and 0 were assigned, accordingly. The maximum score is sixty and the minimum score is zero. Each item's scores are added up to produce the final score.

Focus Group Discussion:

Focus Group Discussions are meticulously arranged sequence of discussions intended to gather opinions on a certain topic of interest in a welcoming, non-threatening setting (Krueger and Casey, 2015). Participants can connect and influence one another in a more genuine setting during focus group discussions. Synergy is produced through group interaction (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2014). Focus group interviews have been conducted on an exceptionally wide range of subjects, from testing concepts to determining final product satisfaction (Kumar, 1987). In a session, a lot more categories than those listed in the interview guide get covered, this occurs as a result of comments made by participants on a subtopic being subsequently upvoted, downvoted, or expanded upon by other participants after they have shared their thoughts, experiences, and explanations (Kumar, 1987).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Quantitative Analysis:

Table 1 depicting compiled group mean, Standard Error of Means(SE) and t-test of males and females in their Altruism score.

	Mean	SE	t-test
Male	35.23	6.57	-1.098
Female	36.92	7.02	

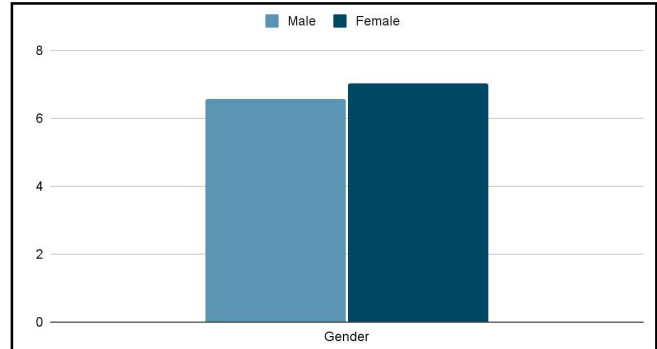
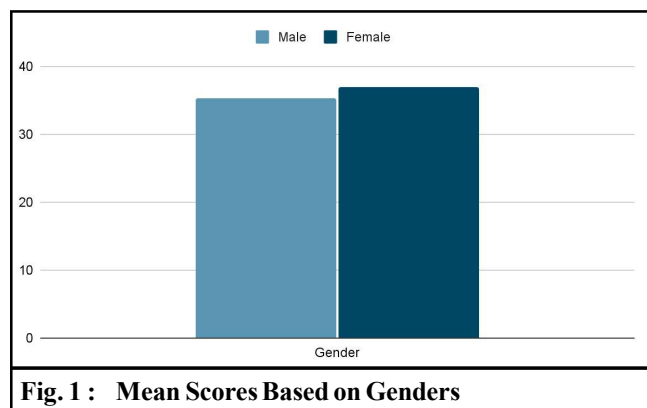


Fig. 2 : Standard Error of Means (SEs)

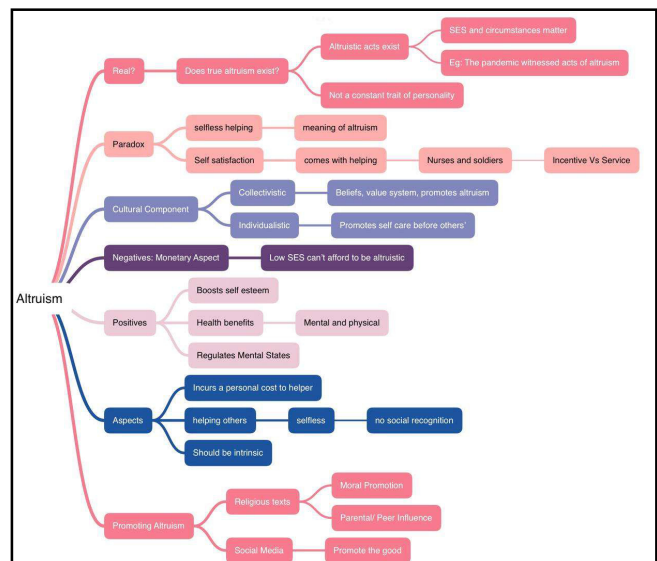


Fig. 3 : Flowchart highlighting the themes and sub-themes that emerged during the Focus Group Discussion

Discussion:

The study focuses on altruism in college-going students in Delhi. An important objective was to triangulate the data with the quantitative analysis done using the Altruism Scale and the qualitative analysis done using the focus group discussion to understand their beliefs and experiences about altruism. For the quantitative study, a sample size of 78 was taken, 39 males and 39 females. As the sample size was large enough an Independent Sample t-test was applied, at the significance level of 0.05. For the analysis of data, descriptive statistics like mean, and standard deviation were employed. The score of the altruism scale for the male participants was found to be 35.23 while the mean for the females was 36.92. The standard error of the mean of the two independent samples was 6.57 and 7.02, respectively. The obtained t-

value was -1.09 and the corresponding p-value was 0.275, since the result is not significant at $p < .05$, our hypothesis is rejected implying there is no significant difference between the level of altruism of male and female college students. The current findings are consistent with previous evidence suggesting that gender does not cause a significant level of difference in the level of altruism (Brar, 2017; Chou, 1998; Giovanis and Ozdamar, 2022; Krebs, 1970; Monk Turner *et al.*, 2002). The insignificance of gender could be explained by the finding of Andreoni and Vesterlund (2001), that men and women tend to be altruistic in contrasting situations and react differently to situational factors like the changing cost of altruism. Hence, no gender might necessarily be more altruistic than the other. However, quite a few studies report contradicting results with females having a higher mean score on the altruism scale (Jeya Bala *et al.*, 2013; Simmons and Emanuele, 2007; Xi *et al.*, 2018). The social norm implications indicate not only greater altruistic behaviour from women but also greater expectations of altruism from them (Brañas-Garza *et al.*, 2018). Despite their greater altruism, the expectations from women remain higher than the real levels of altruism (Brañas-Garza *et al.*, 2018).

The focus group discussion was rich with themes like the nature of altruism: selfless, intrinsic helping of others. Further in the discussion, the role of culture and upbringing was pointed out with the differences in an individualistic and collectivistic culture. The advantages of altruism such as physical and mental benefits as well as a rise in self-esteem were mentioned by the participants. A flip side that not everyone might be able to afford altruistic behaviour was brought up by the participants. One participant mentioned, *"We all come from different backgrounds and cannot obligate people with lower socio-economic backgrounds to feed others, it would be unfair."* Further on, themes such as the argument of service vs. incentive, ways of promoting altruism, and the major question based on whether true altruism exists, were also discussed. Different participants pitched in their opinions and views about what altruism is: the ideas ranged from one person helping the other, altruism being a motivational state of selfless helping and involving no social recognition, or anonymous helping by putting others before self.

The discussion about motivational factors for altruism led towards the discourse, whether it is selfish or selfless

behaviour which becomes a paradox.

By the definition itself, altruism is 'selfless helping'. However, this does not override the fact that self-satisfaction comes with helping. A participant remarked, *"It cannot be completely selfless as altruism makes people feel good about themselves, or if not then maybe their mother told them to do that."* To which other participant added, *"The process might be selfless, but the ultimate result is it affects our own satisfaction and how we feel about ourselves."* However, another participant disagreed with this stating, *"If I feel good about something doesn't make it selfish. Making someone else feel good, which in turn makes me feel good, can it not go hand in hand?"*

Selfless behaviour:

Based on the definition of altruism, the participants agreed that it is selflessly helping others and may even involve certain personal costs and harm to oneself for the sake of others. One participant commented, *"When a person is in a motivational state for helping others in their welfare, neglecting his own well-being or keeping the other person's happiness as the foremost priority, then that motivational state would be defined as altruism."* Other added, *"It is selfless helping of others without personal gain."* Another participant mentioned, *"It involves keeping others before your own self."* Altruism is defined as the desire to improve the welfare of another person and is said to be motivated by a selfless concern for others (Barasch *et al.*, 2014; Batson, 1990; Feigin *et al.*, 2014).

Helping others:

Helping others in the case of altruism separates it from pro-social behaviour since altruism involves selfless helping without any social recognition as described. Altruism is defined as voluntary action carried out with the primary goal of helping another person, without the conscious anticipation of reward (Feigin *et al.*, 2014). A participant mentioned, *"Altruism is selfless helping of others without personal gain."* One participant pointed out the difference between altruistic and prosocial behaviour by saying, *"If something is done for social recognition, it would be pro-social behaviour, not altruism."* Another participant added, *"Happiness from altruistic behaviour would be a reinforcer and not the sole motivation for the behaviour."* Human babies as young as 14 to 18 months old are prone to assist others

in achieving their objectives (Warneken and Tomasello, 2009). They (Warneken and Tomasello, 2009), further mentioned that chimpanzees, the closest living relatives of humans, similarly, provide to others without receiving anything in return.

Should be intrinsic:

Rewarding was not required for an altruistic act, and it did not accelerate the rate of assistance (Warneken and Tomasello, 2006). Warneken and Tomasello (2006) further added that rather than an immediate advantage or a personal gain, assisting others in meeting their unmet desire was seen to motivate individuals to help others in need. The participants agreed that altruism should be intrinsically driven. One of the participants mentioned, *“Altruism should be self-motivated and not obligated.”* Another participant mentioned, *“I don’t think mandating altruism would lead to an altruistic society, but maybe it would lead to a just society in which everyone helps each other and then it should be called something like justice or equality, rather than altruism”*. The activation of reward-related brain circuits by reciprocal cooperation and the penalty for defectors implies that humans have evolved proximate mechanisms that make altruistic behaviour psychologically pleasant (Fehr and Rockenbach, 2004). Therefore, the psychologically pleasant nature of altruism as mentioned by Fehr and Rockenbach (2004) might explain the intrinsic motivation towards altruism.

Role of culture and upbringing:

The participants mentioned the role of upbringing in helping behaviour. One of them commented, *“Our religious texts such as the Quran and Geeta mention certain altruistic acts that we should do like feeding the hungry, taking care of the needy. If this is a part of our upbringing, then it gets internalised and becomes who we are.”* Another participant added to this, *“Things are taught to us by our society, our elders and our culture. I think there can be learned altruism.”* Another participant concluded, *“For a foundational basis, I think it is important for us to learn to be morally nice to others but afterwards it should not be a moral obligation. It should be a self-motivation. Morals to begin with are a good foundation. But after that, you cannot force someone to be moral or altruistic.”* Yablo and Field (2007),

pointed out The Thai-Buddhist-affiliative-collectivistic culture appears more altruistically oriented than the American relatively more areligious accomplishment or individualistic-based society, suggesting a link between socio-cultural-religious ideals and prosocial behaviour. Compared to their American counterparts, Thais express a larger inclination to engage in behaviours that encourage or facilitate altruistic and compassionate actions (Yablo and Field, 2007). The participants being from a **collectivist culture** mentioned what role it plays according to them. One of them mentioned, *“As we live in a collectivistic culture, it’s very much promoted in our culture. We need to live together and as a group, we need to help people.”* Another one added their opinion about the cultural aspect of learning, *“It also depends on how we have been raised, if we are taught to be nice right from childhood then we learn to be nice and it kind of becomes like a belief in the Karma cycle. Good Karma can make people feel good about themselves.”* Whereas for **individualistic culture** it might be like, *“If I’m happy and healthy, only then I can help someone else.”* as mentioned by a participant. This argument is in line with the findings of Munroe (2017), in the study, “Altruism and Collectivism: An Exploratory Study in four Cultures.” who found that Samoa and Nepal’s social and material circumstances were probably the origins of collectivism and, the profound inclination towards altruism. It was further pointed out that test findings for levels of altruism in each of the four cultures fully matched the level of community collectivism (Munroe, 2017).

Advantages of altruistic behaviour:

Boost self-esteem:

The participants agreed with the notion that being altruistic boosted one’s self-esteem. One of them mentioned, *“Self-esteem is the value judgement about our own selves. If I help someone, it would obviously boost my self-esteem, And I would think that I have the capacity to help someone.”* Another added, *“Although the definition of altruism (states it) is selfless helping of others but it would also boost one’s self-esteem. Because it gives a sense of accomplishment that we can help others and we have power”*. Helping others can lead to increased self-esteem, which is a direct process that promotes well-being (Feng and Guo, 2016; Jeya Bala et al., 2013).

Improves physical and mental wellbeing:

One of the participants mentioned, *"I think it is not just related to physical health, but to mental health as well. I wouldn't say that altruism would improve someone's mental health. But if someone is gloomy someday and they help someone, they would go back and think about it, and that would make them happy. So I think it can improve our mental state somehow, not completely, but (at least) partially."* Another participant commented, *"I have read in a research paper that Altruistic people are more likely to be both physically and mentally healthy. There was also some correlation between life span and altruistic behaviour."* To which another added, *"A research study stated that altruism helps in relieving physical pain."*

Altruism, whether family or nonkin, has been linked to better health, despite differences in opportunity or capacity for help (Brown *et al.*, 2005). Wilson and Csikszentmihalyi (2007), have pointed out that the psychological mechanisms that make altruism intrinsically satisfying evolved in in-person encounters, which may explain why practising altruism in such social contexts can be particularly healthy. They further mentioned someone who aids disaster victims improves their health; the startling implication is that they may be improving their own health as well (Wilson and Csikszentmihalyi, 2007). Post (2005), has also highlighted the positive impacts of altruistic tendencies on mental and physical health. Schwartz *et al.* (2003) have mentioned that offering support was linked to improved mental health while reporting overburden was related to worse mental health. Moreover, providing support rather than receiving it was a more significant determinant of subjective mental health (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). It was found that male decision-making and confidence are impacted by altruistic actions, whereas women's happiness, depression, and day-to-day activities are more significant aspects of their Subjective Well-Being (Giovanis and Ozdamar, 2022). Encouraging altruistic actions in college students can improve their overall well-being and sense of self-worth (Feng and Guo, 2016). The fact that emerging adults' subjective well-being scores increased as their altruism scores increased, it is likely that assisting others increases one's sense of purpose and boosts one's self-esteem (Jeya Bala *et al.*, 2013).

Later one participant mentioned the examples of soldiers and nurses with respect to altruism, others disagreed. This raised the argument of incentive versus

care. As per the discussion further, *"Nurses and soldiers are mentally conditioned to be altruistic and their central theme of motivation is duty."* One of them quipped, *"I think soldiers get a lot of benefits. They get paid for it. Their families are taken care of, and they get medals. So that's not altruism."* Another added, *"Any form of helping behaviour that has a monetary aspect is not altruism they are done because people have to fulfil their duties and roles."* This opened up the question of what is altruism and what isn't, and does true altruism exist at all? The participants argued that altruistic acts exist, one of the participants mentioned, *"I personally don't think that altruistic individuals can exist. I think the idea of a person being altruistic throughout their lives is just not sustainable. And I think about soldiers, it's not altruism. It's their duty. The soldiers are trained and mentally conditioned towards doing what they do. Duty is the central theme of their motivation. One person cannot be altruistic for their entire lives because it's simply not viable unless you are just very rich."* Another agreed and added, *"Altruistic people cannot exist but altruistic acts can exist."* She further mentioned, *"I think altruism is rare, but it exists. I think an example of altruism would be a shared experience of people. For example, in Turkey with earthquakes, the people still help each other out. Without even considering about their own needs first."* Another commented, *"I don't think the concept of altruism means that a person has to be altruistic for their whole life, it is more about their little altruistic acts."* One participant stated, *"I think altruism exist. There are many NGOs. In our college also, we have students teaching poor kids for free and they don't get anything in return."* In favour of altruistic acts, the example of the COVID pandemic was given. One of the participants commented, *"Covid was probably the biggest example we saw of altruism."* Another added, *"Many people were helping during Covid; it wasn't limited to any age or gender."* When faced with an existential threat such as the COVID-19 pandemic, people donate a significant amount of resources, especially on a local level (Grimalda *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, the relatively high degree of altruism and empathy noticed in Germany during the pandemic has been highlighted by Hajek and König (2022). People cut back on smoking in China due to strict closure restrictions for COVID-19. More precisely, the closure restrictions discouraged nonsmokers from starting to

smoke and encouraged smokers to cut back on or even quit (Cai and Zhou, 2022). Family altruism, which varies across intrinsic qualities and living situations, including conscientiousness, personality traits, pro-family attitudes, and particular family structures, may be a factor in these outcomes (Cai and Zhou, 2022).

The participants also shared their opinions about ways of promoting altruism, as one of them mentioned, “*We should strive to be altruistic. Providing the basic models and the basic information is important. And giving them the options, for example, altruism does not have to be monitory, it could just be a kind gesture.*”

Conclusion:

Triangulating the data on altruism and comprehending the experiences and views of young adults was the key objective of the study. As per the analysis, it is established that altruism does exist as well as emerging adults have conveyed their beliefs in the existence of altruism and inherent goodness in people. The data in Table 1 indicates both males and females as moderately altruistic and there is no significant difference in levels of altruism based on gender. The results obtained thus far align with earlier data (Brar, 2017; Chou, 1998; Giovanis and Ozdamar, 2022; Krebs, 1970; Monk Turner *et al.*, 2002). This could be due to the growing equality and awareness regarding genders although there are studies that have found differences in altruistic tendency between male and female (Brañas-Garza *et al.*, 2018; Jeya Bala *et al.*, 2013; Simmons and Emanuele, 2007; Xi *et al.*, 2018). According to Brañas-Garza *et al.* (2018) these could be due to differences in social expectations and roles of the different genders.

The focus group discussion consisted of several themes and detailed discourse. As discussed by the participants, altruism is selfless behaviour motivated to benefit others (Barasch *et al.*, 2014; Batson, 1990; Feigin *et al.*, 2014). The core of altruism is selfless helping as opposed to pro-social behaviour (Feigin *et al.*, 2014; Warneken and Tomasello, 2009). The driving motivation for altruism is regarded to be intrinsic (Fehr and Rockenbach, 2004; Warneken and Tomasello, 2006). The important role played by culture and upbringing was highlighted along with the idea that collectivistic cultures tend to be more altruistic (Munroe, 2017; Yablo and Field, 2007). While discussing the advantages of altruism, the boost in self-esteem was pointed out by many participants.

Self-esteem can rise as a result of helping others (Feng and Guo, 2016; Jeya Bala *et al.*, 2013). The participants also highlighted the physical (Brown *et al.*, 2005; Post, 2005) and mental benefits (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012; Wilson and Csikszentmihalyi, 2007) of being altruistic which is in line with existing research. The altruistic tendencies noticed during the COVID-19 dynamic were given as a prime example of the existence of altruism (Grimalda *et al.*, 2021; Hajek and König, 2022). Moreover, family altruism contributed to the cutback of smoking in China due to strict closure restrictions for COVID-19 (Cai and Zhou, 2022). Finally, the participants also shared their opinions about ways of promoting altruism. Altruism is therefore an interesting aspect for further research owing to the myriad roles it plays in our individual and social lives and the many benefits that come along with it.

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