

## Ego Virtues as Predictors of Psychological Alienation among Academically Gifted Students

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**Abstract:** This research aims to investigate the relationship between different ego virtues that rose before or during adolescence and all psychological alienation variables, as well as to find out the extent to which ego virtues (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) can predict general psychological alienation. Participants consisted of 500 academically gifted male and female students ranging in age from 16 – 20 years, with an average of 18 years (SD=1.959). Study instruments included psychosocial inventory of ego strength, and the psychological alienation scale. Results revealed several patterns of the relationship and prediction of ego virtues with psychological alienation variables for males and females separately. Based on the results attained, psychological counseling programs on ego virtues can be designed, with the purpose of reducing the sense of psychological alienation. Further studies should be conducted for investigating the effectiveness of ego development on the other aspects of human personality and behavior.

**Keywords:** Ego Virtues, Psychological Alienation, Academically Gifted students.

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## فاعليات الأنا كمتغير منبئ بالشعور بالاغتراب النفسي لدى طلاب الجامعة الموهوبين أكاديمياً

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**ملخص البحث:** هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى معرفة العلاقة بين فاعليات الأنا، والتي نمت قبل أو خلال فترة المراهقة (الأمل، الإرادة، الغرض، القدرة، التفاني) والشعور بالاغتراب النفسي، كما هدفت أيضاً إلى معرفة إلى أي مدى يمكن لفاعليات الأنا أن تنبئ بالشعور بالاغتراب النفسي. تكونت عينة الدراسة من طلاب الجامعة الموهوبين أكاديمياً (500) طالب وطالبة، تتراوح أعمارهم بين (16-20) عاماً بمتوسط عمري قدره (18) عاماً وانحراف معياري قدره (1.959)، استخدمت الدراسة مقياس فاعليات الأنا، ومقياس الاغتراب النفسي. كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود عدة أنماط بخصوص العلاقة والتنبؤ بين متغيرات الدراسة بشكل منفصل للذكور والإناث. وفي ضوء النتائج التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة يوصي الباحث بتصميم برامج ارشادية تعتمد على فاعليات الأنا للحد من الشعور بالاغتراب النفسي. كما يوصي الباحث أيضاً بضرورة إجراء مزيد من الدراسات للتحقق من فاعلية الأنا على جوانب أخرى من شخصية الإنسان والسلوك الانساني. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** فاعليات الأنا، الاغتراب النفسي، طلاب الجامعة الموهوبين أكاديمياً.



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## 1. Introduction

Human wealth is the highest-ranked emerging economy in the world which may face several problems. One characteristic of this fundamental problem is a gifted care.

“Gifted” as defined in K.A.R. 91-40-1(bb) means performing or demonstrating the potential for performing at significantly higher levels of accomplishment in one or more academic fields due to intellectual ability, when compared to others of similar age, experience and environment. (Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services, 2016, p. 14). These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Gifted students, especially ranging in age from 11-18 years, frequently report a number of problems which are caused by their abundant gifts. These problems include, but not limited to, alienation, perfectionism, competitiveness, unrealistic appraisal of their gifts, rejection from peers, confusion due to mixed messages about their gifts, and parental and social pressures, as well as problems with unchallenging school programs or increased expectations (Sharon & Thomas, 1990). Moreover, there is consensus among studies that gifted might experience some problems such as their sensitivity, perfectionism and asynchronous development, which means that they might not always act their chronological age (Helen & Van, 2000; De Villiers & Oswald, 2013).

On light of these problems, the sense of alienation is considered one of the major psychological characteristics of academically gifted students; almost all of them often feel isolation from their parents and teachers. They sometimes unconsciously continue to isolate themselves from their peers. They may feel anxious about their social skills or physical appearance. They can even feel alienated from their identities. To some extent, this is a normal part of development (Aaron & Rachel, 2013).

As Al- Nawasreh (2016) indicated that there are some psychological characteristics of gifted: tendencies toward the neurotic perfection, a feeling of alienation, feelings of depression and excessive emotional sensitivity, identification problem, conflict roles

and expectations of adults extraordinary feeling of dissatisfaction and fear of failure and poor walk to risk. Al- Buheiri (2002) reported that mentally gifted and excellent are subject to problems, especially when having a high order talent where this talent increase the likelihood of exposing gifted person to adaptive problem, affective and social problem, for they are more sensitive to social conflicts and they experience various degrees of psychological alienation, pressures anxiety, and shyness more than their peers, as a result of their cognitive abilities.

And in this regard, Nu'aysa (2012) indicated there was a self-alienation among gifted students of the university at a degree of medium and a negative correlation relationship between psychological security and psychological alienation, and there are differences between the average degrees of psychological security attributed to educational level factor for postgraduate students.

In addition, Hamadneh (2014) reported that gifted persons have certain traits and characteristics that make them venerable to risk taking or putting them in difficult situations with their selves and with others that contribute to the rise of instances of tension, alienation, anxiety, shyness, and fear feelings, including: excess sensitivity and strong emotions, Idealistic reaction, feeling different, unbalanced development in mental social and emotional domains.

These results are inconsistent with previous studies finding as Nail and Evans (1997) study, Dada (2014) study, Alkhateeb and Hamadneh (2016) study, and Alican and Ömer (2016) study Which showed statistically significant differences in alienation feeling due to respondent's gender.

As a result of those problems, all international studies highlighted that gifted students care is a complex issue (Winstanley, 2006; De Villiers & Oswald, 2013). Therefore, scholars in so many other parts of the world who care about gifted students try to study these problems especially alienation feeling and how strongly gifted students are affected by their abundant gifts.

According to the important of adolescence period especially for academically gifted students, Erikson's theoretical formulation proceed by ego virtues. It includes eight stages in all pursuant to his timetable. The first four stages occur during infancy and childhood, the fifth stage comes during adolescence

period, whereas the last three stages are during the adult years and continue up to old ages. Erikson's writings emphasize adolescence period in particular because it is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. This stage has a great influence on one's adult personality (Ushakiran, 2014).

Ego virtues refer to virtues which arise out of positive resolution of each stage's crisis. These ego virtues include first, hope which arises from experiencing more trust than non-trust in infancy. Second, will that arises from experiencing more autonomy than shame and doubt during younger years. Third, purpose which arises from experiencing more initiative than guilt during early childhood. Fourth, competence that arises from experiencing more industry than inferiority during middle childhood. Fifth, fidelity which arises from experiencing more identity than identity confusion during the adolescent years. Sixth, love that arises from experiencing more intimacy than isolation during early adulthood. Seventh, care that arises from experiencing more generativity than stagnation during middle adulthood. Eighth, wisdom which arises from experiencing more integrity than despair during later adulthood (Kristine, 2014).

Failure to reach a successful resolution of crises and conflicts at every stage of growth may lead to stabilization in that stage. Inability to develop ego's processes, such as judgment and moral reasoning, may lead to psychological damage such as initial sexual stabilization or aggression (Mirshekari, Mollahy, & Reza, 2014).

Hence, one with immature ego will not be prepared to adapt to the reality (Feist & Feist, 2002); Thus, a person with insufficient ego's growth will be more ready to compromise with reality.

## 2. Importance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from; first, the nature of the psychological variables (ego virtues) and their influence on alienation; second, the importance of academically gifted students as a cornerstone in the growth of society; third, the prominent role they play in the progress of society; and fourth from being in line with what has been proved by psychological and educational studies and researches about academically gifted students' psychological condition.

It attempts to predict what academically gifted students may face at the university stage concerning negative feelings such as psychological alienation, which is considered one of the major psychological characteristics of academically gifted students. It of course affects their performance negatively, and pushes them to give up and ignore their talents.

The research also attempts to find out the nature of that influence and monitor its dimensions and its effects through psychological variables (ego virtues). Moreover, the present research helps researchers and those who care about academically gifted students assist those students to overcome such negative feeling. Further, identifying personality traits of academically gifted students would help in devising psychological counseling programs based on ego virtues. These programs are expected to reduce the sense of psychological alienation and recognize the efficacy of ego development on both human personality and behavior.

## 3. Method and Procedures

### 3.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses

This research tries to answer the following questions; firstly to examine the relationships between ego virtues (general ego virtue), and psychological alienation variables; and secondly, to identify the perceptions of ego virtues that arise before or during adolescence (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) on general psychological alienation in a sample of academically gifted students.

In order to reach the general aims of this research, the specific research questions and hypotheses are formulated as follows:

Research Question1 (RQ<sub>1</sub>): To what extent is there a relationship between different ego virtues (general ego virtue) and all psychological alienation variables?

Hypothesis<sub>1</sub> (H<sub>1</sub>): For each gender, there are positive significant relationships between ego virtues (general ego virtue) and all psychological alienation variables.

RQ<sub>2</sub>: To what extent do ego virtues (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) predict general psychological alienation?

H<sub>2</sub>: For each gender, ego virtues (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) will emerge as predictors of general psychological alienation.

## 3.2. Participants

The present research is a descriptive-correlative research, which is designed to provide a snapshot of the present state of affairs, and discover relationships between ego virtues (general ego virtue), and psychological alienation variables, and to identify the perceptions of the ego virtues that rise before or during adolescence (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) on general psychological alienation.

Participants were gifted undergraduate university students at the college of Education and Arts, Northern Border University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Gifted students in this study are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

The selection is made through using the method of a random academically gifted sampling, 15% of all students enrolled were selected as the sample, and according to their performance and accomplishment achieved in the university exams, which is based on the cumulative grade point average (GPA) which is 4.5 of 5.0 at least during their university years.

They consisted of 500 academically gifted male and female students ranging in age from 16 – 20 years, with an average of 18 years (SD=1.959). Male students were 232, with a percentage of (46.4%), and females were 268 with a percentage of (53.6%).

## 3.3 Instruments

### 3.3.1. Psychosocial Inventory of Ego Strength (PIES-SF).

The tool is self-report and was designed by Markstrom and Marshall, (2007) for measuring eight parameters of Ericson's ego (hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care, and wisdom) and in total it consists of 64 questions.

The researcher applied the descriptive methodology (PIES) short form translated and standardized in K.S.A. by Al- Ghamdi (2010).

The 32-item of (PIES-SF) is composed of four items on a 5- point Likert's f-option scale ranging from 1 (do not describe me) to 5 (describe me well) for measuring each virtue for the first five stages (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity).

The researcher computed a general ego strength score

by summing the five individual ego strengths.

To assess the validity and reliability of the Arabic version, Al- Ghamdi used (PIES) on the 386-subject sample of students of both genders, of different educational levels between the age of 15 and 54. The Cornbrash's alpha coefficient reported for hope scale  $r=.71$ , for will scale  $r=.61$ , for purpose scale  $r=.62$ , for competence scale  $r=.58$ , for fidelity scale  $r=.50$ , for love scale  $r=.50$ , for care scale  $r=.68$ , for wisdom scale  $r=.54$ , and for the whole inventory  $r=.78$ .

### 3.3.2. Psychological alienation scale (PAS).

The researcher applied (PAS) which was prepared by Shokier (2002) for two objectives: the first objective measures five forms of alienation (isolation, powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, and rebellion). The second objective measures five dimensions (components) of alienation (self-alienation, social alienation, political alienation, religious alienation, and cultural alienation).

Each of the five types of alienation includes five components of alienation. The 100 items of (PAS) are scored on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (I do not agree) to 2 (yes, I agree). The degree of each type and each component range is (0-40). The highest degree of (PAS) indicates high degree of negative psychological alienation of the individual. The reliability of scale is applied on a sample of 100 individuals of both genders between the ages of 15 and 35.

Based on split half (odd-even), reliability of this scale as well as subscales is as follows: for isolation scale  $r=.62$ , for powerlessness scale  $r=.90$ , for normlessness scale  $r=.85$ , for meaninglessness scale  $r=.71$ , for rebellion scale  $r=.68$ , self-alienation scale  $r=.90$ , for social alienation scale  $r=.71$ , for political alienation scale  $r=.85$ , for religious alienation scale  $r=.60$ , for cultural alienation scale  $r=.71$ , and in general psychological alienation scale  $r=.85$ .

## 3.4. Data Collection

In fall 2016, I had a meeting with a number of academically gifted male students (no. 250) to familiarize them with the study subject and aims. After doing so, I obtained their written consent for participation. Questionnaire packets were handed to the participants who were instructed to fill them out.

These packets included a background information sheet, the questionnaires of psychological alienation scale, and psychosocial inventory of ego strength were provided next. In total, it took me a period of time (40-60 minutes) to administer the application of the questionnaire packets upon males. In the female section (no. 275), such processes were performed by a female colleague. It took both groups exactly 20 minutes to fill out the packets. Only 95.2% of these forms were returned. Finally, All participants were warmly thanked.

### 3.5. Preliminary Analyses

Before analyzing the data and test hypotheses, the researcher used the T-test (Independent Samples) for comparing male and female students according to the research variables.

Based on Table 1, the variables are different in the two groups, with respect to ego virtues, the significant differences were found for purpose  $t(232) = 3.326$ ,  $p < .001$ , and competence  $t(232) = 1.981$ ,  $p < .05$ , on which males scored, significantly, higher than females.

These results are consistent with Dinesh (2006) in his study on ego virtues in males and females, concluding that males have higher ego virtues than females.

Concerning psychological alienation variables, females scored, significantly, higher than males for social alienation  $t(268) = 3.071$ ,  $p < .002$ , political alienation  $t(268) = 7.211$ ,  $p < .001$ , religious alienation  $t(268) = 6.798$ ,  $p < .001$ , cultural alienation  $t(268) = 8.118$ ,  $p < .001$ , isolation  $t(268) = 5.228$ ,  $p < .001$ , powerlessness  $t(268) = 4.004$ ,  $p < .001$ , normlessness  $t(268) = 7.172$ ,  $p < .001$ , meaninglessness  $t(268) = 7.355$ ,  $p < .001$ , rebellion  $t(268) = 3.400$ ,  $p < .001$ , and psychological alienation  $t(268) = 6.002$ ,  $p < .001$ .

**Table 1: Means for (PIES-SF), and (PAS) by gender with t-test comparisons.**

	Male		Female		t- test	Sig. 2-tailed	
	Mean	Std. D.	Mean	Std. D.			
<b>Hope</b>	10.52	2.319	10.87	3.144	-1.392	0.165	
<b>Will</b>	11.31	2.774	11.31	2.688	-.013	0.99	
<b>Purpose</b>	10.69	2.607	9.85	2.979	3.326	0.001	
<b>Competence</b>	11.62	2.316	11.22	2.161	1.981	0.048	
<b>Fidelity</b>	11.52	2.164	11.28	3.283	0.924	0.356	
<b>Ego Virtues</b>	88.59	11.488	87.28	15.801	1.04	0.299	
<b>Types of alienation</b>	<b>Self-Alienation</b>	27.93	6.435	27.54	7.045	0.649	0.517
	<b>Social Alienation</b>	23.07	8.479	25.3	7.747	-3.071	0.002
	<b>Political Alienation</b>	20.45	7.972	25.87	8.713	-7.211	0.001
	<b>Religious Alienation</b>	22.45	8.063	27.33	7.956	-6.798	0.001
	<b>Cultural Alienation</b>	18.83	6.983	24.49	8.411	-8.118	0.001
<b>Components of alienation</b>	<b>Isolation</b>	24.28	7.115	27.63	7.176	-5.228	0.001
	<b>Powerlessness</b>	21.97	6.566	24.58	7.857	-4.004	0.001
	<b>Normlessness</b>	20.79	6.191	25	6.83	-7.172	0.001
	<b>Meaninglessness</b>	20.83	7.435	25.87	7.81	-7.355	0.001
	<b>Rebellion</b>	24.86	8.664	27.45	8.318	-3.400	0.001
<b>Psychological Alienation</b>	112.72	31.651	130.52	34.242	-6.002	0.001	

Note. N = 500

Nm=232

Nf=268

## 4. Results

In this research, PIES-SF scale is only used for the first five stages of ego virtues (i.e., hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) as it appears that these stages are the ones that correspond to development age of the 16 to 20 year-old participants. The availability of several substantial gender-based differences on psychological alienation variables such as the ego virtues (purpose and competence), the researcher has conducted, separately for males and females, the correlation and stepwise regression analyses of the extent to which each of the ego virtues predicts psychological alienation.

### 4.1. Correlation Analyses

In this section, relationships between ego virtues (general ego virtue) and psychological alienation variables are analyzed

Based on Table 2 and 3, for males and consistent with ego virtues (general ego virtue), a significantly negative correlation was found with psychological alienation variables (self-alienation  $r = -.174$ ., social alienation  $r = -.379$ ., religious alienation  $r = -.333$ ., cultural alienation  $r = -.229$ ., isolation  $r = -.361$ ., powerlessness  $r = -.205$ ., meaninglessness  $r = -.188$ .,

**Table 2: Results of correlations analysis between all variables (Male).**

		Ego Virtues						Psychological Alienation										
								Types of Alienation					Components of Alienation					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Ego Virtues</b>	1 Hope	1	.228**	.233**	.482**	.271**	.646**	.005	-.118	.162*	.079	-.164*	.014	.051	.012	.076	.036	-.024
	2 Will		1	.286**	.450**	.014	.542**	.288**	.365**	.208**	.382**	.244**	.361**	.306**	.149**	.249**	.467**	.360**
	3 Purpose			1	.135*	.452**	.627**	.005	.192**	.067	-.275**	.302**	.318**	.051	-.058	-.076	.338**	.204**
	4 Competence				1	.032	.583**	.199**	.327**	.036	-.234**	.137*	.107	.331**	.165*	.277**	.134	.227**
	5 Fidelity					1	.594**	.102	.030	-.328**	.007	.031	-.061	-.184**	.220**	.135*	-.033	.090
	6 Ego Virtues						1	.174**	.379**	.026	-.333**	.229**	.361**	.205**	.084	.188**	.345**	.279**
<b>Psychological Alienation</b>	1 Self-Alienation							1	.642**	.594**	.432**	.460**	.697**	.761**	.663**	.648**	.512**	.736**
	2 Social Alienation								1	.706**	.672**	.561**	.818**	.806**	.715**	.773**	.726**	.871**
	3 Political Alienation									1	.679**	.666**	.798**	.805**	.798**	.775**	.720**	.882**
	4 Religious Alienation										1	.699**	.743**	.673**	.697**	.711**	.869**	.848**
	5 Cultural Alienation											1	.641**	.652**	.698**	.797**	.756**	.810**
	6 Isolation												1	.777**	.654**	.699**	.783**	.892**
	7 Powerlessness													1	.727**	.817**	.631**	.889**
	8 Normlessness														1	.764**	.681**	.859**
	9 meaninglessness															1	.658**	.891**
	10 Rebellion																1	.868**
	11 Psychological Alienation																	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 3: Results of correlations analysis between all variables (Female)**

		Ego Virtues						Psychological Alienation												
								Types of Alienation					Components of Alienation					Total		
								1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Ego Virtues</b>	1	Hope	1	.519**	.327**	.516**	.596**	.764**	.375.-**	.232.-**	.152.-*	.247.-**	.302.-**	.231.-**	.266.-**	.229.-**	.276.-**	.338.-**	.300.-**	
	2	Will		1	.397**	.424**	.589**	.726**	.375.-**	.261.-**	.244.-**	.279.-**	.276.-**	.254.-**	.322.-**	.319.-**	.262.-**	.331.-**	.331.-**	
	3	Purpose			1	.338**	.352**	.626**	.242.-**	.223.-**	.044.-	.295.-**	.057.-	.131.-*	.111.-	.147.-*	.126.-*	.342.-**	.194.-**	
	4	Compete..				1	.483**	.648**	.409.-**	.343.-**	.349.-**	.363.-**	.300.-**	.335.-**	.375.-**	.291.-**	.360.-**	.463.-**	.409.-**	
	5	Fidelity					1	.800**	.455.-**	.305.-**	.267.-**	.421.-**	.274.-**	.285.-**	.347.-**	.370.-**	.317.-**	.453.-**	.395.-**	
	6	Ego Virtues						1	.462.-**	.365.-**	.286.-**	.458.-**	.302.-**	.342.-**	.356.-**	.365.-**	.347.-**	.517.-**	.431.-**	
<b>Psychological Alienation</b>	1	Self-Alienation							1	.759**	.669**	.465**	.569**	.730**	.754**	.696**	.762**	.645**	.795**	
	2	Social Alienation								1	.824**	.617**	.661**	.802**	.742**	.845**	.877**	.784**	.898**	
	3	Political Alienation									1	.719**	.731**	.801**	.849**	.835**	.897**	.786**	.925**	
	4	Religious Alienation										1	.660**	.624**	.699**	.771**	.730**	.828**	.812**	
	5	Cultural Alienation											1	.798**	.822**	.778**	.786**	.664**	.852**	
	6	Isolation												1	.746**	.772**	.792**	.662**	.876**	
	7	Powerlessness													1	.803**	.825**	.698**	.904**	
	8	Normlessness														1	.860**	.722**	.917**	
	9	Meaningless..															1	.787**	.946**	
	10	Rebellion																	1	.866**
	11	Psychological Alienation																		

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01.

rebellion  $r = -345.$ , and psychological alienation  $r = -279.$ ). No significant correlations were found between ego virtues (general ego virtue) and other variables (political alienation, and normlessness). For females, a significantly negative correlation was found with all psychological alienation variables (self-alienation  $r = -462.$ , social alienation  $r = -365.$ , political alienation  $r = -286.$ , religious alienation  $r = -458.$ , cultural alienation  $r = -302.$ , isolation  $r = -342.$ , powerlessness  $r = -356.$ , normlessness  $r = -365.$ , meaninglessness  $r = -347.$ , rebellion  $r = -517.$ , and psychological alienation  $r = -431.$ ).

#### 4.2. Regression Analysis

With reference to the preliminary analysis, t-test comparisons were made for 17 variables based on gender, it displayed that females significantly differ in some variables, while males showed significant differences in other variables. The two groups did not significantly differ in their total scores on other variables; therefore, the stepwise regression analyses were made separately for males and females. These regression analyses were made to determine which of the independent variables (ego virtues variables) would be predictive of dependent variable

**Table 4: Results of stepwise regression analysis on ego virtues on general psychological alienation (male).**

Model	Coefficients	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	R	R <sup>2</sup> Change	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F Change
		B	Std. Error						
Step 1	(Constant) <sup>a</sup>	159.171	8.173	19.475	.001	.360 <sub>a</sub>	0.130	.126	34.231
	<i>Will</i>	-4.107	.702	-3.60	-.5.851				

a. Predictors: (Constant), Will.

b. Dependent Variable: Psychological Alienation.

Note: General Psychological Alienation = 159.171 – 4.107 will.

**Table 5: Results of stepwise regression analysis on ego virtues on general psychological alienation (female)**

Model	Coefficients	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	R	R <sup>2</sup> Change	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F Change
		B	Std. Error						
Step 1	(Constant)	203.231	10.135	20.052	.001	.409 <sub>a</sub>	.167	.164	53.365
	<i>Competence</i>	-6.478	.887	-.409	-7.305				
Step 2	(Constant)	211.434	10.033	21.074	.001	.467 <sub>b</sub>	.218	.212	17.337
	<i>Competence</i>	-4.501	.983	-.284	-4.579				
	<i>Fidelity</i>	-2.694	.647	-.258	-4.164	.001			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Competence.

b. Predictors: (Constant), *Competence*, *Fidelity*.

c. Dependent Variable: Psychological Alienation.

Note: General Psychological Alienation = 203.231 – 6.478 *Competence*.

General Psychological Alienation = 211.434 – 4.501 *Competence* – 2.694 *Fidelity*.

(general psychological alienation variable).

With regard to regression analysis and whether the specific stage of ego virtues scores makes differential contributions to general psychological alienation, the researcher conducted regression analyses for ego virtues (hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity), which will be applied as predictors of dependent variable (the general psychological alienation variable) for each gender.

The results of the regression analysis, which include ego virtues variables (hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) as predictors, are explained for males.

Based on Table 4, multiple correlation (R) was found to be 0.360 for the virtue of will. Further R<sup>2</sup> which represents the contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable was found to be 0.130. Another considerable aspect is R<sup>2</sup> change which is the actual contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable which was found to be 0.130. It means that the virtue of will contributed 13.0% to the dependent variable (general psychological alienation).

The only ego virtues (will) influences general psychological alienation and non- influences were found for the other virtues of ego (hope, purpose,

competence, and fidelity).

The statistical value given in the table indicates  $t = -5.851$  for the virtue of will which is significant beyond 0.01 level. The correlation (partial) was found to be  $r = -0.360$  for the virtue of will which shows that there is a negative correlation between the virtue of will and General Psychological Alienation.

Since  $t$ -value of the virtue of will was found significant. It means that the virtue of will negatively influence the level of general psychological alienation among academically gifted students

Thus, this result partially proves the second hypotheses ( $H_2$ ) of the present research that “for male, ego virtue of will will emerge as a negative predictor of general psychological alienation, and no significance was found for other virtues of ego (hope, purpose, competence, and fidelity) as predictors of general psychological alienation”.

For females, as shown in Table 5, for the first step, the multiple correlation ( $R$ ) was found to be 0.409 for the virtue of competence. Further  $R^2$  which represents the contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable was found to be 0.167.

Another considerable aspect is  $R^2$  change, which is the actual contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable which was found to be 0.167. It means that the virtue of competence contributed 16.7% to the dependent variable (general psychological alienation). The only ego virtue (competence) influences general psychological alienation and no significance was found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, purpose, and fidelity). The statistical value given in the table indicates  $t = -7.305$  for the virtue of Competence which was significant beyond 0.01 level. The correlation (partial) was found to be  $r = -0.409$  for the virtue of competence which shows that there is negative correlation between the virtue of competence and general psychological alienation.

Since,  $t$ -value of the virtue of competence was found significant which means that the virtue of competence negatively influence the level of general psychological alienation among academically gifted students

Thus, it partially proves the second hypotheses ( $H_2$ ) of the present research that “For females, ego virtues (competence) will emerge as a negative predictor of general psychological alienation, and no significance was found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, purpose, and fidelity) as predictors of general psychological

alienation”.

In accordance with the second step, multiple correlation ( $R$ ) was found to be .467 for competence and fidelity virtues. Further  $R^2$  which represents the contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable was found to be 0.218. Another considerable aspect is  $R^2$  change, which is the actual contribution of predictor variables to the criterion variable which was found to be 0.218. It means that competence and fidelity virtues contributed 21.8% to the dependent variable (general psychological alienation).

The only competence and fidelity virtues influence general psychological alienation and a non- influences were found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, and purpose). The statistical value given in the table indicates  $t = (-4.579, -4.164)$  for competence and fidelity virtues which was significant beyond 0.01 level. The correlation (partial) was found to be  $r = (-0.284, -0.258)$  for competence and fidelity virtues which show that there are negative correlation between competence and fidelity virtues and general psychological alienation. Since,  $t$ -value of competence and fidelity virtues were found significant which means that competence and fidelity virtues negatively influence the level of general psychological alienation among academically gifted students

Thus, this result partially proves the second hypotheses ( $H_2$ ) of the present research that “For female, ego virtues (competence and fidelity) will emerge as negative predictors of general psychological alienation, and non-significances were found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, and purpose) as predictors of general psychological alienation”.

## 5. Discussion

Results revealed several patterns of the relationship and prediction of ego virtues with psychological alienation variables for males and females separately.

According to  $H_1$ , there were relationships between ego virtues (general ego virtue) and psychological alienation variables. For males, significant negative correlations were found with psychological alienation variables (self-alienation, social alienation, religious alienation, cultural alienation, isolation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, rebellion, and psychological alienation). However, no significant correlations were found among ego virtues (general ego virtue) and other variables (political alienation, and normlessness).

For females, significant negative correlations were

found with all psychological alienation variables (self-alienation, social alienation, political alienation, religious alienation, cultural alienation, isolation, powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, rebellion, and psychological alienation).

According to  $H_2$ , for males, ego virtue of will will emerge as a negative predictor of general psychological alienation; General Psychological Alienation = 159.171 – 4.107 will, and non-significances were found for other virtues of ego (hope, purpose, competence, and fidelity) as predictors of general psychological alienation.

For females, according to the first step, ego virtues (competence) will emerge as a negative predictor of general psychological alienation; General Psychological Alienation = 203.231 – 6.478 competence, and non-significances were found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, purpose, and fidelity) as predictors of general psychological alienation. In accordance with the second step, ego virtues (competence and fidelity) will emerge as negative predictors of general psychological alienation; General Psychological Alienation = 211.434 – 4.501 Competence – 2.694 Fidelity, however, non-significances were found for other virtues of ego (hope, will, and purpose) as predictors of general psychological alienation.

These patterns are consistent with hierarchical principles in that satisfactory resolution of prior ego strength stages, (hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity) in this research, increases the likelihood of the resolution of later stages, i.e., to get rid of the feeling of psychological alienation.

Will, as a virtue of ego virtues, helps individuals have the determination to get rid of the isolation and alienation feelings. Competence helps individuals to use their skills and abilities to complete the tasks involved in their lives. This is done through the development of their friendship, skills learning, self-evaluation, and teamwork. Fidelity helps individuals to develop their autonomy from parents, sex role identity, internalized morality, and career choice.

Based on the above results, ego virtues are confirmed to play a comparable role to get rid of the feelings of psychological alienation for males and females.

These findings are consistent with Lentner, Maxwell, Protinsky, and Wilkerson (1982) which displayed that young people who have successfully resolved the Eriksonian crises and conflicts will feel a sense of

mastery over their environments and control of their destiny.

Jacki, Kate and Norman (2009), revealed that alienation is the unavoidable result of the processes by which the ego is constituted through identification with the external counterpart. Mastorah (2011) revealed that the loss of their root-identity may cause their sense of alienation and weakness of ego.

Ego virtues are the ability of an individual to manage his personality, despite the pressures of both that demand to increase pleasure or act within society standards. Ego virtues are the balance that we emphasized as the key to a healthy personality; one that is both able to seek pleasure successfully, but doing so within reason and acceptable time and place (Abu Sufiyan & Amjad, 2015).

Regarding emerging economy resource, it's recommended that clinician make use of these results as prevention in matters related to counseling and psychotherapy.

Based on these results, psychological counseling programs can be designed based on ego virtues, with the purpose of reducing the sense of psychological alienation, and also investigating the effectiveness of ego development on the other aspects of human personality and behavior.

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