

Self Esteem, Locus of Control and Multidimensional Perfectionism as the Predictors of Subjective Well Being

Zeynep Karatas¹ & Ozlem Tagay¹

¹ Education Faculty, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Burdur, Turkey

Correspondence: Zeynep Karatas, Education Faculty, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Burdur, Turkey, Turkey.
Tel: 90-248-213-4055. E-mail: zeynepkaratas1972@hotmail.com

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism, and the extent to which the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism contribute to the prediction of subjective well-being. The study was carried out with 318 final year (fourth grade) university students. Subjective Well-Being Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Rotter Internal External Locus of Control Scale and Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism Scale were used in the study. Correlation Coefficient of Pearson Moments and Gradual Regression Analysis were used in the analysis of the data. As a consequence, it was determined that there is a positive relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem, and a negative relationship between subjective well-being and locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism. Also, it was observed that the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism significantly predict subjective well-being.

Keywords: subjective well-being, self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism

1. Introduction

In life, there are some periods in which a number of difficulties are experienced and individuals are faced with problems where they are required to be good. In these periods, coping with these problems is shaped with the strength a person finds in him/herself, and with the state of self-assessment. In the case of this the assessment, individual's personal characteristics, his/her self-structure, the environment in which s/he has lived until that day, the things s/he experienced, experiences and effects step in. The more an individual's way of interpreting and evaluating the events as positive, the better his/her state of subjective well-being may be.

Subjective well-being is a broad notion that encapsulates individual's assessments regarding his/her life. It includes the state that positive, cognitive and spiritual elements exist in life together with the non-existence of negative factors (Diener, 1984). Subjective well-being which is made up of the elements of pleasant emotion/effect, unpleasant emotion/effect and satisfaction of life, being high depends on pleasant emotion's being superior to unpleasant emotion and on individual's cognitive judgement's being positive as regards to his/her life (Tuzgol Dost, 2005b). In pleasant emotion, positive response to others and to activities and generally a positive mood exist. Unpleasant emotion, on the other hand, involves negative effects and holds negative responses to others in personal experiences and life. Anger, sadness, anxiety and worry, stress, disappointment, culpability, shame and envy are the underlying reasons of negative or unpleasant emotions. The other conditions such as loneliness and inability, which are the other negative emotions, are, on the other hand, the significant indicators of the state of affection/illness. Some negative emotions are a part of life and they may be effective in order to mobilize the individual, but the emotions which are frequently observed and are continually negative may be an indicator of a person's worsening life (Joshi, 2010).

Self-concept is a dynamic structure which is extremely important in adolescence and early adulthood, and it develops in a process, which continues lifelong. In this process, self-concept is affected by parents' disciplinary approach and affection, by the peers with the pressure of exhibiting proper attitude, by school life with success and failure and many other events. On the other hand, it may affect mental and physical health, the relationships with others, academic success and the selection of profession. If everything goes all right, various elements/components are blended with each other and a comprehensive self-concept is formed (Gander and Gardiner, 2004). Positive self-esteem is defined as person's wholly recognizing him/herself as an individual,

appreciating and trusting in him/herself (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen and Lagerspetz, 1999), and it is regarded as a phenomenon resistant to change once it is formed at the end of normal developmental process (Fertman and Chubb, 1992).

Locus of control is defined as general expectation or belief in individual's expectations of control over internal and external dimensions in regard to the fact that reinforcers are under the control of the powers within and outside of (luck or faith) the individual (Savasir and Sahin, 1997).

Perfectionism, which is a multi-dimensional personal feature, is to make extreme and too much effort to be perfect at a job. Also, perfectionism is defined as (1) believing that perfectionism is possible and as the effort to achieve it, and as (2) the action to determine high standards for the person him/herself and for the others. Perfectionism is defined in three dimensions based on "self-oriented", "others-oriented" and "based on societal expectation". Perfectionism for the self is the tendency to determine unrealistic standards that are impossible to attain. These standards are for the person him/herself and this is accompanied by not accepting one's own mistakes and self-criticism. Perfectionism for others is that person expects others to follow the unrealistic standards he/she has determined. Perfectionism based on societal expectation is, on the other hand, the tendency of having the belief that others expect impossible things from him/her. What's more, they think that they have to reach these standards, in order to be approved by others (Flett, Hewitt, Garshowitz and Martin, 1997; Flett, Hewitt, Blankstein and Gray, 1998, in cited Gul, Yilmaz and Berksun, 2009).

When considering the studies carried out as to subjective well-being in literature, it is seen that there are studies in which subjective well-being was examined in terms of different variables (Celik, 2008; Dogan, 2004; Ozen, 2005; Tuzgol Dost, 2004; Tuzgol Dost, 2010). In addition, it is also observed that there are studies analyzing the relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem (Abdel-Khalek, 2011; Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin, 2007; Saygin, 2008; Schimmack and Diener, 2003), between subjective well-being and school satisfaction and healthy behaviour (Katja, Paivi, Marja-Terttu and Pekka, 2002), between family dynamics perceived by adolescents and their families and subjective well-being (Rask, Astedt-Kurki, Paavilainen and Laippala, 2003), between subjective well-being and religiousness (Daaleman, 1999), between subjective well-being and motivation, commitment/involvement styles and human want satisfaction (Burton, Lydon, Alessandro and Koestner, 2006; Leak and Cooney, 2001; Ozer, 2009), between subjective well-being and future expectation (Eryilmaz, 2011), between subjective well-being and optimism and self-esteem (Yorulmaz and Eryilmaz, 2006), between subjective well-being and personal characteristics (Eryilmaz and Ogulmus, 2010), between subjective well-being and identity status (Eryilmaz and Aypay, 2011), between subjective well-being and school exhaustion (Aypay and Eryilmaz, 2011).

When the above studies are examined, the number of studies carried out in recent years as regards the subjective well-being has increased, yet no studies in which self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism have been dealt together with subjective well-being. In this study, it is thought that the teachers' self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionisms may have been related to subjective well-being, and they were considered worthwhile for examination.

1.1 Aim of the Research

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism, and the extent to which the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism contribute to the prediction of subjective well-being.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study is in the model of a relational study aiming at predicting the subjective well-being of the final year students of educational faculty in terms of self-esteem, locus of control and multidimensional perfectionism.

2.2 Study Group

318 final year (fourth grade) university students who are studying at the Faculty of Education in different departments in the autumn term of 2010-2011 academic years at Mehmet Akif Ersoy University formed the study group. The study group was made up of 41 students from Primary School Teaching, 39 from English Language Teaching, 73 from Social Sciences Education Department, 52 from Early Childhood Education Department, 29 from Computer Education and Instructional Technology Department, 26 from Turkish Language Education Department, 23 from Elementary Mathematics Education, 35 from Art Education Department, and in total they were 199 female and 119 male students.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS): Subjective Well-Being Scale developed by Tuzgol Dost (2005a), is a scale which consists of 46 items. Structure validity of the scale was examined using main ingredients analysis. According to factor analysis results, the factors change between .52 and .75 on each variable. SWBS Specific Value has 12 factors greater than 1. The first factor accounts for 24.52% of total variance. The total defined/stated variance is 63.83%. The scale is considered to have a single factor as well as 12 factors due to the rapid decrease after the first factor, the values regarding the common factor variance and the load values in the first factor in the analysis of specific value ingredient. Alpha cronbach reliability coefficient of SWBS is .93 and test-retest reliability coefficient is .86. Alpha cronbach internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .94 in this study.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: The scale developed by Rosenberg was adapted by Cuhadaroglu (1986). The scale composed of 63 items with 12 sub-tests. Only the sub-test of self-esteem was used in this study. At the end of the validity and reliability studies of the scale, adapted to Turkish by Cuhadaroglu (1986), psychiatric interviews were made to test the validity of the self-esteem category. In the assessment carried out with these interviews, self-esteems of the students were grouped as high, mean and low according to their views about themselves. The relationships between the results obtained from the views and self-esteem scale were calculated, and validity coefficient of the scale was found to be .71 and reliability coefficient .75. Cecen (2008) calculated the internal consistency coefficient as .82. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient obtained from the study was found as .71.

Rotter Internal-External Scale of Locus of Control: The scale developed by Rotter (1966) was translated into Turkish by Dag (1991) and its studies of validity and reliability for students were made. The scale aims to measure the position of individuals' generalized control expectations over internality-externality and the general expectation or the belief that individuals have as to the fact that reinforcers are under the control of the powers in or outside of the individual. It is applied to the individuals over 17 years old and to people who have at least graduated from secondary high school. The scale is made up of 29 items. The internal consistency of the scale calculated from the sample of 532 subjects was found as .71. KR-20 reliability coefficient of the scale in the sample of 99 subjects was found as .68, as well. Test and re-test reliability of the scale obtained as a result of its re-application with a 23 day interval on average in the sample of 99 subjects is .83. Internal consistency coefficient is .70. As a result of the Analysis of Main Components applied in the validity study, seven factors that can account for 47.7% of the total variance from the scale were obtained (n=532). While these factors were not determined homogeneous enough, they showed substantial similarity to the factors obtained with the original of the scale in terms of their number and patterns. A significant correlation of -.29 was found between the points of Rosenbaum's Learned Strength Scale, which measures self-control, and internal control. In addition, significant correlation of -.21 was determined between the belief of external locus of control and general indication point of Indication Scanning List. A preliminary study was carried out in which the researcher created by utilizing the items of some scales of original locus of control outside of Rotter Internal-External Scale of Locus of Control, where a semi-structured interview was used, and in which 53 subjects were taken into interview one by one. The correlation between the rating points in this interview and Rotter Internal-External Scale of Locus of Control points, which the subjects had answered before and the researcher did not know during the interview, was found significant as $r = .69$.

Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism Scale: Turkish adaptation study of the scale, developed by Hewitt-Flett (1991), for the university students was performed by Oral (1999). The scale consists of 45 items and it is a seven-point likert type scale. The scale has three sub-dimensions, including self-inclining, inclining to other and the perfectionism aiming at social rules. The total variance that the three factors expressed is 31%. When Cronbach Alpha coefficients are analyzed in the reliability calculations, the sub-scale for self-perfectionism was found as .91, the sub-scale for the perfectionism for others as .73 and sub-scale for the perfectionism determined by others as .80 (Oral, 1999). In addition, Tuncer and Voltan-Acar (2006) analyzed the cronbach alpha coefficients within the scope of the Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism Scale, and they found total perfectionism as .86, sub-scale for self-perfectionism as .86, sub-scale for the perfectionism for others as .65 and sub-scale for the perfectionism determined by others as .78. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient obtained in this study was calculated as .78 for total perfectionism, as .64 for self-perfectionism, as .50 for perfectionism for others and as .70 for perfectionism determined by others.

2.4 Collection and Analysis of the Data

The practices were carried out at the Faculty of Education, Mehmet Akif Ersoy University. The researchers applied the scales by attending the classes at appropriate times. The practices took about 20 minutes. In the analyses of the data obtained from this study, Correlation Coefficient of Pearson Moments was used to determine whether there is a relationship between the university students' subjective well-being, self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism. Gradual Regression Analysis was used in order to determine whether the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism predict their points/scores of subjective well-being. The data was analysed using SPSS 15.0 packaged software. .05 significance level was taken into account in the interpretation of the data.

3. Results

3.1 Findings Regarding the Correlations of Scales with Each Other

In the study, the correlation coefficients as to the relationships among the points of subjective well-being, self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism have been presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlations of the points with each other, which the students got from the scales (n=318)

Variables	<i>X</i>	Ss	1	2	3	4	5	6
Subjective well being	174.35	27.08	-	.53**	-.26**	.09	-.13*	-.13*
Self esteem	32.79	4.03	.53**	-	-.14*	.003	-.04	-.12*
Locus of control	11.47	3.85	-.26**	-.14*	-	.04	.09	.09
Self-Perfectionism	85.09	14.43	.09	.003	.04	-	.51**	-.12*
Perfectionism Determined by Others	60.08	11.83	-.13*	-.04	.09	.51**	-	.02
Perfectionism for Others	40.13	8.52	-.13*	-.12*	.09	-.12*	.02	-

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

When Table-1 is examined, it is observed that the relationships of the other scales, outside of the sub-scale for self-perfectionism, with the points taken from the subjective well-being scale is significant at the level of p<.05, p<.01.

3.2 Findings Concerning the Prediction of Subjective Well-being

Table 2. The results of gradual regression analysis regarding the variables predicting subjective well-being (n=318)

Subjective well being	R	R ²	R ² Change	F	F Change	Beta
Self esteem	.529	.280	.280	122.683*	122.683	.529
Locus of control	.559	.313	.033	71.680*	15.174	-.184
Self-Perfectionism	.567	.321	.008	49.524*	3.894	.092
Perfectionism Determined by Others	.589	.347	.026	41.665*	12.599	-.189
Perfectionism for Others	.590	.348	.001	33.321*	.314	-.026

*p<.01

When Table-2 is examined, it is observed that the variable predicting subjective well-being most is self-esteem with the percentage of 28% for expressing variance, and this is followed by locus of control with 3.3%, perfectionism determined by others with 2.6%, perfectionism for self with 0.8% and perfectionism for others with 0.1%, respectively. It is seen that the total expressing percentage of all the variables for subjective well-being is, on the other hand, 34.8%.

4. Discussion

When considered in terms of the variables dealt with in this study, it was established that subjective well-being exhibits a positive relationship with self-esteem, and a negative relationship with locus of control and perfectionism. In addition, it was observed that the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism predicted the level of subjective well-being significantly. In accordance with this result, it is seen that the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism discussed make a significant contribution to predicting the level of subjective well-being.

While it has been determined that the variable contributing to subjective well-being most is self-esteem, it is observed that the other variables were locus of control, perfectionism determined by others, perfectionism for self and perfectionism for others.

According to the results obtained from this study, it has been found out that there is a positive relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem; in addition, it has been observed that the most important variable contributing to the prediction of subjective well-being is self-esteem. Thus, it can be said that as individuals' self-esteem, in other words, their positive opinions about themselves increase, their levels of subjective well-being increase. When the literature is examined, Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007), Bosson (2000), Schimmack and Diener (2003), in their studies, came to the conclusion that self-esteem significantly predicts subjective well-being. Abdel-Khalek (2011) established a positive relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being. These investigations are in line with our studies. Unlike the aforementioned discoveries, Saygin (2008) found no relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem.

Furthermore, while a negative relationship is noticed between subjective well-being and locus of control, it has been determined that the second variable contributing to the prediction of subjective well-being is locus of control. Thus, it can be said that as individuals' external locus of control increases, in other words, as individuals let others control lives by losing the control over their own lives, the levels of subjective well-being are expected to decrease. Fiori, Brown, Cortina and Antonucci (2006), in their studies they carried out over life satisfaction and religiousness, determined that locus of control is an intermediary variable between life satisfaction and religiousness.

Another discovery of the research is, on the other hand, the fact that there is a negative relationship between subjective well-being, and perfectionism determined by others and perfectionism for others. This negative relationship can be elucidated in a way that individuals' level of perfectionism increases; their levels of satisfaction for themselves and from others decreases, thus, it can cause their subjective well-being to decrease. Crosby, Bates and Twohig (2011), in the studies they performed with 376 university students, determined significant relationships between psychological determination and perfectionism. Perolini (2011), in the study he performed with 335 university students, established a significant relationship, in a negative way, between psychological well-being and perfectionism. Albano (2011), in the study he carried out, determined a significant relationship, in a negative way, between life satisfaction and perfectionism. It can be said that these findings show parallelism with our discovery.

5. Conclusion

In this study it was found that subjective well-being exhibits a positive relationship with self-esteem, and a negative relationship with locus of control and perfectionism. In addition, it was observed that the variables of self-esteem, locus of control and multi-dimensional perfectionism predicted the level of subjective well-being. The following recommendations can be made in accordance with the results obtained from this study:

In this study, subjective well-being was examined by discussing self-esteem, locus of control and perfectionism. More different variables can be dealt with in other studies. This study was performed over the final year students of Faculty of Education. New investigations can be carried out with the students studying at different faculties and in different age groups. This study was designed as a relational study. The studies that are empirically designed and that can contribute to individuals' subjective well-being can be performed in new studies. In this study, the relationships between the individuals' subjective well-being, and self-esteem, locus of control and perfectionism were determined. Accordingly, the applications or empirical studies that make students increase their self-esteem, that enable them to take life controls in hand and that will reduce their perfectionism can be performed in their educational lives. It can also be suggested that empirical studies be made over subjective well-being in terms of creating a source for new research.

As it occurs in every study, this research also has limitations. This research is restricted with Subjective Well-Being Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Rotter Internal External Locus of Control Scale and

Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism Scale, which were used to obtain information concerning the discussed variables, and with the students attending the final year of Faculty of Education in the fall term of 2010-2011 academic years.

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Note

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