

Investigation of individual's psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction levels with and without sports

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction levels of individuals who do and do not do sports. Within the scope of the research, the study group is composed of 123 female students and 87 male students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences and Faculty of Education at Akdeniz University in the 2017-2018 spring semester. Psychological Resilience Scale, Optimism Scale, Happiness Scale, Life Satisfaction Scale, and Personal Information Form were used to collect data for the study purposes. Before the data analysis process, the normal distribution characteristics of the scores were examined using 3 methods. 1 -) If the coefficient of Skewness-Kurtosis is <1.5 , the distribution is normal. 2-) Observed by the normal distribution curve. 3-) Normality tests showed that the data showed a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was interpreted for normality because the group size was greater than 50. Besides, the t-test was used in hypothesis tests. In the study, the significance level was determined as 0.05 in statistical procedures. SPSS 22 statistical package program was used in the data analysis. When the research results were examined, the optimism level varied according to the variable of the sports level. Besides, we found that the psychological resilience level differs according to the gender variable. As a result, it can be said that the optimism level of the individuals who do sports is higher than those who do not exercise and that the psychological resilience levels of male participants are higher than those of female participants.

Keywords: Psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, life satisfaction.

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INTRODUCTION

This research is designed to investigate the levels of psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction of individuals with and without sports. One of the main reasons for this research is the observation that the main issues focused on the psychological context in literature research are generally in a system structured on psychopathology and negative concepts (Gillham and Seligman, 1999; Sheldon and King, 2001). Research in the field of sports science and sports psychology also focuses on negative concepts as observed in the psychology literature (Eysenck et al., 2007; Jones, 1995; Smith et al., 2007; Latinjak et al., 2017).

While both empirical and theoretical studies focus on the negative aspects of individuals and their performance

declines, it has recently been suggested by researchers that research needs to be handled from a different perspective. This proposal has often been highlighted not only in the field of psychology but also in the field of sports psychology (Verner-Filion et al., 2017; Filo and Coghlan, 2016). The researchers who hold this view and called this trend as positive psychology trend created their research with a positive frame and emphasized that it is possible to obtain positive results by developing human life's positive aspects (Verner-Filion et al., 2017; Filo and Coghlan, 2016).

In recent years, the positive psychology trend in the field of psychology has been embraced by many researchers. It is observed that there is an emphasis on

developing positive aspects of individuals after the positive psychology trend on human life and investigating positive psychological dynamics that affect individuals (Eryılmaz, 2013; Aydın et al., 2013; Çivitçi, 2012).

Positive psychology, which has started to gain importance in modern psychology, focuses on improving some of the positive and strong characteristics of individuals, experiencing positive subjective lives, and maintaining psychological health through studies that increase their happiness (wellbeing). Positive psychology is focused on the positive aspects of individuals, such as life satisfaction, psychological resilience, and happiness (Tekinalp and Terzi, 2015)

In this respect, research in the field of sports psychology emphasizes that sports, exercise, or physical activity positively affect positive psychological dynamics. (Bayköse et al., 2016; Şahin et al., 2017; Bayköse et al., 2017; Şahin et al., 2017; Adiloğulları et al., 2017; Nergiz et al., 2015). The research in the field of sport and exercise psychology has brought to mind some fundamental questions while trying to clarify how positive psychology factors shape and interact in sports settings. Does sport make us happier? Are the levels of happiness higher in individuals who exercise than those who do not? Is life satisfaction higher in individuals who have higher physical activity levels? Researchers who asked such questions often cited the results as meaning "yes" in the corresponding literature (McAuley et al., 2000; Richards et al., 2015; Rasciute and Downward, 2010). One of the factors of Positive Psychology is psychological resilience. When we look at the literature on the concept of psychological resilience, it is seen that there are many different definitions. Psychological resilience is the ability of the individual to successfully overcome and adapt to these challenging life events when faced with several adverse, stressful, challenging events, or traumas. This adaptation occurs through the interaction of protective and risk factors in the process (Karairmak, 2006; Öz and Yılmaz, 2009; Doğan, 2015). When the literature is examined, it is observed that sports and physical activity increase both physical and psychological resilience in coping with stress, while supporting the protective factors that play a role in the development of psychological resilience (Şahin et al., 2012). Actively exercising is known to increase the secretion of the endorphin hormone, also known as the happiness hormone, and dopamine (Tarhan, 2005). From here, it is seen that doing sports and exercise positively affects happiness (or increases happiness). The concept of happiness (or wellbeing) is an important concept that has been the subject of research for many years, affecting all areas in the lives of individuals. Happiness has a protective effect against psychological problems; being psychologically healthy, having high life satisfaction, being successful in interpersonal interactions, etc. It has been determined in related research that there are some positive results. The concept of subjective well-being is the psychological

meaning of happiness and is defined as individuals feeling positive emotions more than negative emotions and enjoying life. Subjective well-being has a three-dimensional structure; positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Positive affect covers emotions such as happiness, peace, excitement, pride, while negative affect covers emotions such as anger, guilt, hatred, anxiety and sadness. The cognitive element of subjective well-being is life satisfaction (Koruklu and Özdemir, 2011; Eryılmaz and Öğülmüş, 2010). Life satisfaction means meeting one's expectations, demands, wishes, and desires. (Avşaroğlu et al., 2005) Life satisfaction is the emotional response of individuals to life, including work, leisure, and non-work time. (Dikmen, 1995) Besides the factors affecting life satisfaction, there are many factors affected by life satisfaction. The life satisfaction of our lives and whether it is appropriate for our ideal can be counted among these factors (Dağlı and Baysal, 2016). Life satisfaction expresses not only the pleasure we obtain from a certain situation but also expresses the whole life of the individual and covers all dimensions (Dost, 2007). Self theorists argue that people are constantly seeking happiness due to their nature and that the enjoyment of life (satisfaction) exists innately (Cüceloğlu, 2016)

Both the physical and psychological aspects of sports and exercise positively affect people and, with it, life satisfaction is observed in related research (Mağaracı, 2017).

Another of the concepts of positive psychology that are the subject of our research is optimism. Some people are naturally positive about their lives. Optimists consider themselves psychologically healthier than pessimists and perceive their lives more positively (Aronson et al., 2012). When optimists encounter any problem situation, they attribute it to modifiable and controllable reasons, while pessimists explain problems for irreplaceable reasons. Optimistic people strive to overcome problems, while pessimists give up more quickly (Gillham et al., 2001; Scheier et al., 2001). One of the important concepts of positive psychology, which suggests that people should focus on their strengths, is the concept of learned optimism. Behaviorists have argued that the only way to make people change is to change that person's environment because the person does not have the power to change himself. Seligman has opposed this view. According to Seligman, people can learn to be optimistic by changing the way they think, just as they learn to be helpless in the face of bad events (Tekinalp and Terzi, 2015). According to Seligman, learned optimism is not equivalent to positive thinking. This is about how individuals interpret their lives (positive or negative) rather than convincing themselves that everything is positive. So it depends on what attitude they develop against failure or defeat (Martens, 2009).

In this context, this research aimed to examine the psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, and life

satisfaction levels of individuals with and without sports.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Model

It is field research that aims to examine events and phenomena in natural conditions. A screening model was used in the research. In the screening model, the goal is to portray the existing situation as it is. The person involved in the research is tried to identify the object or event as it is, within its circumstances. No attempt is made to influence or manipulate them. What is important is that what is wanted to be learned is observed and determined (Karasar, 2003).

Population

In the spring semester of 2017-2018 at Akdeniz University, students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences and the Faculty of Education constitute the population of the research.

Sample

The research group consists of 210 students, 123 of whom were randomly selected to study at the Faculty of Sports Sciences and Faculty of Education in the spring semester of 2017-2018 at Akdeniz University, 123 of whom were female and 87 of whom were male. The sample of the study was determined according to the subject of our research, the participants in the study were made up of individuals who do and do not sports, so it consisted of 102 people who studied at the Faculty of Sports Sciences and 108 people who studied at the Faculty of Education. Total age averages were calculated as 20.82 ± 2.53 .

Data collection tools

Psychological Resilience Scale, Optimism Scale, Happiness Scale, Life Satisfaction Scale, and Personal Information Form were used to collect data for the study purposes.

Psychological resilience scale

Psychological Resilience Scale was developed by Smith et al. (2008) and adapted to Turkish culture by Doğan (2015). The psychological resilience scale has been developed in 5 point Likert type and measures in a single sub-dimension of 6 items. The resulting Cronbach alpha

reliability coefficient of the scale is .91.

Scale of optimism

The scale of optimism was developed by Scheier and Carver (1985) and adapted to Turkish culture by Aydin and Tezer (1991). The optimism scale has been developed in a 5 point Likert type and measures in a single sub-size of 12 items. The reliability coefficient of the scale is .83.

Happiness scale

The Oxford Happiness Scale was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted to Turkish culture by Doğan and Çötök (2011). The psychological resilience scale has been developed in 5 point Likert type and measures in a single sub-dimension of 7 items. The reliability coefficient of the scale is .96.

Life satisfaction scale

The psychological resilience scale was developed by Diener et al. (1985) and adapted to Turkish culture by Koker (1991). The psychological resilience scale has been developed in the 7 point Likert type and measures in a single sub-dimension of 5 items. The reliability coefficient of the scale is .88.

Personal information form

A personal information form consisting of three questions was used to determine the demographic characteristics of the students who participated in the study. It is aimed to determine the sports status, gender, and age groups of the students with the personal information form.

Data analysis

The normal distribution property of the scores was examined with 3 methods. 1 -) distribution is normal if the coefficient of skewness is 0. 2 -) normal distribution curve. 3 -) it was determined that the data showed normal distribution as a result of normality tests. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was interpreted for normality because the group size was greater than 50. When looking at Tests of Normality p values, it is determined that they show the normal distribution since they took values above .05 in all variables. Besides, the t-test was used in hypothesis tests. In the study, the significance level was determined as 0.05 in statistical procedures. SPSS 22 statistical package software was used in the

analysis of the data obtained in the study.

FINDINGS

When Table 1 is examined, it is observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the optimism levels of the individuals who do sports and those who do not ($p < 0.05$). There is no statistically significant difference between the life satisfaction, happiness, and psychological resilience levels of the individuals who do and do not sport according to the sports variable ($p >$

0.05).

When Table 2 is examined, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference between the optimism, life satisfaction, and happiness levels of men and women according to the gender variable ($p > 0.05$). According to the gender variable, there is a statistically significant difference between the psychological resilience levels of male and female individuals ($p < 0.05$). In this context, the statistical difference in the level of psychological resilience was found to be in favor of male participants.

Table 1. Results related to optimism, life satisfaction, happiness, and psychological resilience levels according to the students' fitness variable.

Variables	Doing sport (n = 139)	Not doing sport (n = 71)	t	p
	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	$\bar{X} \pm SS$		
Optimism	3.23 \pm 0.50	3.05 \pm 0.37	2.67	<0.008
Life satisfaction	4.45 \pm 1.38	4.13 \pm 1.15	1.81	0.089
Happiness	3.01 \pm 0.62	2.89 \pm 0.49	1.49	0.168
Psychological resilience	2.93 \pm 0.52	2.86 \pm 0.33	1.20	0.300

Table 2. Results of students' levels of optimism, life satisfaction, happiness, and psychological resilience according to gender variable.

Variables	Female (n = 123)	Male (n=87)	t	P
	$\bar{X} \pm SS$	$\bar{X} \pm SS$		
Optimism	3.12 \pm 0.42	3.23 \pm 0.52	-1.63	0.105
Life satisfaction	4.38 \pm 1.27	4.30 \pm 1.37	0.42	0.671
Happiness	2.95 \pm 0.58	3.00 \pm 0.58	-0.58	0.564
Psychological resilience	2.84 \pm 0.39	2.99 \pm 0.54	-2.32	<0.021

DISCUSSION

This research aimed to examine the psychological resilience, optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction levels of individuals who do and do not sports. In the context of the findings obtained for the purpose, the information in the relevant field article is discussed in this section.

There is a statistically significant difference between the optimism levels of individuals who do sports and those who do not. This observed difference appears to be in favor of individuals who do sports. In a similar study, optimism, the focus of control, and self-esteem levels of individuals who exercised were higher than those who did not (Özdemir, 2017). In another study, it is concluded that sports activities that individuals perform regularly affect the physical self-perception positively, and positively promote their psychological health (Makar, 2016). According to this information, Özdemir, (2017) and Makar (2016) can be said to support our research. A study

examining the personality traits and stress coping styles of college students studying in sports faculties shows that individuals often take an optimistic and self-confident approach to dealing with stress (Eraslan, 2015). It appears that there is no statistically significant difference between the levels of life satisfaction, happiness, and psychological resilience of individuals who do and do not sport according to the doing sports variable.

There is no statistically significant difference between the optimism, life satisfaction, and happiness levels of male and female individuals according to the gender variable. There is a statistically significant difference between the psychological resilience levels of male and female individuals according to the gender variable. In this context, the statistical difference in the level of psychological resilience was found to be in favor of male participants. In line with these findings, Tusaie and Patterson (2006) found gender differences that boys were more optimistic than girls. These findings by Tusaie and Patterson (2006) contradict our research results.

Conclusion

It can be said that individuals who do sports have higher levels of optimism than those who do not and that men have higher levels of psychological resilience than women participants.

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