PERCEIVED LIFE SATISFACTION AND ANXIETY AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract - The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between life satisfaction and anxiety together with some demographic variables in high school students. This purpose, to measure students' life satisfaction was used Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS). The MSLSS has got five dimensions such as family, friends, school, living environment and self [7]. To measure the emotional state of the students was used the Hospital Anxiety Depression (HAD) Scale [18]. One hundred eighty-three high school students participated in the study. 59.6 % were female and 40.4% were male. Gender, mother education level, father education level, economic level, and anxiety were used to explain students' life satisfaction. In the study, six separate regression models were established for five dimensions (family, friends, school, living environment and self) and total MSLSS. The models of family, school and living environment and MSLSS dependent variables were found to be statistically significant. The findings showed a significant negative relation between anxiety and MSLSS (β=-0.325; $p<0.01$), also economic level and MSLSS (β=0.160; $p<0.05$). The independent variables explained only 13% of the MSLSS level. Anxiety was the most important variable to explain life satisfaction. The second important variable was the economic level to explain life satisfaction. The gender variable was found to be statistically significant only in the model established for the school-dimension. It was concluded that the school life satisfaction levels of females were higher than male students. The anxiety variable was found to be statistically significant in family, school and living environment and MSLSS models. It was concluded that both MSLSS and living environment satisfaction levels of the students with high economic levels were high. The result of the multiple regression analysis showed that the friends-dimension and self-dimension model was not significant. A strong and negative relationship was found between MSLSS and its subscales and HAD-Anxiety (except friends-dimension and self-dimension). As a result, it is possible to say that anxiety and economic level variables have significant explanatory variables in explaining the MSLSS level. It can be said that the findings of this study will help teachers in schools to educate more effectively.

Keywords - Anxiety, High School, Life Satisfaction, Students

I. INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction is considered as a general assessment of one's own life [14]. While there are hundreds of life satisfaction studies for adults, studies on this subject for students have recently been discussed. Recent research reveals the importance of life satisfaction in understanding the psychological well-being of children and teenagers/adolescents. Life satisfaction is defined as the cognitive evaluation of life in the main living areas such as family, social life and living environment [3]. Life satisfaction cannot be considered simply as an output of negative experiences, but it can predict psychological distress and unsuitable behaviors [16].

The individual of secondary education age has an introverted structure rather than an extrovert. It evaluates itself at short intervals. Because life satisfaction is directly related to the quality of the process, it is under the influence of social and economic environment as well as psychological. In this direction, besides the results of the personal gains of the individual (student), it affects the quality of life and the satisfaction of life in the social and economic environment that he/she finds ready for a reason which is not available. The purpose of the study, studying in a secondary school class in Turkey, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th-grade students' satisfaction with life, and anxiety is to investigate the level.

II. METHOD

In order to measure students' life satisfaction, the multidimensional student's life satisfaction scale (MSLSS) was used (Huebner, 2001). The scale consists of five dimensions: family, friends, school, living environment and self. The scale includes a total of forty items, and each item ranges from never to always in a 6-point Likert type. The Hospital Anxiety Depression (HAD) scale was used to measure the emotional state of the students [18]. This scale has 14 items is used to determine the risk and anxiety level in terms of anxiety and depression. We used the anxiety dimension in this study.

The sample of the study consisted of 183 high school students attending three different state high schools. The questionnaires distributed to the students were completed by the volunteer students themselves. T-test, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data.

III. FINDINGS

Of the 183 students who participated in the study, 40.44% were male and 59.56% were female. The age of the students ranged between 14-18 (mean=16.06 ± 1.12). 31.8% of the sample consisted of 9th-grade students, 25% of 10th-grade students, 21.4% of 11th-grade students and 21.9% of 12th-grade students. The

results of the reliability analysis of the scales used in the study are presented in Table 1 with means and standard deviations.

Scales	Items	Mean	S.Dev.	C. Alpha
MSLSS	40	115.81	14.25	0.85
Family	7	20.14	4.47	0.83
Friends	9	28.26	4.55	0.76
School	8	22.05	4.88	0.78
Living environment	9	23.56	5.88	0.79
Self	7	22.12	3.97	0.76
HAD-A	7	10.06	3.85	0.74

Table I: Cronbach α (n=183)

The reliability coefficients of the scales used in the study ranged between 0.74 and 0.85, and all coefficients were within acceptable ranges.

Scales	Female (n=109)	Male (n=74)	t	p
MSLSS	4.30±.56	4.41±.49	-1.356	0.177
Family	4.19±.97	4.51±.91	-2.350	0.020
Friends	4.71±.75	4.71±.78	-.039	0.969
School	4.17±.75	3.92±.67	2.392	0.018
Living environment	3.80±1.07	4.12±.80	-2.414	0.017
Self	4.68±.84	4.83±.86	-1.174	0.242
HAD-A	10.68±3.98	9.12±3.47	2.880	0.004

Table II: t-test for gender

In Table 2, it was found that the multidimensional life satisfaction scale showed a statistically significant difference in the "family", "school" and "living environment" sub-dimensions of female and male students.

In this case, it was found that the satisfaction levels of the males from their families and the satisfaction levels of the living environment were higher than the female students, and the school satisfaction levels of the females were higher than the males. This situation is parallel to the patriarchal feature of the Turkish family structure. It is known that males live a free life and females live a more restricted life by their families.

This is confirmed by the fact that female students have more participation in school life satisfaction than male students. When the emotional state was taken into consideration, it was found that female students had higher anxiety levels than male students at a statistically significant level of 1%. These results coincide with the results of the study conducted by Bilgel et al. (2007) for university students.

	HAD-A
MSLSS	-0.374**
Family	-0.374**
Friends	-0.137
School	-0.195**
Living environment	-0.315**
Self	-0.108

Table III: Correlations between HAD-A and MSLSS

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

A significant correlation was found between anxiety and MSLSS and its sub-dimensions at %1 significance level as seen in Table 3. Significant correlations were obtained between anxiety and MSLSS, except for the "friends" and "self" sub dimensions.

Variables	Family	Friends	School	Living Environment	Self	MSLSS
Gender[1]	0.110	-0.045	-0.201**	0.121	0.050	0.029
Mother education[2]	0.006	0.052	0.050	-0.017	0.068	0.044
Father education[2]	0.092	-0.113	-0.078	0.018	0.091	0.003
Economic level[3]	0.068	0.074	0.053	0.199**	0.061	0.160*
HAD-Anxiety	-0.342**	-0.121	-0.222**	-0.248**	-0.046	-0.325**
Adjusted R^2	0.14	0.002	0.06	0.11	0.04	0.13

Table IV: Regression model (N=183)

* $p < 0,05$; ** $p < 0,01$

All coefficients are standardized coefficients. [1]Gender:1-Female, 2-Male; [2]Mother-Father Education: 1- Secondary school and lower 2-High school and higher[3] Economic level: 1-Lower/Middle; 2- Upper Middle/Upper

In this part of the study, gender, mother education level, father education level, economic level, and anxiety were used to explain students' life satisfaction. Six separate regression models were established for five dimensions (family, friends, school, living environment and self) and total MSLSS. The models of family, school and living environment and MSLSS dependent variables were found to be statistically significant. The findings showed a significant negative relation between anxiety and MSLSS (β=-0.325; $p<0.01$), and also a positive relation between economic level and MSLSS (β=0.160; $p<0.05$). The independent variables

explained only 13% of the MSLSS level for this model. Anxiety was the most important variable to explain life satisfaction. The second important variable was the economic level to explain life satisfaction. The gender variable was found to be statistically significant only in the model established for the school-dimension (β=-0.201; $p<0.01$). It was concluded that the school life satisfaction levels of females were higher than male students. The anxiety variable was found to be statistically significant in family (β=-0.342; $p<0.01$), school (β=-0.222; $p<0.01$) and living environment (β=-0.248; $p<0.01$) and MSLSS models. It was concluded that both MSLSS and living environment satisfaction levels of the students with high economic levels were high. The result of the multiple regression analysis showed that the friends-dimension and self-dimension model was not significant.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Relationships between life satisfaction and depression, loneliness, and self-esteem were found [8]. For example, Lewinsohn et al. (1991) concluded that low life satisfaction triggers depression. Gilman, Huebner, and Laughlin (2000) found statistically significant negative correlations between the multidimensional life satisfaction scale and depression and anxiety levels. Büssing et al. (2008) and Saunders et al. (1999) found a negative relationship between life satisfaction and depression. Khramtsova and Saarnio (2007) found a statistically negative relationship between life satisfaction and depression, and a positive relationship with happiness. Similar findings were found to be valid for stress [4]. Relations were found between low life satisfaction and aggressive behavior [17], depression, anxiety, stress [9], stressful life, externalization, and internalization [13]. All these findings indicate that life satisfaction is a key indicator of the quality of life [10], [5]. It was concluded that female students had higher levels of satisfaction from school than male students, and that male students had higher levels of satisfaction from family and living environment than female students, and anxiety levels of female students were higher than male students. A negative relationship was found between MSLSS and its subscales and HAD-Anxiety (except friends-dimension and self-dimension). In models for MSLSS and living environment satisfaction levels of the students with high economic levels found high. As a result, it is possible to say that anxiety and economic level variables have significant explanatory variables in explaining the MSLSS level. It can be said that the findings of this study will help teachers in schools to educate more effectively.

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