Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SciVerse ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 47 (2012) 256 – 262

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

CY-ICER 2012

Investigating psychological well being of university students according to lifestyles

Ahmet Ragip Ozpolat [a] *, Isa Yucel Isgor [b], Fahri Sezer [c]

[a] *A isst. Prof. Dr. Erzincan Üniversitesi,Eğitim Fakültesi,Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü,PDR ABD,Erzincan 2400, Turkey*
[b] *Asisst. Prof. Dr. Erzincan Üniversitesi,Eğitim Fakültesi,Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü,PDR ABD,,Erzincan 2400, Turkey*
[c] *Asisst. Prof. Dr. Balıkesir Ünv. Necatibey Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, PDR ABD. 1000 Turkey*

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine life styles of university students and examine if their lifestyles are effective on psychological well-being.The sample group of this study is composed of 570 students studying at Ataturk University during the 2010-2011 school years. The sample was constituted by using cluster sampling method on target population. In order to determine university students' life styles life-style inventory, which was developed by Kern (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Özpolat (2011), was used. So as to determine university students' psychological well-being The Scales of Psychological Well-Being, which was developed by Ryff (1989) and adapted to Turkish by Cenkseven (2004), was used. SPSS program was used to analyze the data.

Keywords: Psychological well being, Lifestyle, Self esteem,

1. Introduction

From the moment that an individual comes into the world, he develops his own life style through interactions with surroundings and trial-error experiences. He arranges all his phenomenology according to this life style. This arrangement leads us to build an opinion about the world surrounding us and explain the meaning of it. In the end, these entire rules appear as individuals' own life style principles. As a result of this, individuals' own life principles determine their life styles.

According to Adler, all individuals carry the signs of cultural elements that they are included and heritage, which are inherent biological features. At the same time, these elements are indicators of how these individuals will have a relationship with the world (Powers & Griffith, 1987). This communication style that individuals have with their surroundings explains their relationship with themselves, others and the world, and this framework builds individual's life style (Adler, 1935).

Many scientists, who followed Adler's studies, took into consideration of Adler's emphasis on life styles and started to question them in a more systematic way. While questioning this, individual psychologists mainly used the interview technique (Eckstein & Kern, 2009). However, having understood that this technique differs from one counselor o other while determining the life styles, individual psychologists decided to develop a more systematic

* Ahmet Ragıp ÖZPOLAT. Tel.: 505 511 71 32
E-mail address: ahmetozpolat@hotmail.com

1877-0428 © 2012 Published by Elsevier Ltd. Selection and/or peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Uzunboylu
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.648

approach. By taking notice of the life styles regarding early childhood period and individual psychology, a standard inventory was developed in 1982 by Kern, Wheeler and Curlette (Kern, 1996).

According to this inventory Kern et. al claimed that there are five different life styles. The first life-style scale is *"Control"*. Individuals in this group are people who feel uncomfortable when things happen without their control in their lives. In their lives these individuals are generally perceived as forceful, directing, persuasive, and assertive. People whose life-styles are described as: *"Perfectionists"* are individuals who try to do everything perfectly. Those individuals are sensitive, cautious and they refrain from making mistakes. People whose life-style is described as: *"Need to Please"* are individuals who are very sensitive to other people in their social environment. These individuals particularly refrain from hurting or being mean to people that they communicate. For this respect, these individuals are known as friendly, socially active, warm, and loyal. People whose life-styles are described as: *"Self-esteem",* are unpredictable in their lives; they are mostly pessimist, discouraged and unable to express their own opinions. The last life-style scale is *"Expectations"*. People in this group are individuals who are aspiring, competitive, and ambitious in their lives. They try to reach their personal goals and they have expectations in their lives regarding these goals.

The concept of Psychological Well-Being symbolizes a multi-dimensional structure consisted of life attitudes. Ryff (1989) points that there are no theoretical based approaches to explain psychological well-being, he based his studies on personality and development psychologists' theoretical explanations of positive mental health and he established "Multiple Facets of Psychological Well-being" model. In this model psychological well-being was designed in a broad way questioning if a person is aware of his potential from his life goals to his relationships; from the quality of his relationship with others, to what he feels about his life (Ryff, 1995).

In his model Ryff (1989) used: Maslow's (1968) self-actualization, Allport's (1961; Ewen, 1988) maturity, Rogers' (1961) fully functioning self and Jung's (1933; referred by Ryff, 1989) individuation concepts; Erikson' (1968) psychosocial stages of development, Buhler's (1935; referred by Ryff, 1989) basic tendencies of human life and Neugarten's (1973; referred by Ryff, 1989: 1069-1081) features of personality changes in adulthood and elderliness and Jahoda's (1960) criteria for positive mental health.

In the literature review relations between individuals' life styles and well-being were not analyzed similar to that study, but individuals' psychological well-being was examined from several variables' perspectives. Some of the noteworthy studies are as follows: Schmutte and Ryff (1997), in which they reviewed the relation between personality and psychological well-being. Harrington and Loffredo (2001) examined the relation between psychological well-being and life satisfaction. Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) studied the relation between subjective well-being and psychological well-being from theoretical perspective. Segrin and Taylor (2007), analyzed the relation between interpersonal relations, social skills and psychological well-being.

In this study it was considered that individuals' life-styles are effective on their psychological states. For this reason, it was analyzed to what extent university students' life styles affect their psychological well-being

2. Method

The sample group of this study is composed of 570 students studying at Ataturk University during the 2010-2011 school years. The sample was constituted by using cluster sampling method on target population. In order to determine university students' life styles life-style inventory, which was developed by Kern (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Özpolat (2011), was used. So as to determine university students' psychological well-being The Scales of Psychological Well-Being, which was developed by Ryff (1989) and adapted to Turkish by Cenkseven (2004), was used.

2.1.Data Collection Tool

2.1.1. Life-Styles Inventory

Life-styles Inventory was developed by Kern (1996) and adapted to Turkish by Özpolat (2011). In Turkish form of life-styles inventory, there are 5 items in each subscale. The highest score of each subscale is 25 while lowest is 5. Individuals are asked to grade (between 1 and 5 points) each item in the scale according to what extent they are convenient to themselves. Answers of items were graded as: 5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= No Opinion,

2= Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree. The scale consists of 5 sub-dimensions (Control, Perfectionism, Pleasing, Self-esteem and Expectations) and each sub-dimension has 5 items. The scale provides the total score and 5 subscale points. High scores for each dimension in the life-style inventory reflect that individual embraces that life style. As a result, it is claimed that the highest scores taken from each life-style inventory's subscales provide information about individual's life-style orientation.

2.1.2.The Scales for Psychological Well-Being

The Scales of Psychological Well-Being was developed by Carol D. Ryff (1989) and adapted to Turkish by Cenkseven (2004). This scale is a 6-likert style and consist 84 of items. Each scale has six components that include 14 items. These components include individual's positive evaluations about his past life or himself (self acceptance), the sense that he continues to grow and develop as a person (personal growth), individual's sense of meaningfulness and purposefulness in life (purpose in life), building quality ties to other in relationships (positive relations with others), the capacity of individual to manage effectively his life and the life/world surrounding him (environmental mastery) and the sense of self-determination (autonomy). Out of 84 items scale, 44 are positive and 40 items are negative expressions and negative expressions are graded reversely. The highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 504, the lowest is 84.

2.2. Processing

Scientists used related statistical techniques from the SPSS 17 statistic package in order to examine the analysis of University Students' Life-Styles and Their Psychological Well-Being. These techniques are: Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test and Spearman's rank correlation analysis.

2.3. Findings

In order to understand if there is a normal distribution regarding students' scores for psychological well-being and life-style, which are constant variables of this study, two groups' results were subjected to Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Z) goodness of fit test (K-S) separately. Findings can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Z) Test

	Control	Perfectionism	Need To Please	Self Esteem	Expectations	Positive Relations with Others	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth	Purpose In Life	Self-Acceptance
N	570	570	570	570	570	570	570	570	570	570	570
Mean	17.7	22.9	18	17.3	18.5	61.7	61	59.6	59.7	59.6	63.4
Std. Deviation	3.77	5.86	3.46	3.31	3.36	10.6	11.7	11	10.2	8.23	11.1
Z	3.25	3.47	3.13	2.24	2.39	2.69	3.24	3.37	4.07	3.78	3.64
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Analyzing Table 1 it is seen that, in this research the groups did not have parametric characteristic regarding the psychological well-being scores and life-styles scores. With reference to these findings in statistical analysis, nonparametric hypothesis tests were used.

Table 2 Correlation between University Students' Psychological Well-Being Total Scores and Life-Styles

		Control	Perfectionism	Need To Please	Self Esteem	Expectations
Total Psychological Well-Being	r	.657(**)	.500(**)	-.149(**)	-.328(**)	.134(**)
	p	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
	N	570	570	570	570	570

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Analyzing Table 2 it is found that, the correlation coefficient between university students' psychological well-being total scores and subscales of life-styles is found as follows: Control subscale (r: .657), Perfectionism subscale (r: .500), Need to please subscale (r: -.149), Self-esteem subscale (r: -.328) and Expectations subscale (r: .134). It is revealed that these correlation values are significant at the p< .001 level. According to this result, it was observed that there is a positive and medium level relationship between psychological well-being and control and perfectionism subscales, while there is positive and low level relationship with expectations subscales. It was revealed that there is a negative and low level relationship between psychological well-being and need to please and self-esteem subscales.

Table 3 Correlation between University Students' Psychological Well-Being Subscale Scores and Life-Styles

		Control	Perfectionism	Need to Please	Self-esteem	Expectations
Autonomy	R	.607(**)	.664(**)	-.317(**)	-.432(**)	-.162(**)
	P	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
	N	570	570	570	570	570
Environmental Mastery	R	.635(**)	.511(**)	-.357(**)	-.451(**)	-.114(**)
	P	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.006
	N	570	570	570	570	570
Personal Growth	R	.598(**)	.609(**)	-.250(**)	-.493(**)	-.129(**)
	P	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002
	N	570	570	570	570	570
Purpose In Life	R	.545(**)	.353(**)	-.238(**)	-.303(**)	.242(**)
	P	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
	N	570	570	570	570	570
Self-Acceptance	R	.522(**)	.127(**)	-.055	-.163(**)	.331(**)
	P	0.001	0.002	0.187	0.001	0.001
	N	570	570	570	570	570
Positive Relations with Others	R	-.162(**)	-.269(**)	.391(**)	.439(**)	.490(**)
	P	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
	N	570	570	570	570	570

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen in Table 3, it was found that correlation coefficient between autonomy and control is (r: .607 p: .001), autonomy and perfectionism is (r: .664 p: .001), autonomy and need to please is (r: -.317 p: .001), autonomy and self-esteem is (r: -.432 p: .001), and autonomy and expectations is (r: -.162 p: .0001). According to this result, there is a positive and medium level relationship between control and perfectionism; however, there is a negative and medium level relationship between autonomy and need to please and self-esteem, and a negative and low level relationship between autonomy and expectations.

Table 3 showed that, correlation coefficient between environmental mastery and control is (r: .635 p: .001), environmental mastery and perfectionism is (r: .511 p: .001), environmental mastery and need to please is (r: -.357 p: .001), environmental mastery and self-esteem is (r: -.451 p: .001) and environmental mastery and expectations is (r: -.114 p: .0001). According to this result, there is a positive and medium level relationship between environmental mastery and control and perfectionism; however, there is a negative and medium level relationship between environmental mastery and need to please and self-esteem, and a negative and low level relationship between environmental mastery and expectations.

Continuing to analyze the Table it can be seen that, correlation coefficient between personal growth and control is (r: .598 p: .001), personal growth and perfectionism is (r: .609 p: .001), personal growth and need to please is (r: -.250 p: .001), personal growth and self-esteem is (r: -.493 p: .001) and personal growth and expectations is (r: -.129 p: .0001). These findings prove that there is a positive and medium level relationship between personal growth and control and perfectionism; however, there is a negative and low level relationship between personal growth and need to please and expectations. It was obtained that there is a negative and medium level relationship between personal growth and self-esteem.

In addition, it was revealed that correlation coefficient between purpose in life and control is (r: .545 p: .001), purpose in life and perfectionism is (r: .353 p: .001), purpose in life and need to please is (r: -.238 p: .001), purpose in life and self-esteem is (r: -.303 p: .001) and purpose in life and expectations is (r: .242 p: .0001). According to this finding, there is a positive and medium level relationship between purpose in life and control and perfectionism; however, there is a negative and low level relationship purpose in life and need to please, and there is a positive and low level relationship between purpose in life and expectations, while there is a negative and medium level relationship between purpose in life and self-esteem.

Analyzing the correlation coefficient the results are as follows: self-acceptance and control is (r: .522 p: .001), self-acceptance and perfectionism is (r: .127 p: .001), self-acceptance and need to please is (r: -.055 p: .001), self-acceptance and self-esteem is (r: -.163 p: .001) and self-acceptance and expectations is (r: -.331 p: .0001). These results show that there is a positive and medium relationship between self-acceptance and control, there is a positive and low level relationship between self-acceptance and perfectionism, there is a negative and medium level relationship between self-acceptance and expectations, and there is a negative and low level relationship between self-acceptance and need to please and self-esteem.

In conclusion, it was found that correlation coefficient between Positive Relations with Others and control is (r: .-162 p: .001), Positive Relations with Others and perfectionism is (r: .-269 p: .001), Positive Relations with Others and need to please is (r: .391 p: .001), Positive Relations with Others and self-esteem is (r: .439 p: .001) and Positive Relations with Others and expectations is (r: .490 p: .0001). According to this result, there is a negative and low level relationship between Positive Relations with Others and control and perfectionism; and there is a positive and medium level relationship between Positive Relations with Others and need to please, self-esteem and expectations.

3. Discussion

It was observed that there is a positive and medium level relationship between psychological well-being and control and perfectionism subscales, while there is a positive and low level relationship between psychological well-being and expectations. It was revealed that there is a negative and low level relationship between psychological well-being and need to please and self-esteem subscales. With respect to this finding it can be argued that, individuals whose life styles are control and perfectionism oriented feel better, from the psychological well-being perspective, than other individuals who embrace other life styles. In their meta-analysis study, Deneve and Cooper (1998) reviewed studies analyzing the relationship between 137 personality features and psychological well-being, and found that personality predicts life satisfaction, happiness and positive affection equally while it predicts the negative affection slightly. Life style, which individual embraces, is an important part of individual's personality. As a result, it can be claimed that individuals who pursuit perfection in their lives and control themselves feel, psychologically, better than others who embrace other life styles.

The fact that psychological well-being scores of individuals, who embrace self-esteem and need for please oriented life styles, are negative, leads to argue that those individuals do not feel good from psychological

perspective. Wilson and Peterson (1988) claim that one of the most important determinants of life satisfaction and happiness is self-esteem. Individuals, whose self-esteem is in high levels, mentioned that they are happier and enjoy life better. It is understood that self-esteem levels are low in those who got high scores from the life-styles inventory's self-esteem sub dimension. Due to the nature of life-styles inventory, these sub dimension items, basically, measure the lowness of self-esteem. As a result, this research also showed that individuals whose self-esteem is in low level are not healthy as well regarding psychological well-being perspective.

Individuals who embrace a need for please oriented life style live by accepting what is substantial in their lives. For this reason, these individuals keep living from this point of view: "I only deserve this". In a way they are depressive individuals. According to a study conducted by Kahn, Hessling and Russel (2003); it was questioned if negative affection can explain the relationship between perceived social support, being good psychologically (depression, loneliness and life satisfaction) and bodily health. At the end of the analysis it was seen that negative affection can explain the relationship between perceived social support, being good psychologically and bodily health. In this study, it can be argued that psychological well-beings of those individuals, who embrace need to please oriented life style, are not healthy at all. It can be assumed that individuals, who embrace expectations oriented life style, are more ambitious in their lives. The reason is that this type of individuals always set goals in their lives and try to fulfill them. By doing so, they try to meet their expectations. It can be argued that, psychological well-being of these individuals, who embrace this type of life style, is positive and good.

On the other hand, with respect to the psychological well-being scales sub dimensions, there is a positive relationship between individuals who embrace control and perfection oriented life styles and autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life and self-acceptance scores; while there is a negative relationship with positive relations with others scores. This finding leads us to assume that, individuals who have control and perfectionism oriented life styles always want to control everything in their lives and they are closed minded to others' opinions and views. As a result, it is quite possible for them to have unhealthy relationships with other individuals.

Individuals, who embrace self-esteem and need to please oriented life styles, have negative relationship with psychological well-being sub dimensions including Autonomy, Personal Growth, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life and Self-acceptance scores; while there is a positive relationship with positive relations with others scores. With referenc to these findings, it is possible to argue that individuals who embrace Self-esteem and Need for Please oriented life style are not healthy regarding Environmental Mastery, Self-acceptance, Autonomy and Personal Growth; however, they can have positive relations with others. Accordingly, it can be claimed that these individuals care about others more than themselves and prioritize others' desires over their own desires, by doing so they have better relations with others and refrain from having conflicts. Psychological well-being of individuals, who have Expectations oriented life styles, is negative regarding the Environmental Mastery, Self-acceptance, Autonomy, and Personal Growth; nevertheless there is a positive relationship regarding Purpose in Life and Positive Relations with Others. With reference to this finding it can be mentioned that, Expectation oriented individuals have more positive relations with others because they are more ambitious in their lives and they always set new life purposes.

References

Adler, A.(1935).The fundamental views of individual psychology.*Internaıonal Journal of Individual Psychology,1/1-11.*

Cenkseven, F. (2004). *Üniversite öğrencilerin öznel ve psikolojik iyi olmanın yordayıcılarının incelenmesi.* Unpublished dissertation, Çukurova university Adana.

Deneve, K.M., Cooper, H. (1998). The happy personality: a meta-analysis of personality traits and subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin, 124,(2),* 197-229.

Eckstein, D. and Kern, R. M. (2009).*Psychological fingerprints: Lifestyle assessment and interventions (6th ed.).* Dubuque, lA: Kendall/Hunt.

Harrington, R., Loffredo, D. A. (2001). The relationship between life satisfaction, selfconsciousness, and the myers-briggs type ınventory dimensions. *The Journal of Psychology, 135, (4),* 439-450.

Kahn, J. H., Hessling, R. M. and Russell, D. W. (2003). Social support, health, and wellbeing among the elderly: what is the role of negative affectivity? *Personality And Individual Differences, 35, (1),* 5-17.

Kern, R. (1996).*Kern life style scale interpretation manual*, Georgia:Cmtipress.

Kern, R. (2008).*Lifestyle Assessment on Tenderness and Aggression*, International Congress of Individual Psychology August 3, Vilnius Lithuania.

Keyes, C. L., M., Shmotkin, D. and Ryff, C. D. (2002). Optimizing well-being: the emiprical encounter of two traditions", *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology,* 82, (6), 1007-1023.

Özpolat,A. R. (2011). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin yaşam stillerinin yordayıcılarının Incelenmesi*. Unpublished dissertation. Atatürk University, Erzurum

Powers, R. I. and Griffith, J. J (1987).*Understanding life-style*, The American Institute of Adlerian Studies, Chicago.

Ryff C.D . (1989).Happiness is everything, or is it? explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57, (6),* 1069-1081.

Ryff C.D . (1997). Experience and well-being: explorations on domains of life and how they matter. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 20, (2),* 193-206.

Segrin, C., Taylor, M. (2007). Positive interpersonal relationships mediate the association between social skills and psychological well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences, 43,* 637–646.

Wilson, M.S., Peterson. W.G. (1988). Life satisfaction among young adults from rual families. *Family Relations, 37,* 84- 91.