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Analysis of the Relation between University Students' Life Positions and their Positive-Negative Affectivity

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Abstract. This study aims at comparing relation between life positions and positive-negative affectivity of university students in Turkey. 271 university students participated in the study; 147 of these students were female while 124 of them were male. Age range was 19-22. Life Position Scale developed by Boholst, and adapted to Turkish by İşgör, Özpolat and Kaygusuz was used in the study besides Positive-Negative Affectivity scale which was developed by Watson et al.; reliability and validity study of the scale was made by Gençöz. It was seen that Positive-Negative Affectivity changed according to Life Positions.

Key Words: Life Positions, Positive Affectivity, Negative Affectivity, Positive Psychology, Well-Being

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1 INTRODUCTION

In 1950s, a theory called Transactional Analysis has been developed by Eric Berne in order to understand human behaviors and explain them. This theory can be grouped under these issues;

- Ego states
- Psychological Games
- Life Positions

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Ego states have been analyzed in two different models as structural and functional. According to structural analysis, there are three ego states as Parent, Adult, and Child; according to Functional Analysis, there are five ego states as Critical Parent, Protective Parent, Adult, Natural Child and Corresponding Child (Akkoyun, 2001).

Psychological Games is a time structuring method that starts and continues with a secret message and based on an unaware self programming. At the end of a psychological game which has a complex structure, at least one of the parts lives a familiar negative feeling. This is why, even if it is negative- more intense contact messages are created according to structuring types of other time (Berne, 1964).

On the other hand, life positions are in a hypothetic frame that mostly coincides with positive psychology concepts. Berne states four different life positions: I am Ok –You are Ok, I am Ok –You are not Ok, I am not Ok –You are Ok, I am not Ok –You are not Ok (Berne, 1962).

1. **I am OK, You are OK:** A prudent, healthy situation. If individuals behave realistically, they can solve personal problems and others' problems and can achieve expectations. Individuals in this life position know the importance of others and find life worth living.

2. **I am OK, You are not OK:** It is a projection life position. Individuals in this situation feel cheated and deceived by others. This is why, they try to humiliate and cheat others. They blame others for what they live. They have the feeling that "Your life isn't very valuable".

3. **I am not OK, You are OK:** An introjection life position. Individuals feel weak when they compare themselves with others. These individuals can have some psychological problems such as affective withdrawal and breakdown. They have the feeling "My life isn't that precious".

4. **I am not OK, You are not OK:** An unhealthy life position.

The concept OK that is used in life positions in fact has similarities with individual's self potential, well-being and positive life concepts in psychology. In this sense, life positions include positive perceptions of an individual about himself and his environment.

The concept Ok that is used in life positions at TA, is in fact have similarities with self-potential, well being and positive life concepts of individual in positive psychology. In this sense, life positions –in a way- includes positive perceptions of individual about himself and environment Researchers of positive psychology studies stated that well-being can be made of three components: Life Satisfaction, muchness of positive feelings, fewness of negative feelings (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith 1999). These components generally reflect personality structure. As Life Positions in **TA** is based on perception of life and being perceived by his environment, they –in a way- reflect personality structure of the individual (Napper, 2009, White, 1994). On the other hand, individual's life position can change according to the style of his contacting with life, namely life positions are not stable, and they are variable. (Stewart and Joines, 1987). Many studies in literature show that personality structure and well-being (Albuquerque et al, 2012), optimism and pessimism and well-being (Landa et al, 2011), hope and positive negative affectivity are relevant (Özer & Tezer, 2008). In this sense, there is not an answer in the literature to the question that; "*Do positive-Negative affectivity of individual change according to Life Positions?*" The aim of this study is to look for an answer to this question. On the other hand, it is known that Positive-Negative affective intonations vary according to culture and language (Almagor & Ben-Porath, 1989; Mayer & Gaschke, 1988; Meyer & Shack, 1989; Tellegen, 1985; Watson, 1988). In this sense, this study aims at comparing life positions of students in Turkey and their positive-negative affectivities. Knowing individuals' positive-negative affectivity relations according to their life positions is significant in terms of mental health. Scientific explanation of feelings according to life positions will make positive contributions to individuals' psychological consultation process. It is known that depressive individuals especially have too much negative thoughts (Lightsey & Christopher, 1997; Olioff, Bryson, & Wadden, 1989). So, knowing affective intonations according to life positions will be a useful resource for clients of psychiatric care professionals.

2. METHOD

Depictive research model was used in this study in order to research if there is a difference in individuals' life positions and their positive-negative affectivity. Data in the research was collected through scales.

2.1. Sample and Procedure

271 students from the Education Department of a university in Eastern Anatolia Region of Turkey participated in the study; 147 of these students were female while 124 of them were male. Cluster sampling method was used in choosing students from each class level. The university was in a city that has 80.000-100.000 population. Age range was 19-22.

2.2 Data Collection Tools

Data in this study was gathered by *Life Positions Scale* and *Positive-Negative Affectivity Scale*.

2.2.1 *Life Positions Scale:*

Life Position Scale developed by Boholst (2002) and adapted to Turkish by İşgör, Özpolat and Kaygusuz (2012) was used in this study. This scale is made of four sub-dimensions: I am Ok –You are Ok sub-scale, I am Ok –You are not (-) Ok sub-scale, I am not (-) Ok –You are Ok sub-scale, I am not (-) Ok –You are not (-) Ok sub-scale. The scale can be applied individually or as group; it is 5 point likert type, each dimension has 5 items and there are totally 20 items. It is graded as; I don't agree (1 point), I totally agree (5 points). An individual has the life position according to his highest sub-scale point. Reliability study of the scale was: Internal consistencies of test items were found to be cronbach alpha (a) .84. As a result of confirmatory factor analysis of Life Positions scale, χ 2 were found to be (960.94) sd (195) (χ2/sd= 4.92), and RMSEA (.07) RMR (.08) SRMR (.07) GFI (.97) AGFI (.96) CFI (97).

2.2.2. Positive Negative Affectivity Scale

Positive Negative Affectivity Scale is made of two sub-scales named as Positive Affect and Negative Affect; each sub-scale has 10 items. Each question is graded between 1 (very little) or none and 5 (very much). Positive Affect sub scale of the scale developed by Watson et al. (1988) evaluates individual's level of interest, activeness and alertness. Negative Affect sub scale evaluates individual's level of anger, repulsion, quilt and fear. Watson et al (1988) stated internal reliability of the scale as .88 for positive affect, .87 for negative affect. Turkish reliability and validity studies of the scale were made by Gençöz (2000). Turkish scale's two dimensions were found to be consistent with its original version, internal consistency for positive and negative affect was respectively found to be .83 and .86; test retest consistency was respectively .40 and .54. Scale's standard relative validity was studied with Beck Depression Scale and Beck Anxiety Scale. According to this, Positive affect scale for these scales were found to be respectively -.48 and -.22 correlations, positive affect scale for these scales were respectively .51 and .47.

2.3 Statistical Analysis

Kolmogorov Simirnov Normalcy Test was made in order to determine the use of either parametric or non-parametric tests and it is shown in Table 1. Difference between individuals' Positive and Negative Affective according to Life positions were determined with Mann Whitney U Test. Data were analyzed with SPSS 15.0 program.

Table 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness of Fit Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test							
		I+U+	I+ U-	I- U+	I- U-	positive	negative
N		271	271	271	271	271	271
Normal Parameters(a,b)	Mean	19,5720	11,5904	16,3284	12,9779	33,3764	22,7528
	Std. Deviation	3,79197	4,63543	3,65745	5,03832	7,18424	7,14154
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0,121	0,191	0,074	0,198	0,071	0,084
	Positive	0,076	0,191	0,074	0,198	0,034	0,084
	Negative	-0,121	-0,091	-0,053	-0,130	-0,071	-0,037
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,985	3,151	1,212	3,263	1,162	1,383
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0,001	0,000	0,106	0,000	0,135	0,044

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness of Fit Test Results

When Table 1 is analyzed, it can be seen that K-S values do not have a normal distribution. According to normalcy test results, groups in the research don't have a parametrical feature in terms of individuals' Life Positions and Positive Negative Affect points. Thus, Mann Whitney U Hypothesis test was used in the statistical analysis of individuals' Life Positions and Positive Negative affect points.

3. RESULT

Mann Whitney U Test was applied in order to find the question to the problem: "*Is there a difference between students' positive negative affectivities according to their Life positions*?" and the result is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of Mann Whitney U Test that is applied in order to determine the difference between Life Position and Positive Negative Emotion total points

	Feeling	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
I + U +	Positive	213	152,51	32.485,00	2660.00	**.000***
	Negative	58	75,36	4.371,00		
	Total	271				
I - U +	Positive	213	119,40	25.431,50	2640.50	**.000***
	Negative	58	196,97	11.424,50		
	Total	271				
I + U -	Positive	213	136,30	29.032,50	6112.50	.903
	Negative	58	134,89	7.823,50		
	Total	271				
I – U -	Positive	213	114,11	24.305,00	1514.00	**.000***
	Negative	58	216,40	12.551,00		
	Total	271				

**P < .01*

Results of Mann Whitney U Test that was applied in order to determine the difference between Life Positions and Positive Negative Affect total points

When Table 2 is analyzed, it can be seen that U value of individuals that have **I am Ok, You are Ok** life position was found to be 2660, 00 that is meaningful at p<, 01 significance level. When line averages are analyzed, this finding show that individuals that have **I am Ok, You are Ok** life position have meaningfully higher Positive Affect points.

U value of individuals that have **I am not Ok, You are Ok** life position was found to be 2640, 50 that is meaningful at p<, 01 significance level. When line

averages are analyzed, this finding show that individuals that have **I am not Ok, You are Ok** life position have meaningfully higher Negative Affect points.

U value of individuals that have **I am not Ok, You are not Ok** life position was found to be 1514, 00 that is meaningful at p<, 01 significance level. When line averages are analyzed, this finding show that individuals that have **I am not Ok, You are not Ok** life position have meaningfully higher Negative Affect points.

U value of individuals that have **I am Ok, You are not Ok** life position was found to be 6112, 50 that is not meaningful at p<, 05 significance level.

4. **DISCUSSION**

It is seen that individuals that have **I am OK, You are OK** life style have more Positive affects. Thus, it can be said that these individuals are more hopeful and optimistic about future. Studies of Özer & Tezer (2008) have given similar results. It is possible for every individual to face with stressful situations in life. But his way of contacting with life in these situations show us the style of his coping skills and power. So, it is known that individuals who are optimistic have better psychological well being (Landa et al, 2011). Namely, **I am OK, You are OK** life style is a position in which mental health is protected.

It is determined that individuals that have **I am not OK, You are OK and I am not OK**, You are not OK life positions have more negative feelings. This result shows us that this individual has negative feelings when he is not happy or when he doesn't make positive contact with life. Thus, it is known that negative thinking is especially the most significant element of depression (Lightsey & Christopher, 1997; Olioff, Bryson, & Wadden, 1989). It is possible to say that these individuals in this life position are potentially depressive ones.

There have been no significant difference between **I am Ok, You are not OK** life position and positive-negative affectivity. So, according to the results of **I am Ok,**

You are not OK individuals, it can be said that although individuals think that they are Ok in their life positions, value attributed to others is also significant for them to perceive life positively.

At this point, knowing clients' life positions and directing consultation process in the light of this knowledge will ease the job of individuals working in psychiatric care department. On the other hand, it is necessary to move individuals from where they contact with life to the position of I am OK, You are OK, or at least to make them believe that they can see that life positions can change, and they can change their life positions too (Stewart, & Joines ,1987). Individuals that have this awareness will be able to solve problems and continue their lives healthier.

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