

Predictors of Life Satisfaction among Guidance Counselors and Administrators Employed by the Ministry of Education in Turkey

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Abstract

Problem Statement: A review of the literature indicated that both job satisfaction and life satisfaction are important to an individual's overall wellbeing. While there have been extensive studies related to job satisfaction in a Turkish context, studies related to the predictors of life satisfaction are limited.

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this research study was to explore and compare the level of life satisfaction among guidance counselors and administrators working for the Ministry of Education in Turkey.

Method: A total of 920 participants (679 guidance counselors, 241 administrators) took part in this study. Ten cities from among the most populated and average-size populated cities and surrounding towns in Turkey were selected for data collection. A Socio-Demographic Data Form, prepared by the researchers, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were used to collect data. An independent-samples *t*-test and two separate simultaneous multiple regression analyses were utilized to analyze the data.

Findings: There was a statistically significant difference in the scores for guidance counselors and administrators. Counselors reported higher

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levels of life satisfaction. Results of the regression analyses indicated that the following variables contributed significantly to the level of life satisfaction among guidance counselors: gender, marital status, level of education, fit between educational background and tasks assigned, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction. Guidance counselors who were women, who were married, who reported higher levels of education, higher levels of intrinsic job satisfaction, and higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction, and who reported a better fit between their educational background and the tasks they were assigned to also reported higher levels of life satisfaction. For the administrator group, the following variables contributed significantly to the level of life satisfaction: gender, marital status, and extrinsic job satisfaction. Administrators who were women, who were married, and who reported higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction also reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Based on the results, interventions that increase the administrators' and counselors' job satisfaction levels which in turn will contribute to an increase in their life satisfaction are warranted. An increase in these groups' job and life satisfaction will likely impact the delivery of educational services to students. Further research needs to be carried out in a Turkish context to further contribute to the exploration of the predictors of life satisfaction.

Key Words: Life satisfaction, job satisfaction, administrators, guidance counselors

Introduction

The objective of the introductory statements in this article is to present a preliminary picture of the developments of the theoretical and empirical studies on life satisfaction to provide a scholarly background and implications related to the purpose of our study. In the pursuit of this objective, we will first look at the development of conceptualization of life satisfaction, and then present a brief review of the empirical research findings related directly or indirectly, but importantly, to the subject of the predictors of life satisfaction among administrators and guidance counselors employed by the Ministry of Education in Turkey.

The search for "meaningful life," "happiness," "human wellbeing," and "life satisfaction" have unconsciously or consciously been a most important concern throughout the history of humankind in mythology, theology, literature, philosophy, and scientific studies. Touching on the developments of ideas and concepts in the subject from the period of the ancient Greek philosophy to the modern age systemic scientific studies, we would like to point the readers' attention to the fact that in the Aristotelian ethical model of eudemonism (derived from eudemonia-the Greek word for happiness), human wellbeing or happiness represents the supreme good, instead of pleasure, and only right action leads to individual wellbeing or happiness (Myers,

1992). By the emergence and development of the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century, human beings with reasoning capacity became the “measure” of everything in the universe, and consequently, the reason for the existence of society is construed as the means for the realization of human wellbeing and happiness. Therefore, human wellbeing and happiness become the central values. This perspective somewhat manifested itself in the social philosophy of Utilitarianism, where the purpose of the best government is to provide “the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people” (Veenhoven, 1996, p. 11).

In the 20th century, the great developments in science and technology and the emergence of the affluent societies on the ground of the greatest economic growth in history resulted in the development of the welfare-states in the advanced industrial societies. These chains of development created the inspiration and the realizable possibilities for the utilitarian dream and thesis of “the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people” (Veenhoven, 1996, p. 11) on the societal and continental scale of socio-economic and cultural-political policies in the post-Second World War period. On the grounds of such scientific-technological, socio-economic and cultural-political developments in the world we witnessed the emergence of scientific and socio-economic policy oriented studies on the subjective human wellbeing and quality of life (Veenhoven, 1996). Of course, growing interest on the subject of human wellbeing, happiness and life satisfaction cannot be explained only by such macro-societal developments. The developments of the stock of social scientific knowledge can be considered another important ground in the post-Second World War period for the emergence of scientific studies on the related subjects. Because of this fact, in the whole history of philosophy and science, social philosophers and psychologists have had a deep intellectual interest in the causes and processes of human wellbeing and happiness.

The review of the related literature indicates that the field of human wellbeing and life satisfaction as a special research field started in the 1960s and 1970s in the U.S., which led to the publications of the early classics such as Cantril’s (1965) *Pattern of Human Concerns*, based on an international survey, Bradburn’s (1969) *Structure of Psychological Well-being*, Campbell, Converse, and Rogers’ (1976) *The Quality of American Life* and Andrews and Withey’s (1976) *Social Indicators of Well-Being*. Later decades witnessed the establishment of centers for human wellbeing, quality of life and human development programs at many universities, central governmental organizations, labor unions and international organizations (e.g., the U.N.), the positive psychology movement (Snyder & Lopez, 2007), publications of the field-specific journals as *Social Indicators Research* and *Journal of Happiness*, and massive survey-based volumes of books such as *Correlates of Happiness* (Veenhoven, 1996), and *Foundations of Hedonic Psychology* (Kahneman, Diener & Schwartz, 1999).

Wellbeing might be considered the most abstract-general level concept in this field of scientific study and refers to all of the well-evaluated aspects of human life (Gasper, 2007), both in the sense of objective and subjective terms and indicators. Objective wellbeing is a normative concept. The related research measures what is proposed as having values, with a subject-independent conceptualization and

measurement, as manifested in the quality of life, human development and welfare studies focusing on objective socio-economic-cultural and political indicators of human wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing, which is used as a synonym for happiness, refers to a combination of the positive affect (in the absence of negative affect) and general life satisfaction (as a cognitive-subjective evaluation of human life's rewards) (Deiner, 1984). According to a widely accepted conceptual definition, life satisfaction can be defined "as a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his or her chosen criteria" (Shin & Johnson, 1978, p. 478). It should be underlined that neither such criteria or standards used for evaluation, nor the process of judgment are externally imposed by the researcher, but they are based on a person's internally chosen criteria and judgment process (Deiner, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985).

Considering the fact that a central concern of our research lies in the relationship between job and life satisfaction and the postulation of job satisfaction as a main predictor of life satisfaction, a brief review of the developments of the job satisfaction related studies and the major hypotheses explaining the relation of job and life satisfaction is required for a better understanding of the review of the related empirical research findings to be presented below.

According to Locke (1983), "job satisfaction may be defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). The early interest in the concept of job satisfaction emerged and was developed by the pioneering investigations of the Hawthorne Studies in the 1920s and 1930s, primarily as a reaction to the

Taylorist perspective of the Scientific Management Movement. In the 1940s, Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs laid the theoretical foundation of the later decades' voluminous theoretical and empirical studies on job satisfaction, primarily in the field of industrial and organizational psychology, and secondarily, in the field of education and social politics (Maslow, 1970). In the later decades of the 20th century and in the 21st century, intensive scholarly endeavors in theoretical studies and empirical research on the determinants and consequences of job satisfaction and its relation with life satisfaction have continued to produce an abundant quantity of empirical research findings and more elaborate job satisfaction theories or theoretical models (Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005).

In the mainstream empirical studies on the relationship of job satisfaction and life satisfaction, four main hypotheses have been developed: the spillover, compensation, segmentation and desegregation. Most of the job and life satisfaction studies have found a strong positive relationship between job and life satisfaction, primarily as a result of the spillover process mechanism, consequently supporting the spillover hypotheses (Bryant & Constantine, 2006; Dikmen, 1995; Rain et al., 1991; Surucu & Bacanlı, 2007; Uygac, Arbak, Duygulu, & Cıraklar, 1998).

Our review of the empirical research on the subject indicated that, to the best of our knowledge, though the studies related to job satisfaction are extensive (e.g., Uz-Bas, 2011), the studies on the predictors of life satisfaction are very limited, and studies comparing the administrators and guidance counselors in terms of predictors

of life satisfaction in the field of education are non-existent in a Turkish context. Indeed, this fact was one of the reasons for our undertaking this comparison-aimed empirical study.

The only research that had a close subject matter and a similar research sample to ours had been undertaken by Dikmen (1995). This study's sample consisted of 88 teachers in public schools and 85 administrators working for the government in Turkey. Dikmen's study found a statistically significant positive correlation between levels of job and life satisfaction; women had higher levels of job satisfaction and life satisfaction. More importantly, teachers had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction and life satisfaction than the administrators. These findings support the theoretically hypothesized relation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction and the significance of the intrinsically satisfying characteristics of the job of the teachers in job and life satisfaction relation (Herzberg, Mousner, & Synderman, 1959; Maslow, 1970; Rain, Lane, & Steiner, 1991).

Yılmaz (2008) and Onur (2010) in their research studies regarding the relation between some organizational and job characteristics and life satisfactions of school principals found significant positive correlations between perceived organizational commitment, self-efficacy scores, and life satisfaction scores of school principals. Surucu and Bacanlı (2007) and Bryant and Constantine (2006) in their studies concerning the relation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction of school counselors in Turkey and the U.S., respectively, found significant positive correlations between the levels of job satisfaction and life satisfaction scores of the school counselors, as consistent with the findings of several previous studies with different categories of employees (Heller, Judge, & Watson, 2002; Iverson & Maguire, 2000; Wright, Bennett, & Dun, 1999). These studies generally explained this strong relation primarily with the existence of a spillover effect between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. In their study, Surucu and Bacanlı (2007) also found that levels of job and life satisfaction did not change significantly in terms of gender, level of education and location of organization of schools' counselors.

The study undertaken by Aysan and Bozkurt (2004) on the life satisfactions and stress coping strategies of Turkish school counselors similarly found a significant positive relation between their job and life satisfaction levels and that the married school counselors had significantly higher life satisfaction scores than the unmarried school counselors.

A comprehensive review of the related literature in Turkey indicated that while there were many studies that included job satisfaction as a major dependent variable in their guidance counselors' related studies (e.g., Bulut, 2007; Koc, 1998; Tezer & Uzel, 1999; Yesilyaprak, 2001), there were very few studies that examined the life satisfaction of guidance counselors as a dependent variable. As a result, we hope that our study will expand the literature related to life satisfaction among different groups in Turkey.

Purpose of the Study

The social scientific research related to job and life satisfaction has a critical positive value in the development of the national policies for the improvement of the quality of lives of administrators and guidance counselors in education on the sound relevant scientific research data and findings. The purpose of this research study was to explore and compare the level of life satisfaction among guidance counselors and administrators working for the Ministry of Education in Turkey. We hoped that our study's findings would enlighten and direct the policy-makers in their development of policy measures regarding the administrators and counselors' life satisfaction levels so that the overall quality of education in the society would be advanced.

A guidance counselor in this study is defined as an individual who is hired by the Turkish Ministry of Education to provide counseling and psychological services and to work in the capacity of a guidance counselor or school counselor. These individuals are appointed to work in either Kindergarten-12th grade settings or at a public agency that provides similar counseling and psychological services. An administrator in this study is defined as an individual who is also hired by the Turkish Ministry of Education to work in a school setting as a principle or assistant principle or to work in the school district overseeing the administration of schools.

We were interested in the following research questions: 1) How is the level of life satisfaction different among guidance counselors than it is among administrators? and 2) How do gender, age, marital status, level of education, fit between educational background and tasks assigned, number of years in the profession, place of employment (urban vs. nonurban), type of organization worked in (school vs. public agency/district office), intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction predict life satisfaction among guidance counselors and administrators?

Method

Participants

A total of 920 participants (679 counselors, 241 administrators) took part in this study. Both of these groups were employed by the Turkish Ministry of Education and were subjected to the same laws and regulations governing employee rights and responsibilities. A summary of the demographic variables for both groups is presented in Table 1.

Procedures

Ten cities from among the most populated and average-size populated cities and surrounding towns in Turkey were selected for data collection. Ten research assistants helped in data collection, which was accomplished in June 2010. After receiving permission from school districts and related agencies, the participants were approached and asked to complete the anonymous survey. The guidance counselors were approached in groups when they met at the end of the school year to evaluate the counseling and guidance services that were provided within the district. Twenty-five minutes of the meeting time were taken to administer the surveys. In the case of

the administrators, research assistants approached them individually and revisited them within 24 hours to collect the completed survey.

Measures

Socio-Demographic Data Form. This form was developed by the researchers to collect information about the participants' age, gender, marital status, level of education, place of employment (urban vs. nonurban), type of organization worked in (school vs. public agency/district office), and number of years employed. As part of this form, the participants were also asked to indicate how well they thought their assigned tasks at their employment site were related to their educational background.

Life Satisfaction Scale. For the collection and measurement of the data regarding the major dependent variable of this research, The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was used. The scale was developed by Diener and his colleagues (1985) to measure the cognitive aspect of subjective wellbeing "as a general self-evaluation of a human individual's quality of life according to his/her chosen criteria" (Shin & Johnson, 1978, p. 478). The SWLS consists of 5-item statements with a 7-point Likert type scale. Diener et al. indicate that the SWLS has satisfactory psychometric properties: the items-total correlations ranged from .66 to .81, which is considered as a good level of internal consistency; in its factor analysis, the scale emerges as a single factor accounting for 66% of the variance. As for its reliability, the scale has a test-retest correlation of .82 and a coefficient alpha of .87, and a satisfactory level of correlations with other measures of subjective wellbeing range from $r = .35$ to $r = .82$ (Diener et al., 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Due to its well-articulated conceptualization ground and the above-mentioned satisfactory psychometric characteristics, in addition to the wide use of scale in measuring life satisfaction (Argyle, 2001), we chose to use the SWLS in our study. Because of the fact that the subjects in our present study were Turkish, the Turkish version of the SWLS based on Köker's translation-adaptation and validity-reliability study (Köker, 1991) was used. Köker's study indicated that the scale's test-retest reliability for the Turkish sample was $r = .85$ and that the items-total correlations ranged from .71 to .80.

Job Satisfaction Scale. The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, designed by Weiss and his colleagues (Weiss et al., 1977) to measure employees' satisfaction with their jobs in terms of all aspects of work content and work environments was used to measure the level of job satisfaction. Three forms of the scale are available for use: two long forms and one short form. In this study, the MSQ - short form - was chosen for the reason that its application was better suited to the relatively large sample of our research and the life satisfaction focus of this study. The short form MSQ consists of 20 statements from the long form MSQ that best represent each of the 20 facets in the long form, with a 5-point Likert type scale (from very dissatisfied to very satisfied). Higher scores indicate higher levels of job satisfaction. The scores of the questionnaire provide two factors—intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction factors—and general satisfaction scores. The short form MSQ was chosen on the

grounds of its conceptualization of a job as a multi-dimensional construct with its intrinsically and extrinsically satisfying contents, and physical and social environments based on the major theoretical and research perspectives in the fields of industrial and organizational psychology, humanistic psychology, counseling psychology and occupational sociology on the one hand, and on the grounds of its satisfactory psychometric characteristics, together with being a cross-culturally most widely utilized job satisfaction measurement instrument on the other hand (Fritzche & Parrish, 2005).

As for the other psychometric attributes of the questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1977) the test-retest reliability for general satisfaction is .89 over a week and .70 over a year; no data was provided for intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction subscales. The internal consistency (alpha) ranges between .80 and .92 for the general satisfaction scale, .84 and .91 for the intrinsic satisfaction scale, and .77 and .82 for the extrinsic satisfaction scale. The MSQ's construct validity data indicates the attributes to differentiate job satisfaction levels for various occupational groups at 0.001 significance levels on all job satisfaction scales. In the present study, the Turkish version of the short form MSQ based on Ok's (2004) translation-adaptation and validity-reliability study on the MSQ was used. Ok's adaptation study on the MSQ found the following psychometric values: The internal consistency coefficient was 0.91 and the test-retest correlation was 0.76. In its factorial analysis, Ok's Turkish adaptation study of the MSQ found that the questionnaire items centered on two factors: intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction.

Results

Group Differences

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare level of life satisfaction in guidance counselors and administrators. There was a statistically significant difference in the scores for counselors ($M = 24.67, SD = 5.9$) and administrators ($M = 22.19, SD = 6.3$); $t(920) = 5.52, p < .001$. Counselors reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

Table 1.
Summary of Demographic Variables

		Type of Employment (counselor vs. administrator)			
		Administrator		Counselor	
		n	Percentages (%)	n	Percentages (%)
Age	18-25	2	0.83%	76	11.18%
	26-35	65	26.86%	302	44.41%
	36-45	96	39.67%	271	39.85%
	46 and over	79	32.64%	31	4.56%
Gender	Men	185	76.45%	245	36.03%
	Women	57	23.55%	435	63.97%
Marital Status	Single	41	16.94%	209	30.74%
	Married	201	83.06%	471	69.26%
Level of Education	Associate's degree	41	16.94%	0	0.00%
	Bachelor's degree	166	68.60%	560	82.35%
	Master's degree	35	14.46%	120	17.65%
Place of Employment (urban vs. nonurban)	Nonurban	4	1.65%	153	22.50%
	Urban	238	98.35%	527	77.50%
Type of Organization (school vs. public office)	Public Agency/District Office	191	78.93%	50	7.35%
	School	51	21.07%	630	92.65%

Multiple Regression Analyses

Two separate simultaneous multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine how a group of variables predicted level of satisfaction among counselors and administrators. The predictor variables were gender, age, marital status, level of education, fit between educational background and tasks assigned, number of years in the profession, place of employment (urban vs. nonurban), type of organization worked in (school vs. public agency/district office), intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction.

Table 2*Regression of Demographic and Psychological Variables on Life Satisfaction*

	Life Satisfaction					
	Administrator (N=241)			Counselor (N=679)		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	B
Gender ^A	2.613	0.933	.18**	1.202	0.402	.10**
Age	-0.621	0.660	-.08	0.049	0.434	.01
Marital Status ^B	2.721	1.025	.16**	1.170	0.456	.09*
Level of Education	1.142	0.637	.10	1.140	0.509	.07*
Fit between educational background and tasks	0.321	0.491	.04	0.916	0.393	.08*
Number of years in employment	0.292	0.629	.04	-0.001	0.320	.01
Place of Employment (urban vs. nonurban) ^C	-4.926	2.787	-.10	-0.197	0.471	-.01
Type of Organization (school vs. public agency) ^D	-1.026	0.893	-.07	-.325	0.759	-.01
Intrinsic Satisfaction	0.090	0.064	.10	0.269	0.039	.30**
Extrinsic Satisfaction	0.509	0.082	.47**	0.291	0.045	.27**
R ²	.31			.30		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.^AGender: 0 = Men; 1 = Women^BMarital Status: 0 = Single; 1 = Married^CPlace of employment: 0 = Nonurban; 1 = Urban^DType of Organization: 0 = Public Agency; 1 = School

For guidance counselors, the multiple regression model was statistically significant and predicted 30% of the variance in the criterion variable [$R^2 = .30$, $F(10, 669) = 28.34$, $p < .001$]. The following variables contributed significantly to the level of life satisfaction: gender ($\beta = .10$, $t = 2.991$, $p < .01$), marital status ($\beta = .09$, $t = 2.569$, $p < .05$), level of education ($\beta = .07$, $t = 2.241$, $p < .05$), fit between educational background and

tasks assigned ($\beta = .08$, $t = 2.331$, $p < .05$), intrinsic job satisfaction ($\beta = .30$, $t = 6.892$, $p < .01$), and extrinsic job satisfaction ($\beta = .27$, $t = 6.441$, $p < .01$). Guidance counselors who were women, who were married, who reported higher levels of education, higher levels of intrinsic job satisfaction, and higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction, and who reported a better fit between their educational background and the tasks they were assigned to also reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

For the administrators' group, the multiple regression model was also statistically significant and predicted 31% of the variance in the criterion variable [$R^2 = .31$, $F(10, 231) = 10.36$, $p < .001$]. The following variables contributed significantly to the level of life satisfaction: gender ($\beta = .18$, $t = 2.800$, $p < .01$), marital status ($\beta = .16$, $t = 2.656$, $p < .01$), and extrinsic job satisfaction ($\beta = .47$, $t = 6.216$, $p < .01$). Administrators who were women, who were married, and who reported higher levels of extrinsic job satisfaction also reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings in our study indicated that guidance counselors experienced a higher level of life satisfaction than the administrators. Considering our reflective reading of the arguments of the theoretical studies and the findings of the empirical research on the subject, we can primarily attribute this result to the intrinsically satisfying nature of the guidance counselors' job with its creative, autonomous work with greater leisure time characteristics that can provide objectively more self-actualizing human life conditions, compared with more routine, less autonomous and less leisure time providing characteristics of the administrators' job. On the basis of this interpretation, it is also possible to extend our reasoning that the guidance counselors, due to the training they have received, are better able to assess their quality of life and make changes accordingly to have better lives.

Our results also indicated that both guidance counselors and administrators who were married or who were women had higher levels of life satisfaction. This is in line with Dikmen's (1995) study which showed that female administrators had higher levels of life satisfaction. A greatly plausible explanation for our finding would be the fact that, compared with men, women, particularly in traditional, underdeveloped, and developing countries under patriarchal societal conditions, have lower aspirations and expectations in jobs and life; therefore, the achievement of the same kind of jobs provides higher levels of job satisfaction and life satisfaction for women than men. In relation to marriage, our finding supported Aysan and Bozkurt's (2004) study which indicated that married school counselors had higher life satisfaction. Married individuals may feel that they have certain stability in their lives and feel accomplished due to being married. As a result, compared to single individuals, they may feel more satisfied with their lives. Our findings, however, contradict Surucu and Bacanlı's (2007) study which found that gender was not related to life satisfaction among counselors. In their study, the researchers used a different scale to measure life satisfaction than the one we used in our study. Use of different questionnaires might be an explanation for the difference in these findings.

For both of our participant groups, we also found that job satisfaction predicted life satisfaction. This finding is in line with Surucu and Bacanlı's (2007) and Bryant and Constantine's (2006) findings that job satisfaction was related to life satisfaction. This result may be explained by the spillover effect (e.g., Rain et al., 1991) where individuals who are happy with their jobs tend to carry this happiness into the other parts of their lives, thus reaching a better level of life satisfaction.

While for the counselor group both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction predicted life satisfaction, for the administrator group only extrinsic job satisfaction served as a predictor. A possible explanation for this difference might be that the dominance of extrinsic job value orientations in the world of administrators such as the status of authority, esteemed high status, high official conditions and high payments is present. The administrator positions in all kinds of societies (developed-developing-underdeveloped) are wanted by and are chosen among individuals (men and women) with such above-mentioned value orientations. Consequently, for the administrators, compared with their less satisfying intrinsic job characteristics, the highly satisfied levels of their extrinsic job characteristics would naturally be a higher level predictor of their life satisfaction.

Another result showed that counselors who had higher levels of education and who reported a better fit between their educational background and the tasks they were assigned to reported better life satisfaction. Individuals who were assigned tasks that are related to the education they have received may feel more valued and useful, which in turn may help them experience better life satisfaction.

Our findings have several implications. First, as most other theoretical and empirical research on the subject, our research indicated that job satisfaction is a most significant predictor of life satisfaction and, consequently, work has a dominant place objectively and subjectively in human life and human wellbeing. In addition, both the administrator and the counselor group have an important role in the educational and learning processes of students. Especially, the administrators hold a key role in developing new regulations and implementation of these regulations, some of which affect the likelihood of students attaining a quality level of education. Considering that these youngsters are the future of the country, interventions to increase the administrators' and counselors' job satisfaction levels which in turn will contribute to an increase in their life satisfaction is warranted. An increase in these groups' job and life satisfaction will likely impact the delivery of educational services to students. Second, counselors should be assigned tasks that are related to the education they have received. Assigning them non-relevant duties and tasks may lower their life satisfaction and their overall wellbeing. Third, as an implication for further research, in order to reach a higher level of scientific universality in this field of research, longitudinal-experimental-semi-experimental research designs should be undertaken by the collective groups of scholars on the world society scale. Following our research, an integrative, comparative and more objectively oriented perspective is needed in conceptualization, measurements and interpretation of predictors of life satisfaction and human wellbeing. We hope that researchers will continue studying these two very important types of satisfaction.

Conclusion

Our review of the life satisfaction related theoretical and empirical studies indicates the dominance of the over-subjective conceptualization and measurement perspective in this field of research at the present time. The appraisal of this situation suggests the need for the development of an interdisciplinary and integrative perspective on the conceptualization and measurement of human wellbeing that would better serve both the objectives of pure social scientific interests and the improvement of human wellbeing in the world society in practice. Even more significantly, there is a need for the integration of a critical social science perspective into the research field of human wellbeing – life-satisfaction in particular – and the field of social sciences in general, for the scientists and the scientific studies can be in the service of self-realization and the emancipation of humankind collectively toward their self-realization in a real qualitative sense (Bhaskar, 1987; Marx, 1964; Millioğulları, 2007).

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Türkiye’de Milli Eğitim Bakanlığında Çalışan Psikolojik Danışmanlar Ve Yöneticilerin Yaşam Doyumlarını Yordayıcı Değişkenler

(Özet)

Problem Durumu: Mutluluk ya da yaşam doyumunun, insanlık tarihi boyunca tüm insanların yaşam boyu erişmek istediği, hep erişmek için çalıştığı ana ve sonal amaç olduğu, insan türünün önemli fiziksel, duygusal, düşünsel ontolojik bir gerçekliğidir. Bu nedenle de, mutluluğun ne olduğu, nasıl erişileceği, insanlığın düşün tarihi boyunca, sıradan insane anlatsından mitolojiye, teolojiye, yazına ve felsefeye bir en önemli düşünme-araştırma konusu olmuştur. Giderek, modern çağda toplum bilimsel araştırmaların konusu olmaya başlamış ve 1960’lı yıllardan başlayarak, mutluluk, yaşam doyumunu, insanın kendini iyi duyumsama durumu (human well-being) ve yaşam niteliği, bir önemli toplum bilimsel-interdisiplineri kuramsal ve görgül bilimsel araştırma alanı haline gelmiş bulunmaktadır. Bu gelişmeyi, kuşkusuz, insan ve toplum bilimleri açısından ve daha insanca-tüm insanları mutlayıcı-anlamli bir toplumsal düzeni geliştirebilme amacı açısından bir en değer-anlamli gelişme olarak değerlendirebiliriz.

Son yıllarda Türkiye’de toplum bilim çevrelerinde de bu yeni önemli araştırma alanının yansımaları görülmeye başlandı; insanın kendini iyi duyumsama, yaşam doyumunu, iş doyumunu ve yaşam niteliği üzerine araştırmaların gerçekleştirildiği görülmekle birlikte, ilgili araştırma yazınının incelenmesi, toplumumuzun çağdaştırılmasında ve geleceğinde çok önemli bir yeri olan Türk Milli Eğitim topluluğunun bileşenlerinden olan eğitim yöneticileri ve psikolojik danışmanların yaşam doyumlarını belirleyici-yordayıcı etmenlerin neler olabileceği, bu etmenlerden

özellikle, iş doyumunun yaşam doyumunu üzerinde belirleyiciliğinin karşılaştırılmalı perspektifle inceleyen araştırmaların olmadığını göstermiş bulunmaktadır. Araştırma konusu, bu gerekçelerle seçilmeye değer bulunmuştur.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye’de Milli Eğitim Bakanlığında çalışan eğitim yöneticileri ve psikolojik danışmanların yaşam doyumlarını yordayıcı etmenleri, karşılaştırmalı bir yaklaşımla araştırmaktır. Böylece, araştırmanın bu alanda konunun bilimsel bilgisinin geliştirilmesine ve eğitim çalışanları topluluğunun yaşam niteliğini geliştirici ulusal eğitim politikalarının oluşturulmasında bilimsel temelli veriler sağlamaktır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Araştırma örneklemi, Türkiye’de Milli Eğitim Bakanlığının merkez ve taşra örgütlerini temsili olarak içerecek şekilde, büyük ve orta ölçekli 10 ilde çalışan yöneticiler ve psikolojik danışmanlar arasından seçilen 920 katılımcıdan oluşmaktadır (679 psikolojik danışman ve 241 eğitim yöneticisi olmak üzere). Veri toplama araçları olarak, araştırmacılarca hazırlanan sosyo-demografik veri bilgi formu, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire ile Satisfaction with Life Scale kullanılmıştır. Her iki ölçekte hem özgün formlarının yetkin kavramsal temellendirilme nitelikleri hem de yeterli psikometrik özellikleri nedeniyle, kültürler arası karşılaştırmalı araştırmalarda en çok kullanılan veri toplama araçları arasında olmaları nedeniyle tercih edilmiştir. Ayrıca, bu iki ölçeğin Türkçe versiyonlarının da yeterli psikometrik niteliklere sahip oluşları temelinde bu ölçeklerin kullanılması tercihi yapılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Araştırmanın üzerine temellendirildiği kuramların beklentilerine uygun olarak, psikolojik danışmanlar ve yöneticilerin yaşam doyum düzeyleri arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olduğu bulunmuştur. Psikolojik danışmanların algılanan yaşam doyum düzeylerinin, yöneticilerin algılanan yaşam doyumlarından daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür. Çoklu regresyon çözümlemesinin sonuçları, cinsiyet, evlilik statüsü, eğitim düzeyi, eğitim-görev uyumu, içsel ve dışsal iş doyum değişkenlerinin psikolojik danışmanların yaşam doyum düzeylerini istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düzeyde yordadığını göstermiştir. Psikolojik danışmanlar arasında kadın, evli, eğitim düzeyi yüksek, eğitim-görev uyumu olanlar ve içsel ve dışsal iş doyum düzeyi yüksek olanların, yaşam doyumlarının da anlamlı düzeyde yüksek olduğu görülmüştür. Yöneticiler grubu içinse, cinsiyet, evlilik statüsü ve dışsal iş doyum değişkenlerinin, yaşam doyum düzeylerini istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ölçüde yordadığı görülmüştür. Yöneticiler arasında, kadın, evli olanlar ve yüksek düzeyde iş doyum olanların, yaşam doyum düzeylerinin daha yüksek olduğu görülmüştür.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Öneriler: Araştırmanın bir önemli sonucu, ülkemizde ve başka ülkelerde bu konuda yapılan araştırma bulguları ile de tutarlı olarak, psikolojik danışmanların yöneticilerden daha yüksek yaşam doyum düzeyine sahip olduğudur. İlgili araştırma sonuçları ve kuramsal temelde bu bulgu, yöneticilerle karşılaştırıldığında, psikolojik danışmanların işlerinin daha yaratıcı, görece daha özgür, kendilerini gerçekleştirmeye daha uygun olanak sağlayıcı, daha yeterli boş zaman veren içsel iş doyum sağlayıcı nitelikte olmasına bağlanabilir. Araştırmanın

diğer bir önemli sonucu da, iş doyumunun yaşam doyumunu yordamada bir ana etmen olduğu bulgusunu desteklemesidir.

Bu araştırma deneyimi, en önemli kuramsal-yöntemsel öneriler olarak, bilimsel evrenselliğe erişmek için bu alandaki kavramlaştırma, araştırma araçları ve göstergelerinin öznel perspektiften nesnel perspektife doğru geliştirilmesi, aynı konuda yapılan öznel ve nesnel perspektifli araştırma sonuçlarının karşılaştırılması; kültürler arası, toplumsal sistemlerarası karşılaştırılmalı yaklaşımlı ve uzun dönemli araştırma tasarımlarının daha yeterlice yön verici olması gereğini vurgulamayı zorunlu kılmaktadır. Uygulamaya yönelik önerimiz ise, tüm toplumsal politikalar için geçerli olacağı gibi, ulusal eğitim politikalarının da bilimsel bulgular temelinde geliştirilmesi bilincinin kazandırılması olacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yaşam doyumunu, iş doyumunu, psikolojik danışman, yönetici.