Resilience and life satisfaction as the predictors of general self-efficacy

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship among general self-efficacy, resilience, life satisfaction and the extent to which the variables of resilience and life satisfaction contribute to the prediction of general self-efficacy. The study was carried out with 310 middle-aged adults in Burdur; 195 (62.9%) of which were female, 115 (37.1%) of which were male. Among them, 70 (22.6%) of which were single, 227 (73.2%) of which were married and 13 (4.2%) of which were divorced. The General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Resilience in Midlife Scale and Life Satisfaction Scale were used in the study. Correlation Coefficient of Pearson Moments and Hierarchical Regression Analysis were used in the analysis of the data. As a consequence, it was determined that there is a positive relationship among general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction. Also, it was observed that the variables of resilience and life satisfaction significantly predict general self-efficacy.

Keywords: General self-efficacy, resilience, life satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

The concept of self-efficacy was addressed by Bandura (1977) within the scope of the social-cognitive theory for the first time. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is an individual's self-perception about revealing a certain performance. In other words, it is the individual's belief about he or she can succeed in anything. In addition, self-efficacy beliefs determine how individuals feel, think and how they cope with difficulties. The concept of self-efficacy refers to individuals' confidence in their source rather than their capacity. Although an individual has the ability to do any job, if he/she could not believe himself/herself, then he/she may fail to perform the job. An individual's competence in terms of self-efficacy is directly based on four sources, including performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological states. According to Bandura (1994), self-efficacy belief influences four psychological processes, including cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes.

Self-efficacy can be discussed as situation-specific self-efficacy and it has been discussed as general self-efficacy in currently conducted studies. Situation-specific self-efficacy belief is referred to as self-efficacy in issues such as academic or interpersonal relationships. General self-efficacy belief is the individual's belief in reaching life goals in a general sense (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2004; Scherbaum, Cohen-Charash & Kern, 2006). Analysing previously applied studies, it is seen that there are several studies related to self-efficacy in recent years. There are also research studies in which the relationship of general self-efficacy with hope, optimism and general well-being exist (Magaletta & Oliver, 1999); with goal setting and self-assessment (Schunk, 2003); with depression and shyness (Hermann & Betz, 2004); with burnout (Bolat, 2011); with family functions (Ikiz & Yoruk, 2013) is discussed. In this study, it is objected to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and resilience and subjective well-being.

Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy prefer to challenge hard tasks rather than avoiding them. These people set goals for themselves that they can challenge and they try to remain strong for adhering to these goals. When they encounter failure, they increase their efforts and maintain them. After facing failure and obstacles, they can bring back their efficacy perceptions back quickly (Bandura, 1994). In this perspective, it is considered that self-efficacy may be associated with resilience and life satisfaction. The concept of resilience was used for the first time in the 1950s while defining individuals who can cope with stressful events and who can survive. The literal meaning of resilience is the flexibility of the material. In other words, it means not to accept being under pressure, re-gaining strength (Garmezy, 1993). According to Toland and Carrigan (2011) and Beltman, Mansfield and Pride (2011), resilience is not only a situation occurring under difficulty and pressure but also it represents an individual's having the ability to cope with difficulty and stress effectively. Resilience is associated with an individual's easy, effective, ambitious, successful and healthy way of coping with difficult conditions.

Higher level of self-efficacy may affect individuals' success and their subjective well-being states in many ways. Subjective well-being consists of two main components including emotional and cognitive. Cognitive component of subjective well-being is also called life satisfaction. Although an emotional component of subjective well-being receives so much interest by researchers, it is seen that its cognitive dimension is relatively neglected (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). Vinson and Erikson (2012) and Kapteyn, Smith and Soest, (2009) analysed factors affecting individuals' life satisfaction and happiness in their study, and consequently, they determined that various factors ranging from gender to family life, from monthly income to seeking meaning in life affected life satisfaction.

Life satisfaction is an individual's evaluation of the difference between his/her expectations and what he/she has. In other words, it can be defined as a person's assessment of his/her life in accordance with his/her own criteria. This satisfaction is not related to a specific or main satisfaction but satisfaction related to the whole life (Wilson & Petterson, 1988). Especially considering research studies in which adults' life satisfaction are analysed, it is possible to find studies in which the relationship of adults' life satisfaction with optimism (Collins, Goldman & Rodriguez, 2007; Diener &

Lucas, 1999); marital status, health status and close relationships (Martikainen, 2008); social support, self-esteem and gender roles (Matud, Bethencourt & Ibanez, 2014); multidimensional perfectionism and humour (Calisandemir & Tagay, 2015) is examined.

According to Erikson's lifelong developmental theory, all developmental conflicts may arise during the life-span. Developmental tasks of life repeat themselves continuously and the structure called personality appears. Adult who is in inaction conflict with productivity still tries to struggle with conflict of distance against proximity, conflict of a role against identity and conflict of insecurity against basic trust (Ivey, Ivey, Myers & Sweeney, 2013). In an individual's ability to live his life the fullest, it would be effective to cope with these developmental conflicts. At this point, it is thought that adults' life satisfaction and resilience may affect their self-efficacy levels. This situation will bring a different perspective to counsellors working with adults. In this study with an examination of the general self-efficacy of adults, it is thought to contribute to researchers and practitioners working in this field. In this context, the objective of this research is to examine the relationship between adults' resilience levels, life satisfaction and general self-efficacy, and to determine whether resilience and life satisfaction variables predict resilience or not.

2. Method

This research is a study of relationality model towards predicting adults' resilience from the point of resilience and life satisfaction.

2.1. Individuals within the scope of research

The study was carried out with 310 middle-aged adults in Burdur, 195 (62.9%) of which were female, 115 (37.1%) which were male and among them, 70 (22.6%) of which were single, 227 (73.2%) of which were married and 13 (4.2%) of which were divorced. Among 30–65 years old adults included in the research group, 106 of them are teachers, 76 of them are nurses, 39 of them are health officers, 29 of them are midwives, 14 of them are police, 10 of them are laboratory assistants and 4 of them are doctors. The average age of the group is 40.

2.2. Measurement tools

2.2.1. General self-efficacy scale-GSE
The General Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) adopted into more than 25 languages and adapted into Turkish by Aypay (2010) is the four-point Likert-type scale (completely wrong = 1, completely correct = 4) consisting of 10 items, and all items are scored in a positive way. The scale gives 10–40 points. A higher score means that general self-efficacy is high. Correlation coefficient calculated for test–retest reliability of this single-dimensional scale is $r = 0.80$, $p < 0.001$. Calculated regarding the reliability of the scale, it is determined that the scale's alpha internal consistency coefficient is 0.79 and 0.63 for scale component and 0.83 for a total of 10 items (Aypay, 2010). Within the scope of this research, Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was found to be 0.84.

2.2.2. Resilience in midlife scale
Developed by Ryan and Caltabiano (2009), the scale was adopted into Turkish Culture by Savi-Cakar, Karatas and Cakır (2014). To determine the validity of Resilience in Midlife scale (RIM-S), language validity, structure validity and criteria relative validity were analysed. For structural validity, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. Self-efficacy scale consisting of 25 items includes five sub-scales, including self-efficacy, family and social networks, perseverance, internal control locus and coping. As a result of analyses, it is revealed that total correlation coefficients regarding the reliability of RIM-S range between 0.17 and 0.66. The test–retest correlation coefficient of the scale is calculated

as 0.85 and Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient is calculated as 0.71. For criterion-related validity, correlations between Life Satisfaction Scale and General Self-Efficacy Scale and Resilience Scale for Adults Scale are calculated. A statistically significant positive correlation is found as 0.58 for Life Satisfaction and 0.65 for General Self-Efficacy.

2.2.3. Life satisfaction scale

The scale was developed by Diener et al. (1985) and firstly adopted into Turkish version by Koker (1991). There are five items related to life satisfaction in the scale and each item is answered as per seven-graded answering systems (1: not suitable and 7: very convenient). The Scale is intended to measure general life satisfaction in all age groups from adolescents to adults. As a result of item analysis of the scale, the correlation was found adequate and test–retest reliability coefficient was found to be 0.85. In the study conducted by Yetim (1993), Cronbach's alpha internal coefficient of the test and test–retest reliability was found to be 0.86 and 0.73, respectively. As the score received from the scale increases, it shows that life satisfaction increases. Within the scope of this research, the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale is determined as 0.92.

2.3. Data analyses

Predicted variable of the research is general self-efficacy, and the predictive variable is the resilience and life satisfaction. In the research, scatter diagram in SPSS software was used to analyse whether there is any linear relationship between resilience and life satisfaction discussed as predictor variable and self-efficacy as the predicted variable. A linear relationship was determined between predictor variables and predicted variable; Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the variables, then the Hierarchical Regression Analysis technique was applied. Before analyses, extreme values were taken into consideration and 26 extreme values were removed from the observation set. Then, it was determined that data are distributed normally. In addition, in the model, there should not be any correlations between error terms. Accordingly, considering Durban Watson value used in testing autocorrelation in the model, it was seen that the value desired to be between 1.5 and 2.5 (Kalayci, 2006) was found as 1.951, and in the model, there were no autocorrelations and standard errors were very small and regression assumption is provided. Research data were entered into SPSS 15 software and analyses were carried out in this program. In the study, the significance level was accepted as 0.05.

3. Findings

3.1. Findings regarding correlations of general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction variables with each other

In the research, descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients belonging to general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction scores are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics about variables and correlation coefficients between variables

Variables	n	$\overline{X}$	s	1	2	3
1-General self-efficacy	310	29.31	4.66	-	0.652**	0.501**
2- Resilience	310	67.98	8.78	0.652**	-	0.574**
3-Life satisfaction	310	23.47	5.80	0.501**	0.574**	-

**p < 0.01.

Analysing Table 1, it is seen that adults achieve the following score averages: 29.31 for General Self-Efficacy Scale, 67.98 for Resilience Scale and 23.47 for Life Satisfaction Scale, respectively. In addition, a significant positive relationship is observed between general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction.

3.2. Findings related to predicting general self-efficacy

In the research, to determine whether resilience and life satisfaction variables predict self-efficacy or not, hierarchical regression analysis was conducted and findings are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of hierarchical regression analysis related to variables predicting self-efficacy (n = 310)

Model	R	R^2	R^2 change	F	F change
1	0.652	0.424	0.423	227.182**	227.182
2	0.670	0.449	0.445	124.852**	13.386

**$p < 0.01$.

Analysing Table 2, two models fictionalised in the study are both significant (F = 227.182, $p < 0.01$; F = 124.852, $p < 0.01$), and the explanation average for total variance is 44.9%. It has been revealed that group variables predicting the Self-Efficacy mostly are those consisting of resilience variable with 42.4% variance explanation percentage which are entered in the first model, and then life satisfaction with a percentage of 0.25% entered in the second model. Analysing the significance provided by each variable to the model in both models, it is seen that, in the first model, resilience variable provides significant contribution to the model (t = 3.697, $p < 0.01$, $β$: 0.652), in the second model, life satisfaction variable has a significant contribution to the model (t = 3.986, $p < 0.01$, $β$: 0.189).

4. Conclusion and discussion

It has been appointed in the study that general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction variables show a significant relationship, and that resilience and life satisfaction variables predict self-efficacy significantly. First finding of the study is that there are positive significant relationships between general self-efficacy and resilience. According to this finding, as adults' resilience levels increase, their general self-efficacy levels also increase.

While Hamill (2003) found a significant positive correlation between adolescents' resilience levels and self-efficacy; Terzi (2008) found out that there was a positive significant relationship between students' self-efficacy and resilience levels in the study conducted with university students. Mamta and Sharma (2013); Cutler (2006) have revealed that there is a significant relationship between adults' self-efficacy and resilience levels. Resilience can be expressed as showing a positive response by individuals in the face of stressful experiences. People's ability to adapt to stressful situations is his/her ability to cope with this situation effectively. People with a higher level of resilience are those who hold the control of events and who can turn negative events into their favour (Rutter, 1987).

Individuals with higher general self-efficacy level tend to increase their efforts and maintain them when they face failure. After facing failure and obstacles, they can bring back their efficacy perceptions back quickly. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in oneself about succeeding in any issues (Bandura, 1994). Thus, individuals with higher self-efficacy belief can be said that they will be more successful in coping with difficult situations. With such a perspective, it is an expected result that general self-efficacy level increases as resilience level increases.

According to another finding of the study, adults' resilience levels and their life satisfaction predict their general self-efficacy significantly. General self-efficacy is affected by their resilience and life satisfaction. There are also research studies available reporting that there is a positive correlation between general self-efficacy and life satisfaction (Akgunduz, 2013; Sahranc, 2008).

Mamta and Sharma (2013) have revealed that there is a significant relationship between adults' self-efficacy, resilience levels and their well-being state. As we know, life satisfaction is an individual's cognitive judgment about his/her living conditions in line with the criteria determined by oneself. In other words, the harmony between an individual's life satisfaction and achievements determines

his/her life satisfaction (Diener & Lucas, 1999). General self-efficacy is, on the other hand, a person's beliefs about his/her qualifications. Harmony between an individual's desires and achievements, in other words, life satisfaction will affect that person's self-efficacy positively. General self-efficacy is related to how much an individual feels competent regarding his/her performance in situations requiring struggle when faced in life. Therefore, it is an expected finding that adults' general self-efficacy affects their resilience and life satisfaction.

5. Recommendations

With reference to this research finding revealing that adults' resilience levels and life satisfaction predict significantly their general self-efficacy in a positive level, following suggestions can be submitted: In particular, it can be suggested that psychological counsellors working with adults also provided with training that will increase resilience and life satisfaction with a view to improve adults' general self-efficacy. Considering that the average age of this group is 36.6, similar studies can be conducted towards adults in older ages and towards elderly people. As is known, general self-efficacy, life satisfaction and resilience are included among the concepts of positive psychology. It is considered that individuals with a high level of resilience and life satisfaction will have higher levels of self-efficacy. As for an individual's effective coping with stress and difficult situations faced in life, these interpreted characteristics come into prominence. Hence, it has become more and more important for psychological counsellors to gain this awareness during both education process and professional process and to support psychological counsellors on this issue.

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