

## 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%) were male, 70 (22.6%) were single, 227 (73.2%) were married and 13 (4.2%) were divorced. The General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Resilience in Midlife Scale (RIM-S) and the 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

## 1. Introduction

Bandura (1977) first addressed the concept of self-efficacy within the scope of social-cognitive theory. 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 resources rather than their capacity. Although an individual has the ability to do any job, if they do not believe in themselves, then they 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 also 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). Analyzing previously applied studies, it is seen that there are several studies related to self-efficacy in recent years. There are also studies that discuss the relationship of general self-efficacy with hope, optimism, and general well-being (Magaletta & Oliver, 1999), with goal setting and self-assessment (Schunk, 2003), with depression and shyness (Hermann & Betz, 2004), with burnout (Bolat, 2011) and with family functions (İkiz & Yoruk, 2013). This study aims to to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and resilience and subjective well-being.

Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy prefer to face hard tasks rather than avoiding them. These people set goals for themselves that they can challenge, and they try to strongly adhere to these goals. When they encounter failure they increase their efforts and maintain them. After facing failure and obstacles, they can quickly bring back their efficacy perceptions (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 (Garnezy, 1993). According to Tolland and Carrigan (2011); Beltman, Mansfield Pride (2011), resilience is not only a situation occurring under difficulty and pressure, but it is also 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 ways of coping with difficult conditions.

Higher levels of self-efficacy may affect individuals' success and their subjective well-being states in many ways. Subjective well-being consists of two main components: emotional and cognitive. The cognitive component of subjective well-being is also called life satisfaction. Although the emotional component of subjective well-being receives a great deal of interest from 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) analyzed factors affecting individuals' life satisfactions and happiness in their studies; 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 rather satisfaction related to the whole life (Wilson & Petterson, 1988). Particularly considering the research in which adults' life satisfaction is analyzed, it is possible to find studies that examine 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) and multidimensional perfectionism and humor (Calisandemir & Tagay, 2015).

According to Erikson's lifelong developmental theory, all developmental conflicts may arise during the life span. The developmental tasks of life repeat themselves continuously and the structure called personality appears. An adult who is in inaction conflict with productivity still tries to struggle with conflict of distance against proximity, conflict of role against identity and conflict of insecurity against basic trust (Ivey, Ivey, Myers & Sweeney, 2013). In an individual's ability to live his life to 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 counselors working with adults. It is thought that this study, with its examination of the general self-efficacy of adults, will 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 or not resilience and life satisfaction variables predicts resilience.

## 2. Method

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

### 2.1 Individuals Within the Scope of the Research

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

### 2.2 Measurement Tools

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE): The GSE developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), adapted into more than 25 languages and into Turkish by Aypay (2010), is the 4-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 to 40 points. A higher score means that general self-efficacy is high. The correlation coefficient calculated for test-retest reliability of this single-dimensional scale is ( $r=.80$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Calculated regarding the reliability of the scale, it is determined that the scale's alpha internal consistency coefficient is .79 and .63 for scale component and .83 for a total of ten items (Aypay, 2010). Within the scope of this research, Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was found to be .84.

Resilience in Midlife Scale (RIM): Developed by Ryan and Caltabiano (2009), the scale was adapted into Turkish culture by Savi-Cakar, Karatas and Cakir (2014). To determine the validity of the RIM scale, language validity, structure validity and criteria relative validity was analyzed. For structural validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. The 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 was revealed that total correlation coefficients regarding the reliability of the RIM range between .17 and .66. The test-retest correlation coefficient of the scale was calculated as .85 and Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated as .71. For criterion-related validity, correlations among the Life Satisfaction Scale, and the Resilience Scale for Adults Scale was calculated. A statistically significant positive correlation was found as .58 for life satisfaction and .65 for general self-efficacy.

Life Satisfaction Scale: Diener, Emmons and Griffin (1985) developed this scale it was and first adapted into Turkish by Koker (1991). There are five items related to life satisfaction in the scale, and each item is answered as per 7-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, correlation was found to be adequate and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be .85. In Yetim's (1993) study, the Cronbach's alpha internal coefficient of the test and test-retest reliability was found to be .86 and .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 was determined as .92.

### 2.3. Data Analyses

The predicted variable of the research is general self-efficacy, and the predictive variable is resilience and life satisfaction. In the research, a scatter diagram in SPSS software was used to analyze whether there is any linear relationship between resilience and life satisfaction, discussed as the 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 were distributed normally. In addition, in the model, there should not be any correlations between error terms. Accordingly, considering the 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 (Kalaycı, 2006) was found as 1.951; moreover, 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 .05.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1. Findings Regarding the Correlations of General Self-Efficacy, Resilience and Life Satisfaction Variables with Each Other

In the research, the 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	$\bar{X}$	s	1	2	3
1-General Self-Efficacy	310	29.31	4.6	-	.652	.501
2- Resilience	310	67.98	8.7	.652	-	.574
3-Life Satisfaction	310	23.47	5.8	.501	.574	-

\*\*p<.01

Analyzing Table 1, it is seen that adults achieve the following score averages: 29.31 for the GSE, 67.98 for Resilience Scale and 23.47 for the 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 <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F	F Change
1	.652	.424	.423	227.182*	227.182
2	.670	.449	.445	124.852*	13.386

\*\*p<.01

Analyzing Table 2, two models fictionalized in the study are both significant (F=227.182, p<.01; F=124.852, p<.01), and the explanation average for total variance is 44.9%. It has been revealed that group variables predicting the self-efficacy were mostly those consisting of resilience variable with 42.4% variance explanation percentage, which were entered in the first model, and then life satisfaction with a percentage of 0.25% entered in the second model. Analyzing the significance provided by each variable to the model in both models, it was seen that in the first model, the resilience variable provided significant contribution to the model (t=3.697, p<.01, β: .652), whereas in the second model, life satisfaction variable had a significant contribution to the model (t=3.986, p<.01, β: .189).

### 4. Conclusion and Discussion

It has been suggested in the study that general self-efficacy, resilience and life satisfaction variables show a significant relationship, and that resilience and life satisfaction variables significantly predict self-efficacy. The 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 that there was positive significant relationship between students' self-efficacy and resilience levels in the study conducted with university students. Mamta and Sharma (2013) and Cutler (2006) have revealed that there is a significant relationship between adults' self-efficacy and resilience levels. Resilience can be described as individuals showing positive responses 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 higher levels of resilience are those who hold the control of events and who can turn negative events in their favor (Rutter, 1987).

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

According to another finding of the study, adults' resilience levels and their life satisfaction significantly predict their general self-efficacy. General self-efficacy is affected by their resilience and

life satisfaction. There are also studies available that report 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 that oneself determines. In other words, the harmony between an individual's life satisfaction and achievements determine 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 significantly predict their general self-efficacy on a positive level, the following suggestions can be submitted. In particular, it can be suggested that psychological counselors working with adults should also be provided with training that will increase resilience and life satisfaction with a view to improving adults' general self-efficacy. Considering that the average age of this group was 36.6 years of age, similar studies could be conducted with adults in older ages and with 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 high levels 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 counselors to gain this awareness during both education processes and professional processes, and to support psychological counselors on this issue.

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