

Happiness and Future Expectations in High School and Vocational High School Students

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Abstract

Goal: In this study, how level of happiness among high school and vocational high school students have an effect on their future expectations, is being researched. **Method:** Study has been conducted on adolescent students who are studying in public schools in Rize, Turkey. This study used 20387 high school students as its objects. Since the study group will be given equal opportunity to be selected for all students, using the random sampling method, the study group consists of 400 high school and 420 vocational high school, 259 female and 561 male students, in total of 820 individuals. This study, which is an application research, is a quantitative research conducted with the data obtained using the descriptive scanning model and the relational techniques. For data analysis, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0 and AMOS 21.0 software's has been used. The Cronbach Alpha value for the Oxford Happiness Scale that has been used in the research is 0,868, and the Cronbach Alpha value calculated for the Adolescent Future Expectation value is 0,875. Findings regarding the distribution of students according to their socio-demographic characteristics were determined by frequency analysis. Descriptive statistics regarding the scores the students got from the Oxford Happiness Scale and Adolescent Future Expectation Scale are given. The normal distribution status of the students' scores from the Oxford Happiness Scale and Adolescent Future Expectation Scale was examined by looking at the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, QQ plot and skewness-kurtosis values, and it was found that it revealed a normal distribution. Pearson test has been used to determine the relationship between the scores students received from the Oxford Happiness Scale and the Adolescent Future Expectation Scale. A structural equation model was created regarding the effect of the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the students on the scores of the Adolescent Future Expectation Scale. **Findings:** As a result of the study, a statistically significant difference was found between the scores of the students from the Oxford Happiness Scale and the overall Adolescent Future Expectation Scale and the sub-dimensions of "Work and Education", "Religion and Society", "Health and Life" according to the types of high school. **Discussion:** Suggestions were made in line with the findings.

Keywords: Adolescent, Happiness, Future Expectation

Introduction

This study examines how the happiness levels of adolescents who are studying in high schools and vocational high schools affect their future expectations.

The word adolescent comes from the Latin verb 'adolescere' which means "to grow up" or "to mature". Adolescence is a period between childhood and adulthood.

It is a transition stage from one universe to the other and it does not occur within precise lines. But even at different times, all adolescents overcome this period and grow into mature adults.

In this context, we can describe adolescence as a bridge that individuals have to cross in order to take part in the world of fully developed and responsible adults (Dolgin, 2014).

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Adolescence is a difficult period in which teenagers are challenged with new problems like physical and hormonal changes, identity formation and the start of romantic relationships and struggle with their changing moods caused by such issues. (Larson & Lampman-Petratis, 1989). During this period, adolescents develop significantly in order to become physically, emotionally and mentally developed social adults. Also, some crucial developmental tasks must be accomplished for this period to be successfully completed and lived. These tasks are; being emotionally independent from parents and other adults, desire to take part in social responsibilities and gaining these responsibilities and to have developed values and moral system that will guide their behaviour (Sarı, Ötünç, & Erceylan, (2007).

In terms of general definitions, happiness is described as a state of satisfaction that increases with positive emotions and decrease of unwanted emotions. It is also described as the feeling of increased satisfaction that comes when the intensity of high level positive emotions overcome negative emotions in recent days. (Hills & Argyle, 2002). Happiness is having low unwanted negative emotions and having high positive emotions for a high life satisfaction (Lama, Howard & Cutler, 2000) that people aim to reach and strive for (Argyle & Martin, 1989).

As a result of the research conducted on societies with different cultural values, it was concluded that happiness is what people mostly desire (Diener, Oishi & Lucas 2003). The fact that happiness is one of the main goals of human life has led to activities aimed at explaining happiness and achieving happiness from past to present.

In the historical process, philosophers have seen the achievement of happiness as the most intense motivating factor in most of the human activities. Aristotle stated that the ultimate goal of life is happiness and the purpose of achieving this goal is virtue and dignity (Kaya, 1983), and argued that a virtuous life can only bring peace and happiness to an individual. In addition to that, Socrates stated that the necessity of being happy is to be virtuous (Gökberk, 1996). In order to understand the purpose of happiness in human life, it should be viewed from a holistic perspective (Örücü, 2019). Every person seeks happiness throughout their life and happiness is the only goal of human life (Büyükdüvenci, 1993).

In psychology, happiness is defined as subjective well being (Eryılmaz, 2011). Subjective well being consists of positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction factors (Tuzgöl-Dost, 2005). In fact, in the nineties, psychology was

defined as thinking on the components that make people happy, not investigating the negativities in human life (Örücü, 2019). Happiness of an individual can be explained as; experiencing positive emotions intensively and negative emotions less so that life satisfaction can stay high (Diener, 1984).

Happiness is one of the main emotions that teenagers realize during adolescence. Happiness, which creates positive effect on the development processes of adolescents (Cihangir & Meydan, 2008), is an inevitable reality in the fact that school success affects the belief of carrying one towards future goals. In the researches made on the topic of happiness, Seligman and his friends set out with the question, "What are the factors affecting the success of a successful individual?" and focused on questions such as "What is a good life?" or "What are the qualities of individuals who are successful and happy in life?" and with that, highlighted the term "psychological well-being" (Akın, 2008).

Although the concept of well being is often evaluated in terms of mental health, in the simplest terms, human beings are filled with the desire for happiness more than anything else. The demand and purpose of being happy is inherent in humanity. In addition to that, the behaviors of happy and unhappy people can differ from each other (Demir, 2020).

As individuals' levels of happiness increase, it becomes easier for them to move forward in life with more positive emotions and interact positively with their environment (Thoilliez, 2011). In a study conducted by Koca in the city of Samsun, it was determined that as the level of happiness increases in adolescents, there is an increase on student's school success and positive effects that the school success is carried to the future goals (Koca, 2020). Also, the way happy people interpret, evaluate, and react to life events also differ from those who are less happy (Ünüvar, Çalışandemir, Tagay & Amini, 2015).

Future expectations are cognitive maps that include the priorities, ideas and concerns of the individuals (Şimşek, 2012). In addition to that, the wishes and desires of the individuals for being together with whom, where and in which situation, and their expectations from life individually or socially, also affect their future expectations (İkizoğlu, Önal Dölek & Arslan Cıfci, 2007). When a theoretical evaluation is made, all expectations about future are so important that most of the time, the strongest motive for making decisions is again expectations about the future (Nurmi, 2011).

Individual's desired position in the future and his/her demands from life according to this dream can also be summarized as future expectations (İkizoğlu, Önal Dölek & Arslan Cıfci, 2007). Future expectation is considered as one of the most important concepts in adolescence, which is one of the most important stages of the process of becoming an individual in human life. So much so that adolescents' expectations for the future determine their adult lives (Şimşek, 2012). Adolescents' expectations towards future and their hopes for turning them into reality can affect both their mental health and their level of satisfaction with their lives and also determine the direction of change and development of society (Yavuzer, Demir, Meşeci & Sertelin, 2005).

The goal of this study is to examine the effect of happiness or future expectation in high school students and the differences in future expectations between high school and vocational high school students. For this purpose, an answer was sought to the question of how the happiness and future expectation levels of students differ depending on the type of school.

Methodology

This research is a quantitative study conducted with descriptive scanning model using relational techniques.

Region and sampling

This study is conducted on adolescents studying in public schools in Rize, Turkey. Nature of the study consists of 20387 high school students. Since the study group will be given equal opportunity to be selected for all students, using the random sampling method, the study group consists of 400 high school and 420 vocational high school, 259 female and 561 male students, in total of 820 individuals. The study, which is an application research is a quantitative research conducted with the data obtained using the descriptive survey model and the relational techniques. For data analysis, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0 and AMOS 21.0 softwares has been used. The Cronbach Alpha value for the Oxford Happiness Scale that has been used in the research is 0,868, and the Cronbach Alpha value calculated for the Adolescent Future Expectation value is 0,875. Findings regarding the distribution of students according to their socio-demographic characteristics were determined by frequency analysis. Descriptive statistics regarding the scores the students got from the Oxford Happiness Scale and Adolescent Future Expectation Scale are given. The normal

distribution status of the students' scores from the Oxford Happiness Scale and Adolescent Future Expectation Scale was examined by looking at the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, QQ plot and skewness-kurtosis values, and it was found that it revealed a normal distribution. Pearson test has been used to determine the relationship between the scores students received from the Oxford Happiness Scale and the Adolescent Future Expectation Scale. A structural equation model was created regarding the effect of the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the students on the scores of the Adolescent Future Expectation Scale.

In determining the sample number, there were 8873 high school students (20387 students in total), and a simple random sampling formula was used to determine the sample depending on each school type (Yamane, 2001).

Since the number of high school students are 8873;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot (e)^2} = \frac{8873}{1 + 8873 \cdot (0,05)^2} = 383$$

Since the number of vocational high school students are 11514;

$$n = \frac{N \cdot t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{(N - 1) \cdot d^2 + t^2 \cdot p \cdot q} = \frac{11514 \cdot (1,96)^2 \cdot 0,50 \cdot 0,50}{(11514 - 1) \cdot (0,05)^2 + (1,96)^2 \cdot 0,50 \cdot 0,50}$$

$$n = \frac{11514 \cdot 3,8415 \cdot 0,25}{11514 \cdot 0,0025 + 3,8416 \cdot 0,25} = 400$$

According to this calculation, out of 20387 students in the research circle, since 8873 of them are high school students and 11514 are vocational high school students, the z value is 1.96 with a 95% confidence interval and the p and q ratios are 0.5 with a sampling error of 5%, it was determined that a sample of 383 high school students and 400 vocational high school students were sufficient.

Collecting of data

In the city center of Rize, a total of 21 high schools and vocational high schools that were organized by name, 2 high schools and 2 vocational high schools were chosen by using drawing method, 400 students from high schools and 420 students from vocational high schools were taken and researched. In order to obtain the minimum number to be sampled, a total of 820 questionnaires were applied by considering the questionnaires that would be considered invalid. Necessary information was given to the students and those who wanted to participate voluntarily.

The data were collected by survey method. A 12-question form containing socio-demographic characteristics of the students was used as data collection tools.

Oxford Happiness Scale (OHS): Oxford Happiness Scale (Cronbach alpha = 0.91), developed by Hills and Argyle (Hills & Argyle, 2002) and adapted into Turkish by Doğan and Sapmaz, was used to measure the levels of happiness in practice in the study group. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was 0.91, the reliability coefficient obtained by the test half-way method was 0.86, and the composite reliability was found as 0.91 for the 29-item and 6-point Likert-type (1- I strongly disagree, 6- I completely agree) scale (Doğan & Sapmaz, 2012). Getting a high score on the scale indicates that the student's happiness level is high.

Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents (FESA): FESA "Future Expectations Scale for Adolescence", (Cronbach alfa = 0.925), which was developed by McWhirter & McWhirter (McWhirter & McWhirter, 2008) and whose validity and reliability was tested by Tuncer (Tuncer, 2008) was used. The scale consists of 25 items and all items start with "When I Become an Adult". The lowest score is 1 and the highest score is 7. Scale items are scored as "1: I absolutely do not believe" and "7: I absolutely believe". There are four sub-factors in the scale; first factor is consisting of 11 items

(Work and Education), the second factor is 7 items (Marriage and Family), the third factor is 3 items (Religion and Society), and the fourth factor consists of 4 items (Health and Life).

Findings

Sociodemographic variables, percentage and number distributions of the study group are given in Table 1. Table 2 demonstrates the p values found by the t test in comparing the groups with the Oxford Happiness Scale for High School and Vocational High School Students and the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents.

The structural equation model created to determine the effect of the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the students participating in the study on the scores of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents is shown in Figure 1.

The correlations and p values between the Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores are given in Table 3 and the goodness of fit indices related to the model created to determine the effect of the Oxford Happiness Scale scores on the scores of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents are shown in Table 4.

Table 1. Distribution of High School and Vocational High School students by sociodemographic variables

	High School		Vocational High School		Total		χ^2
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Gender							
Girl	202	50,50	57	13,57	259	31,59	129,296
Boy	198	49,50	363	86,43	561	68,41	
Age							
15 and below	158	39,50	111	26,43	269	32,80	25,612
16	136	34,00	132	31,43	268	32,68	
17 and above	106	26,50	177	42,14	283	34,51	
Class							
9	127	31,75	120	28,57	247	30,12	3,421
10	74	18,50	99	23,57	173	21,10	
11	93	23,25	91	21,67	184	22,44	
12	106	26,50	110	26,19	216	26,34	
Number of siblings							
Only child	16	4,00	17	4,05	33	4,02	3,921
Two siblings	96	24,00	126	30,00	222	27,07	
Three siblings	162	40,50	152	36,19	314	38,29	
Four and above	126	31,50	125	29,76	251	30,61	
Birth order							
First born	130	32,50	148	35,24	278	33,90	4,723
Second born	106	26,50	123	29,29	229	27,93	
Third born	98	24,50	77	18,33	175	21,34	
Fourth or above	66	16,50	72	17,14	138	16,83	

Longest place of settlement								
Village	68	17,00	145	34,52	213	25,98		
District	86	21,50	33	7,86	119	14,51	55,157	0,000*
City/Metropolis	246	61,50	242	57,62	488	59,51		
Income of the family								
Low	10	2,50	32	7,62	42	5,12		
Average	252	63,00	252	60,00	504	61,46	11,057	0,004*
Good/High	138	34,50	136	32,38	274	33,41		
Parents together/separate								
Together	376	94,00	396	94,29	772	94,15	0,030	0,862
Separate	24	6,00	24	5,71	48	5,85		
Number of friends								
10 and below	72	18,00	97	23,10	169	20,61		
Between 11-20	166	41,50	109	25,95	275	33,54	22,230	0,000*
21 and above	162	40,50	214	50,95	376	45,85		
Number of close friends								
3 and below	142	35,50	161	38,33	303	36,95		
Between 4-9	160	40,00	139	33,10	299	36,46	4,401	0,111
10 and above	98	24,50	120	28,57	218	26,59		

*p<0,05

Table 2. Comparison of the Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores of students according to their high school types

	Type of School	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Oxford Happiness Scale	High School	400	120,04	21,91		
	Vocational High School	420	114,98	19,20	3,524	0,000*
Work and Education	High School	400	59,39	19,35	-6,203	0,000*
	Vocational High School	420	66,86	14,93		
Marriage and Family	High School	400	36,28	12,55	0,371	0,711
	Vocational High School	420	35,93	14,45		
Religion and Society	High School	400	13,65	5,96	-5,304	0,000*
	Vocational High School	420	15,81	5,72		
Health and Life	High School	400	21,49	7,52	2,061	0,040*
	Vocational High School	420	20,41	7,43		
Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents	High School	400	130,81	31,94	-3,690	0,000*
	Vocational High School	420	139,01	31,72		

*p<0,05

Table 2 shows the t test results for the comparison of the Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale of Adolescents scores according to the high school types that students included in the study attended.

According to the examined table, a statistically significant difference was found between the scores of the students participating in the study from the Oxford Happiness Scale according to the type of high school they were attending ($p < 0.05$).

Oxford Happiness Scale scores of high school students are significantly higher than vocational high school students.

It was observed that the difference between the overall scores of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents and the sub-dimensions of "Work and Education", "Religion and Society", and "Health and Life" was found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the scores of high school students in Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents in

general and in the "Work and Education" and "Religion and Society" sub-dimensions are significantly lower than the students attending vocational high schools; Their scores in the "Health and Life" sub-dimension are significantly higher.

Structural equation modeling was utilized to examine the effect of happiness levels of students included in the study on future expectations.

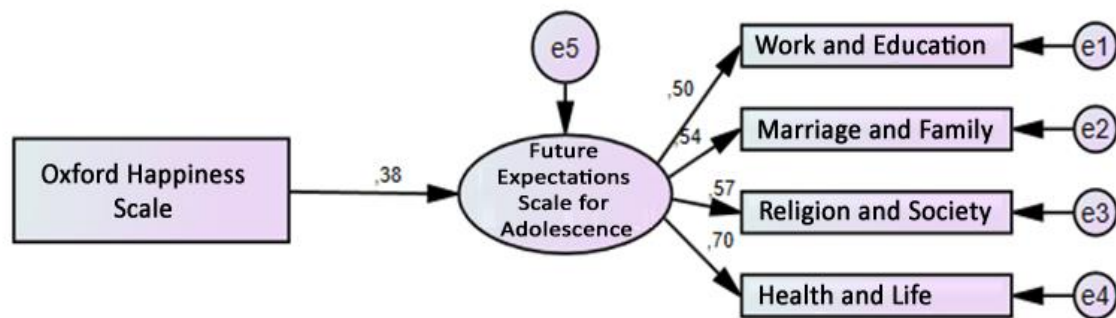


Figure 1. Path diagram regarding the effect of Oxford Happiness Scale scores of students on Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores

Table 3. Correlations between students' Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores (n=820)

	Oxford Happiness Scale	
	r	p
Work and Education	0,154	0,000**
Marriage and Family	0,248	0,000**
Religion and Society	0,157	0,000**
Health and Life	0,304	0,000**
Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents	0,290	0,000**

Table 3, correlations between the Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores of the students are given.

It was observed that there were statistically significant correlations between the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the students and the total scores of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents and the scores they got from the sub-

dimensions of work and education, marriage and family, religion and society and health and life ($p < 0,05$).

This correlation is positive and weak. According to this, as the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the student's increase, their scores from the total of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents and the sub-dimensions in the scale also increase

Table 4. Goodness of fit indexes related to the model of the effect of students' school type, Oxford Happiness Scale scores on Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores

Goodness of fit indexes	Index	Fit
χ^2 /sd (chi square / degrees of freedom)	3,170	Acceptable
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0,051	Acceptable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0,971	Excellent
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0,980	Excellent
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0,992	Excellent
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0,977	Excellent

When the goodness of fit values shown in Table 4 are examined;

It was observed that the students' school type, the effect of the Oxford Happiness Scale scores on the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents, model of the model related to χ^2 /sd (chi square/degree of freedom) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were found to have an acceptable fit. It was determined that it has excellent fit in terms of Normed Fit Index (NFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI). According to the model with extremely good fit, the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the students predicted the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores statistically, significantly and positively. ($\beta=0,38$; $p<0,05$).

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

As a result of this study, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference between the scores of high school students from the Oxford Happiness Scale according to their high school types. Regarding the data specified in Table 2, the scores obtained by high school students from the scale are higher than vocational high school students. Having a higher score on the scale indicates that the student's level of happiness is high (Doğan & Sapmaz, 2012). Thus, it was determined that high school students were happier than vocational high school students.

In their study on happiness and hope in adolescents, Cihangir and Meydan determined that they have a higher contribution to the motivation to pursue goals in examining the

happiness levels of adolescents (Cihangir & Meydan, 2018). Happiness positively affects the focus and effort of reaching one's goal.

In addition, when the relationship between the subjective well-being levels of adolescents and their positive expectations for the future were examined in his study, Eryılmaz concluded that the subjective well-being levels of adolescents who have positive expectations for the future increased significantly and crucially (Eryılmaz, 2011).

It was observed that vocational high school students were significantly higher than high school students in terms of the scores of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescence. When the sub-dimensions of the scale were examined, it was seen that although the scores of high school students in the sub-dimensions of "Work and Education" and "Religion and Society" were significantly lower than those who attended vocational high schools, their scores from the "Health and Life" sub-dimension were significantly higher. High scores of vocational high school students from the sub-dimension of "Work and Education" may be the vocational training they receive within the scope of educational activities. The risks taken by students studying in Vocational High Schools regarding their social position are high (Tan, 2019). So much so that in the work of Yavuzer, Demir, Meşeci and Sertelin, a healthy orientation, a democratic education system, securing their future and especially the creation of job opportunities, are needed for adolescents to develop with the awareness of social responsibility. Considering that the most basic expectations of adolescents for their future is

having a good profession, the importance of this requirement is once again understood (Yavuzer, Demir, Meşeci & Sertelin, 2005). In addition, it is the phenomenon of self-realization, which is the efforts of a person by using and revealing her existing abilities in order to reach the desired goal (Erol & Erol 2019). Adolescents who are studying at vocational high schools, getting high scores in the Work and Education dimension, especially in the scale of future expectations, are the main factor underlying their future expectations, and their efforts to guarantee their future.

Also, it is recommended that the guidance services work on the high scores of vocational high school students in the "Religion and Society" sub-dimension compared to high school students and the low scores they receive in the "Health and Life" sub-dimension.

According to the correlations between Oxford Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescence scores, students' Oxford Happiness Scale scores and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescence total scores and their scores from "Work and Education", "Marriage and Family", "Religion and Society", and "Health and Life" sub-dimensions on the scale, it was found that there were significant positive correlations and weak strength correlations. Vocational high school students scored higher than high school students in the sub-dimensions of "Work and Education", "Religion and Society" and "Health and Life". In the study conducted by Uluçay, Özpolat, İşgör & Taşkesen on the future expectations of high school students, it was observed that vocational high school students also got high scores from high school students in the sub-dimensions of "Work and Education", "Religion and Society", and Health and Life (Uluçay, Özpolat, İşgör & Taşkesen, 2014). When the correlations between the Oxford

Happiness Scale and Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents scores of the students are examined in Table 3, the students' Oxford Happiness Scale scores and the adolescent Future Expectation Scale total scores and the sub-dimensions of work and education, marriage and family, religion and society, and health and life, it was observed that there were statistically significant correlations between the scores they received. According to the correlations in positive and weak strength, as the Oxford Happiness Scale scores of the student's increase, their scores from the total of the Future Expectations Scale for Adolescents and the sub-dimensions in the scale also increase.

In the study conducted by Eryılmaz, significant and crucial relationships were found between having positive future expectations and subjective well-being of adolescents (Eryılmaz, 2011). It has been found that individuals focused on future expectations have positive functionality, get their health checks done and exhibit less psychopathology (Kazakina, 1999), (Guarino, 1999).

It is clear that when we can make students individuals with high levels of happiness in terms of the educational environment and daily life situations, their future expectations will increase. In this respect, it is recommended that guidance and psychological counseling units for high school students be carried out in activities that increase happiness for individuals with high future expectations. In addition to education and training, especially in the school environment, by ensuring cooperation between relevant units and institutions. In this context, our study can provide information to secondary school administrators and teachers, guidance teachers, researchers, parents and related units.

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