

A Study on Vitality and Happiness Levels of Sports High School Students

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Abstract

The present study is aimed at determining subjective vitality and subjective happiness levels of sport high school students and to examine the levels based on certain variables. Relational screening model was used in this study. The sample of the research consisted of a total of 185 students, 113 (61.1%) male and 72 (38.9%) female, who continued their education at “Trabzon Sports High School” in 2019-2020. “Personal Information Form” designed by the researcher, “Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS)” and “Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)” were used as data collection tools in the research. It was accepted that the research data showed a normal distribution according to the skewness and kurtosis values. Accordingly, descriptive statistics were used as a statistical method in the analysis of the data, and T-Test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), correlation and regression analyzes were used for independent groups.

In line with the research analysis, it was found that the students of sports high schools had above-average levels of vitality and happiness. It has been observed that the subjective vitality and happiness levels are higher among male students and students affiliated with a sports club (licensed/unlicensed). In addition, it was concluded that the subjective happiness and vitality levels are higher among students who do team sports and those who have longer years of practising sports, and no significant difference was determined according to the variable of socio-economic status of the family. As a result, it was found that there was a high (.81) significant positive correlation between subjective happiness and vitality. Another important

result is that subjective vitality (66%) has an important role in predicting subjective happiness.

Keywords: Student, Sports high school, Happiness, Vitality

1. Introduction

The factors underlying human behavior have been the subject of research for centuries and the concept of happiness has generally been encountered as an answer to this question (Diener, 1984). Seeking happiness is in the nature of every person (Yalçın, 1994). In recent years, intense work tempo, working conditions, stress, anxiety and technological developments have brought the concept of happiness to the fore. Thus, the phenomenon of being happy, needed due to the negative reasons brought about by the present day (Baysal & Aka, 2013), brought along many questions as to the definition and nature of happiness, what the determining factors are, and whether there is permanent happiness or not, and answers to those questions were sought (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

Previous studies have generally dealt with negative emotional states, and positive situations affecting happiness have been ignored (Goleman, 2003; cited in Çelik, 2008). After the 1970s, studies on positive emotions increased, and the studies into negative situations were criticized (Yetim, 2001). With the positive psychology movement, both social and behavioral scientists have created an experimental and institutional structure on psychological well-being, and the subject of happiness has begun to be examined within the framework of a scientific structure (Diener, 1984; Türkdoğan, 2010). Positive psychology, which focuses on the positive aspects of people, stated that the individual should actualize himself at the highest level. Concepts such as life satisfaction, subjective well-being, psychological well-being, psychological resilience, and personal development have begun to appear in the literature (Csikszentmihalyi, 2005).

According to Diener (1984), who defines happiness as the emotional evaluation of experiences, it is stated that the frequent occurrence of positive mood states, the rare occurrence of positive emotional states, and as a result, the high satisfaction from their lives is an indicator of happiness. Studies have shown that happy individuals feel better, have better interpersonal relationships thanks to more intense positive emotions (Diener & Seligman, 2002), and life energies are better, their life spans are longer and they are more successful in their business lives (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Psychological well-being, which makes life better and is a state that individuals should develop for their mental well-being and health, is a condition that individuals do not consciously focus on, but always feel (Yazıcı & Tunçkol, 2015). In other words, it is the general state of the individual's perspective of life. The concept of vitality, which is also called the quality of life, is thought to be related to happiness.

It is thought that individuals who are fit can be healthier and happier. The basis of the concept of vitality is based on the "Self-Determination Theory" and it is an important part of subjective well-being and happiness, which is a part of positive psychology, and is an important feature to have (Akin, 2012; Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Subjective vitality, predicting a positive structure, can be expressed as a subjective experience of being energetic,

vital and fit (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). According to W. Hoeger and S. Hoeger (2012), wellness is defined as the individual's creating a lifestyle, leading a healthy and quality life, the art of evaluating his life as a whole, and feeling wellness. In order to be happy, fit and to have a positive outlook on their lives, individuals get rid of negative emotions and include positive ones. Determining the factors that negatively affect happiness and well-being, and taking measures to prevent those factors will make individuals fitter and happier.

With the idea that “productive societies consist of healthy, happy and fit individuals”, the health and well-being of today's children and youth is closely related to the future of society (Taşer, 2004). It is thought that the concepts of happiness and well-being concern all humanity from past to present, as well as sports high school students who are at the very beginning of their sports life. In the light of this, determining the vitality and happiness levels of students studying in sports high schools and examining them based on certain variables constitute the research problem.

2. Method

2.1 Research Model

This research was conducted with a descriptive survey model. In this method based on describing the past or present situation as it is, the situation, person or object to be investigated is to be described in its own conditions and observed in its existing situation without changing it (Karasar, 2012).

2.2 Research Group

The study group of the research consisted of a total of 185 students of whom 113 (61.1%) males and 72 (38.9%) females studying at Trabzon Sports High School affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the 2019-2020 academic year.

2.3 Sampling Procedures

In determining the research group, “Convenience Sampling” method was used, in which the sample is taken from existing and volunteering individuals in the immediate and easily accessible vicinity if it does not cover a region in question. If the researcher can reflect the range of variables measured to his sample as much as possible and the variables to be examined include basic human characteristics, a region, country, etc. sampling may not be necessary (Erkuş, 2009). In addition, this method is time-effective and brings practicality to the researcher (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2004).

The “Subjective Vitality and Subjective Happiness Scale” used in the research was collected from the students at Trabzon Sports High School, who formed the study group in the 2019-2020 academic year. Prior to the implementation of the data collection tools, necessary permissions were obtained. Considering the number of students, the questionnaires were reproduced, the appropriate time interval was determined within the knowledge of the school administration, and the questionnaires were applied with the help of the school counselor and physical education teacher. The rules to be complied with were specified in detail and the voluntary basis was adhered to. Out of the 200 applied questionnaires, those that did not have

proper coding were ruled out and 185 valid questionnaires were included in the statistical analysis.

2.4 Data Collection Tools

The “Personal Information Form” designed by the researcher, the “Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS) and Subjective Happiness Scale” (SHS) were applied to determine the vitality and happiness levels of individuals.

2.4.1 Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)

The “Subjective Happiness Scale”, developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) and adapted into Turkish by Akın and Satici (2011), was used to determine the happiness levels of the students participating in the study. The scale, adapted into Turkish, is a 7-point Likert scale (1 I am not happy at all-7 I am very happy) and consists of 4 items. The 4th item of the scale is reverse coded. High scores obtained from the scale indicate that the individual’s subjective happiness level is higher. In the reliability analyzes of the Subjective Happiness Scale, the Cronbach α reliability coefficient was found to be .86. The Cronbach α internal consistency coefficient calculated on the data collected within the scope of this research was calculated as .94.

2.4.2 Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS)

The “Subjective Vitality Scale” (SVS), developed by Ryan and Frederick (1997) and adapted into Turkish by Akın, Satici, Arslan, Akın, and Kayis (2012), was used to determine the vitality levels of sports high school students. The scale, adapted into Turkish, is a 7-point Likert scale (1 not valid-7 completely valid) and consists of 7 items. The second item of the scale is reverse coded. High scores obtained from the scale indicate that the individual’s subjective vitality level is higher. In the reliability analyzes of the Subjective Vitality Scale, the Cronbach α reliability coefficient was found to be .84. The Cronbach α internal consistency coefficient within the scope of this research was found to be .93.

2.5 Analysis of Data

The data collected from the research group were interpreted with the statistical package program SPSS 24. SPSS Inc., Chicago, Illinois, USA. Before the analysis -the data was checked with the values of Skewness and Kurtosis (normal distribution of the data) whether the parametric tests met the prerequisites, and it was seen that the data showed a normal distribution. Thus, parametric tests were used in the analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequency, arithmetic mean, standard deviation) were used as the statistical method, T-Test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for independent groups, Tukey HSD comparison tests to determine the intergroup differences, Simple Linear Pearson Correlation analysis and Regression test to determine the relationship between the scales.

3. Results

Table 1. Distribution of individuals' personal information (n: 185)

		f	%
Gender	Female	72	38.9
	Male	113	61.1
Affiliated with a Sports Club (Licensed)	Yes	102	55.1
	No	83	44.9
Sports Branch	Team	98	53.0
	Individual	87	47.0
Years of Practise	1 -5 years	145	78.4
	6-10 years	40	21.6
Family Income	Income < Expense	71	38.4
	Income = Expense	82	44.3
	Income > Expense	32	17.3

Table 2. Scores obtained from the scales

	Number of Items	n	\bar{x}	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
SVS	7	185	3.97	1.82	.193	-.893
SHS	4	185	3.81	2.02	.338	-1.219

Table 2 shows the arithmetic mean, standard deviation values, skewness and kurtosis values related to the scores obtained from the items from the Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS) and Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS). The arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the scores obtained from SVS are 3.97 ± 1.82 . The arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the scores obtained from SHS are 3.81 ± 2.02 . The skewness and kurtosis values related to whether the total scores obtained from SVS and SHS fulfill the assumption of normality were calculated as 0.193/-0.893 0.338/-1.219, respectively. It is seen that the data obtained from SVS and SHS satisfy the assumption of normal distribution.

Table 3. T-Test results of SVS and SHS scores by gender variable

	Gender	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	t	p
SVS	Female	72	3.40	1.61	166.356	-3.557	0.00*
	Male	113	4.32	1.86			
SHS	Female	72	3.17	1.81	164.480	-3.656	0.00*
	Male	113	4.22	2.05			

In the analysis of the gender of the students, a significant difference was found between the scores of Subjective Vitality [$t_{(166.356)} = -3.557, p < 0.01$] and Subjective Happiness [$t_{(164.480)} = -3.656, p < 0.01$] in favor of male students (Table 3).

Table 4. T-Test results of SVS and SHS scores by the variable of being affiliated with a sports club

	Affiliated with a Sports Club	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	t	p
SVS	Yes	102	4.48	1.73	183	4.453	0.00**
	No	83	3.34	1.73			
SHS	Yes	102	4.56	1.97	182.360	6.183	0.00**
	No	83	2.89	1.69			

The T-Test results as to being affiliated with a sports club and SVS and SHS show that there are differences in favor of the students who are affiliated with the sports club [$t_{(183)} = 4.453, p < 0.01$], [$t_{(182.360)} = 6.183, p < 0.01$]. In other words, subjective vitality and happiness levels changed depending on doing sports (Table 4).

Table 5. T-Test results of SVS and SHS scores according to sports branch variable

	Sports Brach	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	t	p
SVS	Team	98	4.43	1.76	183	3.828	0.00**
	Individual	87	3.44	1.74			
SHS	Team	98	4.46	1.98	182.822	4.991	0.00**
	Individual	87	3.07	1.81			

As can be seen in Table 5, a significant difference was determined between the students' SVS [$t_{(183)} = 3.828, p < 0.01$] and SHS [$t_{(182.822)} = 4.991, p < 0.01$] scores of those who do team sports compared to those who do individual sports. In other words, the happiness and vitality averages were found higher in team athletes.

Table 6. T-Test results of SVS and SHS scores according to years of practice variable

	Years of Practice	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	t	p
SVS	1-5 years	145	3.75	1.78	183	-3.161	0.00**
	6 years and more	40	4.75	1.75			
SHS	1-5 years	145	3.51	1.98	183	-4.031	0.00**
	6 years and more	40	4.91	1.81			

Analysis results revealed a significant difference in terms of years of practising sports between the students' SVS [$t_{(183)} = -3.161, p < 0.01$] and SHS [$t_{(183)} = -4.031, p < 0.01$] scores (Table 6).

Table 7. ANOVA Results of SVS and SHS scores according to the variable of family income

	Family Income	n	\bar{x}	SD	df	F	p
SVS	Income < Expense	71	4.03	1.99	2-182	1.162	.315
	Income = Expense	82	3.77	1.68			
	Income > Expense	32	4.33	1.74			
SHS	Income < Expense	71	3.85	2.11	2-182	.075	.928
	Income = Expense	82	3.74	1.98			
	Income > Expense	32	3.89	1.99			

According to the ANOVA results of whether the family income status shows a significant difference in SVS and SHS scores, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the students' SVS [$F_{(2,182)} = 1.162, p > 0.05$] and SHS scores [$F_{(2,182)} = 0.075, p > 0.05$] (Table 7).

Table 8. Correlation results between SVS and SHS

	SVS		
	n	r	P
SHS	185	0.81	0.00**

Pearson Correlation test results are provided in Table 8 to test the relationship between subjective vitality and subjective happiness. In the correlation analysis, it was determined that there was a positive and significant relationship between subjective vitality and subjective happiness ($r = 0.81$, $p = 0.00$).

Table 9. Regression results between SVS and SHS

	B	Standard Error	β	t	P
Constant	.234	.211		1.113	.267
SVS	.902	.048	.810	18.671	.000

Note. $R = 0.81$; $R^2 = .656$; [$F_{(1,183)} = 348.594$, $p = 0.00$].

As can be seen in Table 9, the result of the regression analysis determined that the subjective vitality levels of the athlete students were a significant predictor of their subjective happiness. There is a highly significant positive correlation ($R = 0.81$) between the subjective vitality and subjective happiness of the athlete students. Students' subjective vitality explains 66% of the total variance of their subjective happiness.

4. Discussion

In this section, the subjective happiness and subjective vitality of sports high school students are discussed through the findings in the literature, the results are interpreted and summarized.

The subjective happiness (3.81 ± 2.02) and subjective vitality levels (3.97 ± 1.82) of sports high school students are above the average. It can be explained by the fact that sports high school students spend a lot of time on sports and physical activities. It is stated that participation in sports reduces many health problems such as heart diseases, obesity, etc., and increases conditions such as well-being, happiness and quality of life (Rejeski, Shelton, Miller, Dunn, King, and Salls, 2001). It is stated that participation in physical activity has positive effects on mood and increases subjective well-being (Fox, 1999; Tuzgöl-Dost, 2006). Yazıcı and Tunçkol (2015) revealed similar results in their research on physical education teacher candidates.

According to the findings obtained in the study, the subjective vitality and subjective happiness levels of sports high school students differ in favor of male students (Table 3). In a

study examining the relationship between participation in sports and happiness in the USA, it was stated that both genders were happy to participate in physical activity, but boys scored higher than girls from participating in sports (Huang & Humphreys, 2012). In many studies that overlap with the research findings, it is reported that boys had life satisfaction, subjective well-being, psychological well-being and happiness (Somoğlu, 2016; Doğan, 2004; Aşçı, 2002; Yazıcı, Caz, & Tunçkol, 2016). Contrary to these findings, it was observed that the subjective well-being (Sezer, 2011) levels of the participants in favor of girls were higher than that of men. There are studies in the literature in which gender does not have an effect on happiness (Diener & Myers, 1997; Kimball & Willis, 2006). The absence of a significant difference between the well-being scores of girls and boys was reported in some studies (Cirhinlioğlu, 2006; Gürkan, 2014; Çağrı & Gürkan, 2010; Mahon et al., 2005; Rasmussen & Laumann, 2014; Habibzadeh & Allahviridiyani, 2011; Kalafat, 1996; Aydemir, 2008; Özen, 2005; Saygın, 2008; Cihangir-Çankaya, 2009; Kartal, 2013; Uçan, 2013; Tingaz & Hazar, 2014; Tunçkol, 2015). It is seen that women and men express a higher level of happiness than each other at different periods in life. This can be explained by the fact that gender is a variable that affects life-long perceptions in line with social roles. Depending on the cultural characteristics of the society they live in, it can be expected that there will be a difference between the genders in terms of happiness. For example, considering the cultural structure of the society we live in, more value is attributed to men, which causes men to be more advantageous in society and women to experience various difficulties. It is possible that this situation causes the expectation that the subjective well-being of men will be high.

The results of the research revealed that the subjective happiness and vitality levels of the students who do sports in a sports club are higher (Table 4). When the sports structure in Turkey is taken into account, it is seen that sports operate at the club level. In order to be at the top levels in sports life, it is necessary to do sports depending on a club. In the study, it can be said that it is an expected result that the students' subjective vitality and happiness levels are high when they are affiliated with a sports club. In the literature, they mentioned the positive effect of exercise on psychological well-being (Cramer, Nieman, & Lee, 1991; Doğan, 2006; Szabo, 2003). In another study, Tunçkol (2015) stated that while there was no significant relationship between the happiness levels of the participants who regularly do sports, the happiness of the participants who had an athlete license increased. In another study, Atılğan (2011) stated that the mental and physical health status of the high school students who do sports under license are better. It is known that active participation in sports increases psychological self-efficacy strengthens physiological health and has a positive effect on the psychological well-being of athletes (Hidalgo et al., 2010; cited in Topuz, 2013). In the study conducted by Somoğlu et al. (2021), it was stated that students who do active sports had higher life satisfaction. As Gezer (2014) stated, the main purpose of participation in sports is to bring positive effects on the individual's health, happiness, rest, entertainment and personality.

When the sports branch variable was examined, it was found that the students interested in team sports showed higher subjective vitality and happiness (Table 5). Significant difference can be explained by the fact that students have higher happiness and vitality due to reasons

such as experiencing more relationships in team sports, increasing shared experience, and the unity created by team spirit. Somoğlu (2016) found that the life satisfaction of the athletes who are interested in team sports is higher in his study on hearing-impaired sports students. Again, in the study of Somoğlu (2021), in which he tried to determine the sportive life satisfaction of sports high school students, he found that the sports-specific life satisfaction was higher in the athletes interested in team sports.

When the happiness and vitality levels of the sports high school students are analyzed according to the time they spend in sports, it is seen that the subjective happiness and vitality levels are higher in the students who had six or more years of sports practice (Table 6). Somoğlu (2016) found that the life satisfaction of the hearing-impaired athletes was significant in favor of the students who continued sports for a longer period of time. The fact that this result is meaningful can be explained by the fact that the individual enjoys doing sport and that it is a natural result that he spends a long time on practising and his happiness and vitality levels increase. In this present study, when the effect of the socio-economic status of the family on the happiness and vitality of the sports high school students was examined, no significant difference was found. In the literature, the relationship between income and well-being (international and individual level) is examined from different perspectives (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002; Suh, Diener, & Fujita, 1996). People residing in developed societies report being happier; however, when it is considered from the perspective of people living in the same country, it is stated that the difference between the groups is not so evident (Diener, 1984). In parallel with the results of the research (Nur-Şahin, 2011; Ben-Zur, 2003; Tunçkol, 2015), no significant difference could be found between socio-economic status and subjective happiness. Contrary to the research result, certain studies found significant relation between economic status and happiness (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2005; Cummins, 2000; Paolini, Yanez, & Kelly, 2006; Canbay, 2010; Özgür, Babacan-Gümüş, & Durdu, 2010; Kermen, 2013; Sacks, Stevenson, & Justin, 2010; Tuzgöl-Dost, 2004; Yazıcı, Caz, & Tunçkol, 2016).

When the correlation and regression findings were examined in the study, it was found that there was a high level of positive correlation between vitality and happiness, and 66% of their happiness was explained by being fit. There are studies with different study groups that found a significant positive relationship between subjective happiness and vitality (Tunçkol, 2015; Köse et al., 2019; Ryan & Frederick, 1997; Yazıcı & Tunçkol, 2015). The fact that subjective happiness has a positive relationship with many psychologically functional variables such as psychological health, life satisfaction, positive affectivity and subjective vitality has a positive relationship with life satisfaction, self-actualization, positive affectivity, self-esteem, extroversion and intrinsic motivation shows that subjective vitality contributes positively to subjective happiness (Akın & Akın, 2015). According to the research findings of Tunçkol (2015), there is a positive, moderate relationship between subjective vitality and happiness, and the participants' vitality levels predict 20% of their happiness levels. This result shows that there is an inseparable link between vitality and happiness, and if one increases, the other will follow it in parallel. A. Akın and Ü. Akın (2015) also found that there was a positive relationship between subjective happiness and subjective vitality, and that subjective

happiness was positively predicted by subjective vitality. In addition, the fact that subjective vitality is positively related to a number of psychologically functional variables such as life satisfaction, self-actualization, positive affect, self-esteem, extraversion and intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Frederick, 1997) explains the positive contribution of subjective vitality to subjective happiness.

5. Conclusion

It is safe to state that the students at the sports high school feel fit and happy. It has been concluded that the subjective happiness and vitality levels of the students are higher in those who are involved in sports for a longer period and who are affiliated with a sports club. In addition, it has been determined that male students are happier and fitter than female students, and team athletes are happier and more energetic than individual athletes. Therefore, it is important for all families to be interested in a sport, to participate in sports actively and regularly, and to direct their children to sportive activities. Education and sports policies should also make arrangements and organizations in this direction. Parents, teachers and administrators have a great responsibility for the participation of girls or students in sports. School administrators should see it as a mission to protect and maintain students' happiness and vitality levels. For future studies, it may be recommended to set different independent variables, increase the number of samples, or conduct experimental studies.

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