Examining Multi-Dimensional Life Satisfaction as a Predictor of Loneliness and Self-Esteem

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine correlations between the multi-dimensions of life satisfaction (self-esteem, friend, school, environment, family, self) and self-esteem by considering loneliness as a dependent variable. The sample consisted of 448 secondary school students; 208 (46.4%) of them were male and 240 (53.6%) of them were female students. For this purpose, Obesity Determinant Measure, Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were used. It was concluded that the Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale predicted loneliness negatively. Obesity, being sometimes a handicap for life satisfaction, also predicted loneliness negatively for this population. A negative correlation between self-esteem and loneliness was estimated; regarding the sub-dimensions, negative correlations were found between friend, school, environment, family, self, and loneliness.

Key words: *adolescents; life satisfaction; obesity; subjective well-being.*

Introduction

Life satisfaction is a crucial sub-category of life quality as life satisfaction, together with mental and physical health, is something about the success people get through their life span (Veenhoven, 1996). As a more general term, life quality has many different aspects and ambiguousness as it depends on one's point of view and philosophical understanding of life. Thus, although it does not have a common and concrete definition, and it is accepted as a subjective term (Arpacı, 2008; Cummins, 2005; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach & Henrich, 2007; Hunt, 1997), it is widely used in everyday life (Holmes, 2006).

Despite the emphasis on life satisfaction in general, there is little research on life satisfaction among adolescents (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004; Bozgeyikli, Isıklar

& Eroglu, 2010; Gilman, Huebner & Laughlin, 1999; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach & Henrich, 2007; Terry & Huebner, 1994; Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2003; Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2004). It can be asserted that scales cannot give concrete evidence because of the physical and mental changes they experience (Gilman, Huebner & Laughlin, 1999; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach & Henrich, 2007).

Parallel with life quality, life satisfaction depends on adolescent family income (Veenhoven, 1996), education, social environment (Suldo & Huebner, 2006), somewhat socioeconomic status (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008) and, more importantly, the fulfilment of one's life aims (Bozgeyikli, Isıklar & Eroglu, 2010). Thus, it can be concluded that life satisfaction indicates a parallel increase with life quality (Veenhoven, 1996). It is like this because life satisfaction can be defined as a kind of cognitive assessment and abilities of creating selected standards that include an overall contentment in one's life quality (Gilman, Huebner & Laughlin, 1999) and these advanced cognitive abilities make adolescents meet their needs (Bozgeyikli, Isıklar & Eroglu, 2010).

Life satisfaction cannot only be enclosed by monetary and status conditions in such a way that psychological satisfaction is always needed for a better life. Loneliness is one of the barriers that prevent this satisfaction. It is a kind of dissatisfaction (Peplau & Perlman, 1981; Poulsen, Ziviani, Johnson & Cuskelly, 2008) caused by the lack of friendship (Zur, 2012), and reflects painful inner world (Prezza & Pacilli, 2007), social world and isolation (Cacioppo et al., 2006) that happens when there is a visible difference between the wanted and the continuous social relationships (Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi & Cummins, 2008); this can be considered as an evidence showing that loneliness is a negative (Poulsen, Ziviani, Johnson & Cuskelly, 2008) and a major factor of life satisfaction (Goodwin, Cook & Yung, 2001) especially for the young (Baker & Bugay, 2011). As for the young, it can be said that loneliness gives certain damage to psychological and emotional states, as well as to school life and performance. Further, it may cause peer bullying due to social isolation. Moreover, it has been generally found that depression and suicidal ideation (Batıgün, 2008; Chang, Sanna, Hirsch & Jeglic, 2010; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach & Henrich, 2007; Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi & Cummins, 2008; Rokach, 2011; Schinka, Dulmen, Bossarte & Swahn, 2012) are the results of loneliness which affects subjective well-being and life satisfaction negatively (Huebner, 2004; Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi & Cummins, 2008). Loneliness has certain relations with gender, as well. For instance, females are likely to experience loneliness much more than males. According to a research carried out on Turkish university students, female students feel more loneliness than males (Gürsesa, Merhametli, Sahin, Günes & Acikyildiz, 2011).

Adolescent self-esteem is defined as assessing one's self-worth, especially in a social context, that has positive correlations with life satisfaction (Coccia, 2011;

Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008). Of note, subjective well-being can be another factor that enables people to make judgments about their life satisfaction, as well. It is defined as the judgment of one's own life satisfaction as a whole (Valkenburg, Peter & Schouten, 2006), which, according to the above-mentioned relations, indicates a negative correlation between loneliness and well-being in terms of life satisfaction (Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi & Cummins, 2008). After many studies, it is generally accepted that adolescent self-esteem is highly associated with his/her well-being, so that the former is a kind of initiative causing the latter to happen (Valkenburg, Peter & Schouten, 2006). This is why one of the closest links that complete the process of life satisfaction is one's subjective well-being, as it is the key to better life satisfaction (Gilman, Huebner & Laughlin, 1999).

In today's life conditions, obesity has been going up rapidly (Buffart, 2008; Schwimmer, Burwinkle & Varni, 2003). This dazzling increase negatively shapes life quality, especially among children and adolescents (Schwimmer, Burwinkle & Varni, 2003). Furthermore, obesity affects their self-perception regarding, for instance, self-esteem (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2003), body self-esteem (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2004), cognitive ability (Friedlander, Larkin, Rosen, Palermo & Redline, 2003), education (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004), and social adjustment problems (Schwimmer, Burwinkle & Varni, 2003) which causes their life satisfaction to decrease dramatically (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004). It is clearly stated in many studies that physical activity reduces depression and improves academic success and self-esteem (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2004). In addition, it is clearly stated that life satisfaction predicts weight control (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2003). From this aspect, obesity has been examined between genders. Although there is not sufficient research on the effect of obesity among adolescents (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004; Valois, Zulia, Huebner & Drane, 2003), women are the focus in most studies as they are especially prone to obesity or being overweight. As a result, they have less life satisfaction and lower aims in life because they feel more discouragement in their social lives (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004).

In brief, life satisfaction has such components, so that adolescent necessities should be clarified in order to estimate the real scores. Following a great deal of research, in this paper loneliness, as a dependent variable, is discussed via multidimensional aspects of life satisfaction (self-esteem, friends, school, environment, family, self) and self-esteem.

Method
Participants

The participants have been selected among the students of three schools in Turkey – Aksaray Secondary School, Nigde Secondary School and Konya Selcuklu Secondary School. In this process, the survey model was used and the sample finally consisted of 448 students; 240 (53.6%) female and 208 (46.4%) male students.

Instruments

Measure for Determining Obesity

Adolescents gain nearly a half of the weight that adults get during their growth period. However, the difference between height and weight rates in terms of age should not be more than 15% (Baltacı, Ersoy, Karaagaoglu, Derman & Kanbur, 2006). Body mass index (BMI) is an easy and a quick way used for diagnosing obesity. BMI is calculated by applying the following formula: BMI= Weight (kg)/[Height (m) x Height (m)]. For children, BMI is changeable according to their age. Thus, BMI values appropriate for age and gender were used at diagnosing obesity among children and adolescents. The ones with BMI above 85. (BMI >85.) were accepted as overweight, while the ones with BMI above 95. (BMI >95.) were accepted as obese (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000).

Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale

The Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS), which was developed by Huebner (1994) and tested for its validity and reliability on primary school students by Civitci (2007), was used. The original scale included five different sub-dimensions, such as "family, friends, school, self, and environment". The scale items provided four degree options: (1) Never, (2) Sometimes, (3) Often, and (4) Always. Besides, there were 40 items, 10 of which graded reversely. The item numbers were reduced to 36 because of the cultural differences in Turkey. The factor quantity was determined as 5 in the original scale. Cronbach's alpha in this case was .87 for the total scale, .85 for friends sub-scale, .76 for school sub-scale, .75 for environment sub-scale, .74 for family sub-scale, and .70 for self sub-scale. For the current sample, a Cronbach's alpha of .85 for the MSLS total scale, .87 for friends sub-scale, .72 for school sub-scale, .74 for environment sub-scale, .77 for family sub-scale, and .71 for self sub-scale were obtained.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a 10-item Guttman Scale, which was developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted by Cuhadaroglu (1986). In the adapted study, psychiatric interviews with secondary school students were used as the criteria for this scale. Examining the correlation coefficient between the interview scores and the self-esteem scale revealed a good criterion related-validity coefficient of .71. On the other hand, in a recent study conducted by Celik (2004), RSES was also found to be quite reliable in a university sample. In Celik's study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be .87 (n = 733).

Loneliness Scale

The UCLA-LS was developed to assess the subjective feelings of loneliness or social isolation. Loneliness was measured by the 20-item UCLA-LS (Russell et al., 1980) in

which subjects were asked to rate each of the 20 statements according to how often they agreed with the description. The responses ranged from 4 (often) to 1 (not at all), with a total possible aggregate score range of 20-80. The higher the score was, the more loneliness the person experienced. This instrument had an internal consistency, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha, equal to 0.94 (16). The validity and reliability of the Turkish version were confirmed. In addition, this instrument had an internal consistency equal to 0.96 for Turkey (Demir, 1989). The scale reliability coefficient alpha of 0.85 was found in this research.

Results

In this section there are given the inter-correlation matrix results for the following variables: loneliness, self-esteem, friends, school, environment, family and self, as well as the multiple regression analysis results for loneliness. Also, the adolescent obesity results are given.

Table 1. *The inter-correlation regarding the matrix results for variables of multi-dimensional life satisfaction, self-esteem and loneliness*

		Loneliness	Self Esteem	Friends	School	Environment	Family
Self Esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.845					
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000					
	N	448					
Friends	Pearson Correlation	-.824	.819				
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	448	448				
School	Pearson Correlation	-.816	.813	.938			
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	448	448	448			
Environment	Pearson Correlation	-.696	.773	.831	.861		
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	448	448	448	448		
Family	Pearson Correlation	-.796	.842	.830	.827	.752	
	Sig.(2-tailed)	000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	448	448	448	448	448	
Self	Pearson Correlation	.804	.885	.798	.784	.795	.789
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	448	448	448	448	448	448

Table 1 presents the correlation results of self-esteem, friends, family, environment, and self with loneliness. When the results were examined, there was found to be a negative and significant correlation between self-esteem, friends, family, environment, and self, and loneliness.

Table 2. *Multiple regression analysis results for loneliness - Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	Correlations				
	β	Std.Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	103.907	2.275		45.671	.000			
Self-Esteem	-.316	.050	-.350	-6.331	.000	-.845	-.289	-.138
Friends	-.474	.149	-.213	-3.187	.002	-.824	-.150	-.069
School	-.834	.190	-.310	-4.378	.000	-.816	-.204	-.095
Environment	.811	.144	.261	5.628	.000	-.696	.259	.123
Family	-.350	.165	-.098	-2.123	.034	-.796	-.101	-.046
Self	-.836	.200	-.213	-4.176	.000	-804	-.195	-.091

The regression analysis results related to predicting loneliness in accordance with self-esteem, friends, school, environment, family and self are shown in Table 2. When examining the dual and partial correlations between the independent variables (predictor) and the dependent variable (being predicted), there was a high level of negative correlation between self-esteem and loneliness (r= −.85), when the other variables were under control, it was noticed that the correlation between self-esteem and loneliness was estimated as r= −.29. As can be seen, again there was a high level of negative correlation between the friends sub-dimension of life satisfaction and loneliness (r= −.82). Conversely, when the other variables were under control, the correlation between friend and loneliness was estimated as r= −.15. Moreover, it was found out that there was a high level of negative correlation between the school sub-dimension of life satisfaction and loneliness (r= −.82). But when the other variables were under control, there was a negative correlation between school and loneliness (r= −.20). As for the relationship between the environment sub-dimension of life satisfaction and loneliness, there was a high level of negative correlation found as r= −.70; but when the other variables were under control, there was a negative correlation between environment and loneliness (r= −.26). After analysing the correlation between the family sub-dimension of life satisfaction and loneliness, there was a high level of negative correlation between family and loneliness (r= −.80), but when the other variables were under control, there was a negative correlation between self-esteem and loneliness (r= −.10). Parallel with the aforementioned variables, there was a high level of negative correlation between the self sub-dimension of life satisfaction and loneliness (r= −.80). However, when the other variables were under control, again there was a negative correlation between self and loneliness estimated as r= −.20. In brief, there was found to be a negative correlation between self-esteem, friends, school, environment, family and self altogether, and loneliness (R=.889, R^2 =791, P<.001). The order of the relative importance that the independent variables had on loneliness, according to the standardised regression coefficient (β), was as follows: self-esteem, friends, school, self, family, and environment. Examining the t-test results considering the statistical significance of the regression coefficients, all the variables were functioned as significant predictors of loneliness.

Table 3. *The t-Test results for the difference between obese and non-obese adolescents - Loneliness Mean Scores*

	Obesity	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Loneliness	Non-Obese	240	41.53	11.95
	Obese	208	71.77	4.43
t= -34.48	**df= 446**	**P<.001**		

Analyzing Table 3, the mean score in case of the adolescents of normal weight was 41.53, while the standard deviation was estimated as 11.95. The mean score of the adolescents classified as obese was 71.77, while the standard deviation was estimated as 4.43. T-value was found statistically significant (t= −34.48, p<.001). After analysing the mean difference between the groups, the level of loneliness among obese adolescents was higher than that of adolescents having normal weight.

Discussion

In a study carried out by Goodwin et al., there is a negative correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction in the following cultural groups: Italian, Chinese-Canadian, and Anglo-Canadian (Goodwin, Cook & Yung, 2001). This finding strongly indicates that loneliness, which raises an unbalanced emotional mood that hinders someone from his/her goals and overall satisfaction from his/her life, increases unless s/he achieves psychological balance in his/her life. Besides, increased aims lead to increased subjective well-being, which improves life satisfaction in general (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008). Similarly, in another study, it is clearly stated that loneliness, life satisfaction, depression and health state are in the same direction. For example, better life satisfaction paves the way for better well-being, which makes better life satisfaction easier (Swami et al., 2007). For children and adolescents, socially 'not wanted' children from 3rd to 6th grade were reported to have higher loneliness levels and they had more social dissatisfaction (23%) than neglected (8%) and popular children (3%) (Gladstone, 2009). All of these can be indicated for our study, as well. For instance, considering the multidimensional (self-esteem, friends, school, environment, family and self) life satisfaction, it can be concluded that there are all negative correlations between loneliness and these dimensions.

For the family dimension, according to a study conducted with middle school students, life satisfaction is directly related to family relationships perceived by this student group (Huebner, Gilman & Laughlin, 1998). According to our current results, family and loneliness have negative relationships, emphasizing the parallelism (see Table 1). In other studies, it is stated that parental relationships are reasonably related to adolescent well-being (Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter & Keehn, 2006), which increases their life satisfaction that refers to loneliness (see Table 1). Interestingly, it is remarkable for the family effect on life satisfaction that divorce may have a less negative effect than the lack of close relationships with family. It is indicated that divorcing results in decreasing well-being for children and adolescents, but the level of parental relationships sometimes overshadow this negative event (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008).

As expected, a greater Body Mass Index (BMI) results in the higher rates of dissatisfaction, especially for females (Ball, Crawford & Kenardy, 2004) and college students (Coccia, 2011). As can be seen in Table 2, the loneliness levels of obese adolescents are likely to be higher than that of normal adolescents, which confirms the other study results about a positive relation between loneliness and obesity (Schwimmer, Burwinkle & Varni, 2003). In addition to the superficial sides of obesity, other components of adolescent life satisfaction may affect their life conditions, such as experiencing difficulties in making decisions and problem solving methods that lead them to be out-of-control in their dietary behaviours (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2003).

As determined by some research, it can be said that physical appearance is a predictive of self-esteem, which means that obesity can be another factor of self-esteem. As life satisfaction has quite different dimensions, self-esteem is much more related to school (we can add academic success for this variable), as well as to friends, social environment, family, and self (Huebner, Gilman & Laughlin, 1998). Apart from obesity, as discussed in the family dimension, parental behaviours are closely related to well-being, which helps life satisfaction and self-esteem increase (Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter & Keehn, 2006).

Support from friends and their attitudes towards an adolescent are important and necessary. In a study, having a need for this support can partially predict global satisfaction as the support given by parents and friends is emphasised by adolescents (Saha, 2011). Some effects of gender can be observed. For example, it is clearly stated in the above-mentioned study that parental support and self-esteem positively predict each other, for boys and girls. As such, this positive correlation, especially for boys, can be seen in the school environment so that friendly support leading to higher self-esteem paves the way for a better attitude to school (such a correlation is not found in case of girls), which is an indicator of the important role that social support has among adolescents.

On the other hand, despite the lack of research into school life, i.e. life satisfaction, it is stated that life satisfaction and school factors (e.g. enough satisfaction from school, academic achievement, making friends, etc.) have certain correlations (Suldo, Riley & Shaffer, 2006). In another study conducted by Suldo and Huebner (2006), it is indicated that the secondary school students with the high level of life satisfaction also have high academic competency and cognitive abilities, social support from every source in their environment, emotional satisfaction. Conversely, according to Gilman and Huebner (2006), lower life satisfaction among adolescents is related to their school failure and negative attitude to school and teachers (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008), which, therefore, emphasizes that adolescent life satisfaction, in particular, can be affected by school affairs both positively and negatively.

We can evaluate the self dimension from different aspects. For instance, one of them can be considered as fulfilling one's own aims and standards. According to a study,

there is a negative correlation between the standards subscale and the discrepancy subscale. Of note, studies in general demonstrate that having life satisfaction and meeting one's own standards are positively correlated (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008).

To sum, we can clearly state that life satisfaction is diverse in terms of loneliness as mentioned in the introduction part. For example, if life satisfaction cannot get enough confirmation from people (family, friends, close friends, school personnel, and the overall culture) and other satisfactory components (physical and mental health, success, working environment, payment, etc.), it may not respond to one's life requirements completely. Further details about adolescents can be required and different variables can be used for examining different aspects of adolescent life styles.

Conclusion

As the level of self-esteem of adolescents who participated in the research increased, their level of loneliness decreased. Furthermore, it has been observed that as the level of self-esteem of adolescents increased, their life satisfaction increased in areas such as friends, school, environment, family and self, as well.

The increase of loneliness among the adolescents who participated in the research decreased their life satisfaction in areas of friends, school and environment. Furthermore, the increase of the level of loneliness affects positively the self domain of life satisfaction.

When the loneliness level of the obese and non-obese adolescents who participated in the research is examined, the loneliness level of non-obese adolescents has been found to be lower than that of obese adolescents.

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Istraživanje višedimenzionalnog životnog zadovoljstva kao prediktora usamljenosti i samopoštovanja

Sažetak

Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je odrediti korelacije između više dimenzija životnog zadovoljstva (samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja) i samopoštovanja, razmatrajući usamljenost kao zavisnu varijablu. Uzorak se sastojao od 448 srednjoškolaca, od kojih 208 (46.4%) učenika i 240 (53.6%) učenica. Korišteni su: Mjera za određivanje pretilosti, Višedimenzionalna ljestvica učenikova životnog zadovoljstva i Rosenbergova ljestvica za procjenu samopoštovanja. Prema našim rezultatima, zaključeno je da višedimenzionalna ljestvica učenikova životnog zadovoljstva čini negativni prediktor usamljenosti. Pretilost, ponekad nedostatak kada je riječ o životnom zadovoljstvu, negativno predviđa usamljenost među učenicima koji su činili uzorak. Utvrđena je negativna korelacija između samopoštovanja i usamljenosti, kao što je utvrđena negativna korelacija između sporednih varijabli prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja i usamljenosti.

Ključne riječi: *adolescenti; pretilost; subjektivno blagostanje; životno zadovoljstvo.*

Uvod

Životno zadovoljstvo je ključna potkategorija životne kvalitete jer životno zadovoljstvo, zajedno s mentalnim i tjelesnim zdravljem, predstavlja nešto povezano s uspjehom koji ljudi tijekom života ostvaruju (Veenhoven, 1996). Kao opći pojam, životna kvaliteta ima niz različitih aspekata i neodređene je prirode zato što ovisi o nečijem stajalištu i filozofskom razumijevanju života. Stoga se, premda nema jednu zajedničku i konkretnu definiciju i prihvaćen je kao subjektivni pojam (Arpacı, 2008; Cummins, 2005; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach i Henrich, 2007; Hunt, 1997), u svakodnevnom životu široko primjenjuje (Holmes, 2006).

Unatoč općem isticanju životnog zadovoljstva mali je korpus istraživanja kojima je tema životno zadovoljstvo među adolescentnima (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004; Bozgeyikli, Isıklar i Eroglu, 2010; Gilman, Huebner i Laughlin, 1999; Goldbeck,

Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach i Henrich, 2007; Terry i Huebner, 1994; Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2003; Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2004). Može se tvrditi da ljestvice ne daju konkretne dokaze zbog iskustava s fizičkim i mentalnim promjenama (Gilman, Huebner i Laughlin, 1999; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach i Henrich, 2007).

Usporedo sa životnom kvalitetom, životno zadovoljstvo ovisi o primanjima u obitelji adolescenata (Veenhoven, 1996), obrazovanju, društvenom okruženju (Suldo i Huebner, 2006), donekle društvenoekonomskom statusu (Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008) te, što je još važnije, ispunjenju životnih ciljeva (Bozgeyikli, Isıklar i Eroglu, 2010). Može se, dakle, zaključiti da životno zadovoljstvo raste s poboljšanjem životne kvalitete (Veenhoven, 1996). Ono se, stoga, može definirati kao neka vrsta kognitivne procjene i sposobnosti utvrđivanja odabranih mjerila koja obuhvaćaju ukupno zadovoljstvo životnom kvalitetom (Gilman, Huebner i Laughlin, 1999), dok bolje kognitivne sposobnosti adolescentima omogućuju zadovoljenje potreba (Bozgeyikli, Isıklar i Eroglu, 2010).

Životno se zadovoljstvo ne može obuhvatiti samo monetarnim i statusnim okolnostima s obzirom na to da je psihološko zadovoljstvo uvijek nužno za bolji život. Usamljenost je jedna od prepreka tome zadovoljstvu. To je neka vrsta nezadovoljstva (Peplau i Perlman, 1981; Poulsen, Ziviani, Johnson i Cuskelly, 2008) izazvana nedostatkom prijateljstva (Zur, 2012) i odraz je bolnog unutarnjeg svijeta (Prezza i Pacilli, 2007), društvenog svijeta i izolacije (Cacioppo i sur., 2006) do koje dolazi kada postoji vidljiva razlika između željenog i društvenih odnosa (Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi i Cummins, 2008), što se može smatrati dokazom da je usamljenost negativna (Poulsen, Ziviani, Johnson i Cuskelly, 2008) i čini glavni čimbenik životnog zadovoljstva (Goodwin, Cook i Yung, 2001), osobito za mlade ljude (Baker i Bugay, 2011). Govoreći o mladima, može se reći da usamljenost nanosi određenu štetu njihovim psihološkim i emotivnim stanjima, kao i životu i rezultatima u školi. Nadalje, zbog društvene izolacije, može izazvati nasilje među njima. Uglavnom je, štoviše, otkriveno da su depresija i suicidalne misli (Batıgün, 2008; Chang, Sanna, Hirsch i Jeglic, 2010; Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach i Henrich, 2007; Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi i Cummins, 2008; Rokach, 2011; Schinka, Dulmen, Bossarte i Swahn, 2012) rezultat usamljenosti koja negativno utječe na subjektivno blagostanje i životno zadovoljstvo (Huebner, 2004; Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi i Cummins, 2008). Usamljenost je na neki način, također, povezana s rodom pa će pripadnice ženskog roda, primjerice, iskusiti veću usamljenost od pripadnika muškog roda. Prema istraživanju provedenom na jednom turskom sveučilištu, studentice su se osjećale usamljenijima nego studenti (Gürsesa, Merhametli, Sahin, Günes i Acikyildiz, 2011).

Samopoštovanje adolescenata definira se kao procjena vlastite vrijednosti, osobito u društvenom kontekstu, koja je u pozitivnoj korelaciji sa životnim zadovoljstvom (Coccia, 2011; Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008). Subjektivno blagostanje može biti još

jedan čimbenik koji omogućuje ljudima da prosuđuju zadovoljstvo vlastitim životom. Definira se kao procjena zadovoljstva vlastitim životom u cjelini (Valkenburg, Peter i Schouten, 2006) što, prema spomenutim odnosima, ukazuje na negativnu korelaciju između usamljenosti i blagostanja kada je riječ o životnom zadovoljstvu (Mellor, Stokes, Firth, Hayashi i Cummins, 2008). Nakon brojnih provedenih istraživanja uglavnom je prihvaćena snažna povezanost između samopoštovanja adolescenata i njihova blagostanja, tako da ono prvo predstavlja neku vrstu inicijative koja će dovesti do drugog (Valkenburg, Peter i Schouten, 2006). To je razlog zašto jednu od najzatvorenijih veza koje upotpunjuju proces životnog zadovoljstva čini nečije subjektivno blagostanje jer je to ključ većeg životnog zadovoljstva (Gilman, Huebner i Laughlin, 1999).

U današnjim životnim uvjetima ubrzano se širi pretilost (Buffart, 2008; Schwimmer, Burwinkle i Varni, 2003). Taj vrtoglavi rast negativno oblikuje kvalitetu života, osobito među djecom i adolescentima (Schwimmer, Burwinkle i Varni, 2003). Štoviše, pretilost utječe na to kako sami sebe percipiraju, primjerice na njihovo samopoštovanje (Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2003), poštovanje vlastitog tijela (Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2004), kognitivnu sposobnost (Friedlander, Larkin, Rosen, Palermo i Redline, 2003), obrazovanje (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004) i probleme društvene prilagodbe (Schwimmer, Burwinkle i Varni, 2003), što dovodi do njihova dramatičnog nezadovoljstva vlastitim životom (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004). U mnogim se istraživanjima jasno navodi kako fizička aktivnost ima zadatak smanjiti depresiju, poboljšati akademski uspjeh i samopoštovanje (Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2004). Osim toga, jasno se ističe da životno zadovoljstvo predviđa kontrolu tjelesne težine (Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2003). Upravo se s toga aspekta pretilost promatra u odnosu na rod. Premda ne postoji dovoljno istraživanja o učinku pretilosti među adolescentima (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004; Valois, Zulia, Huebner i Drane, 2003), ženska je populacija u središtu većine njih jer je osobito sklona pretilosti ili prekomjernoj tjelesnoj težini. Stoga su pripadnice ženskog roda manje zadovoljne svojim životom i postavljaju si slabije životne ciljeve jer se osjećaju obeshrabrenijima u vlastitom društvenom životu (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004).

Ukratko, životno zadovoljstvo sadrži toliko različitih elemenata da je nužno rasvijetliti potrebe adolescenata kako bi se došlo do stvarnih rezultata. U svjetlu glavnine istraživanja u ovom se radu s različitih stajališta o životnom zadovoljstvu (samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja) raspravlja o usamljenosti kao zavisnoj varijabli i samopoštovanju.

Metodologija

Ispitanici

Za ovo su istraživanje ispitanici izabrani među učenicima triju srednjih škola (Aksaray, Nigde i Konya Selcuklu) u Turskoj. Odabrani su s pomoću anketnog modela; bilo ih je ukupno 448, od toga 240 (53.6%) učenica i 208 (46.4%) učenika.

Instrumenti
Mjera pretilosti

Adolescenti dostignu gotovo polovinu tjelesne težine koju kao odrasli steknu tijekom razvoja. Međutim, razlika između visine i težine u smislu dobi ne bi trebala iznositi više od 15% (Baltacı, Ersoy, Karaagaoglu, Derman i Kanbur, 2006). Indeks tjelesne mase (BMI) jednostavan je i brz način za dijagnosticiranje pretilosti. Izračunava se s pomoću formule: BMI= težina (kg)/[visina (m) x visina (m)]. Kod djece se mijenja ovisno o dobi. Dakle, pri dijagnosticiranju pretilosti kod djece i adolescenata koriste se vrijednosti indeksa tjelesne mase koje vrijede za njihovu dob i rod. Tako da su oni čiji su indeksi tjelesne mase veći od 85 (BMI >85.) smatrani prekomjerno teškima, dok su oni čiji su indeksi tjelesne mase veći od 95 (BMI >95.) prihvaćeni kao pretili (Centri za kontrolu i prevenciju bolesti, 2000).

Višedimenzionalna ljestvica za procjenu učenikova životnog zadovoljstva:

U istraživanju je korištena višedimenzionalna ljestvica učenikova životnog zadovoljstva (MSLSS), koju je izradio Huebner (1994), dok joj je valjanost i pouzdanost na uzorku učenika osnovne škole utvrdio Civitci (2007). Izvorna je ljestvica imala pet različitih dimenzija, kao što su: obitelj, prijatelji, škola, vlastito ja i sredina. Pružala je četiri mogućnosti odgovora: (1) Nikad, (2) Ponekad, (3) Često, (4) Uvijek. Imala je, također, 40 stavaka, od kojih je 10 obrnuto ocjenjivano. Broj stavaka je smanjen na 36 zbog kuloroloških razlika, da bi bila primjenjiva na Tursku. Čimbenik kvantitete bio je označen brojem 5 na izvornoj ljestvici. Cronbach alpha za višedimenzionalne ljestvice iznosio je ,87 kada je u pitanju cjelovita ljestvica, ,85 za „prijatelji" ljestvicu, ,76 za „škola", ljestvicu, ,75 za „sredina" ljestvicu, ,74 za „obitelj" ljestvicu, te ,70 za „ja" ljestvicu. U slučaju ovog uzorka, to je značilo ,85 za „sredina" ljestvicu, ,77 za „obitelj" ljestvicu, te ,71 za „ja" ljestvicu.

Rosenbergova ljestvica za procjenu samopoštovanja

Rosenbergova ljestvica za procjenu samopoštovanja (RSES) predstavlja Guttmanovu ljestvicu s 10 stavaka, koju je razradio Rosenberg (1965), a prilagodio Cuhadaroglu (1986). U prilagođenoj inačici, kao kriteriji za RSES, korišteni su psihijatrijski intervjui sa srednjoškolskim učenicima. Istražujući koeficijent korelacije između rezultata intervjua i ljestvice samopoštovanja, utvrđen je dobar kriterijski koeficijent od .71. S druge strane, u nedavnom istraživanju što ga je proveo Celik (2004), RSES je bio također sasvim pouzdan na sveučilišnom uzorku. U Celikovom istraživanju, koeficijent Cronbach Alpha za RSES iznosio je ,87 (n = 733).

Ljestvica za procjenu usamljenosti

Ljestvica za procjenu usamljenosti (UCLA-LS) izrađena je da bi se odredili subjektivni osjećaji usamljenosti ili društvene izolacije. Usamljenost je mjerena s pomoću UCLA-LS (Russell i sur., 1980), pri čemu su ispitanici zamoljeni da vrednuju

20 stavaka prema tome koliko se slažu s opisanim. Odgovori su se kretali u rasponu od 4 (često) do 1 (uopće ne), a ukupni mogući zbroj bodova iznosio je između 20 i 80. Što je rezultat bio veći, tim je iskustvo usamljenosti bilo snažnije. Instrument se odlikovao unutarnjom konzistencijom – alpha = 0,94 (16). Potvrđeni su valjanost i pouzdanost turske inačice te ljestvice (UCLA-LS). Osim toga, instrument se odlikovao unutarnjom konzistencijom alpa = 0,96 za Tursku (Demir, 1989). U ovom je istraživanju pronađen alpha koeficijent pouzdanosti ljestvice od 0,85.

Rezultati

U ovom se dijelu istraživanja navode rezultati matrice međusobnih korelacija za varijable usamljenost, samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja, te rezultati višestruke regresijske analize za usamljenost. Također su predstavljeni rezultati o tome jesu li adolescenti pretili.

Tablica 1.

U tablici 1 navedeni su rezultati korelacije samopoštovanja, prijatelja, obitelji, sredine i vlastitog ja u odnosu na usamljenost. Kada se pogledaju ti rezultati, primjećuje se negativna i značajna korelacija između varijabli samopoštovanje, prijatelji, obitelj, sredina, vlastito ja i varijable usamljenost.

Tablica 2.

Rezultati regresijske analize povezani s predviđanjem usamljenosti u odnosu na varijable samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja prikazani su u tablici 2. Kada se pogledaju dvojne i djelomične korelacije između varijabli - prediktora (nezavisne) i varijable onoga što se predviđalo (zavisna), primjećuje se visok stupanj negativne korelacije između samopoštovanja i usamljenosti r= −,85, kada su druge varijable pod kontrolom, korelacija između samopoštovanja i usamljenosti iznosi r= −,29. Kao što se vidi, opet postoji visok stupanj negativne korelacije između dimenzije životnog zadovoljstva „prijatelji" i usamljenosti r= −,82. Obrnuto, kada su druge varijable pod kontrolom, korelacija između varijabli prijatelji i usamljenost iznosi r= −,15. Štoviše, utvrđen je visok stupanj negativne korelacije između varijable škola, koja predstavlja dimenziju životnog zadovoljstva, i usamljenosti r= −,82. No, kada su ostale varijable pod kontrolom, korelacija između varijabli škola i usamljenost negativna je r= −,20. Kada je riječ o odnosu između „sredine" kao dimenzije životnog zadovoljstva i usamljenosti, pronađen je visok stupanj negativne korelacije r= −,70; ali kada su druge varijable pod kontrolom korelacija između sredine i usamljenosti negativna je r= −,26. Analiza korelacije između „obitelji", dimenzije životnog zadovoljstva, i usamljenosti pokazala je visok stupanj negativne korelacije između obitelji i usamljenosti r= −,80, ali kada su druge varijable pod kontrolom, utvrđena je negativna korelacija između samopoštovanja i usamljenosti r= −,10. Usporedo sa spomenutim varijablama, postoji visok stupanj negativne korelacije između „vlastito

ja", što je također dimenzija životnog zadovoljstva, i usamljenosti r= −,80. No, kada su druge varijable pod kontrolom, ponovno bilježimo negativnu korelaciju između vlastitog ja i usamljenosti r= −,20. Ukratko, utvrđeno je da postoji negativna korelacija između svih varijabli (samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja) i usamljenosti (R=,889, R^2 =791, P<,001). Redoslijed relativne važnosti što ju varijable-prediktor imaju za usamljenost prema standardnom regresijskom koeficijentu (β) sljedeći je: samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, vlastito ja, obitelj i sredina. Rezultati t-testa koji se odnose na statističku značajnost regresijskih koeficijenata pokazuju da sve varijable funkcioniraju kao važni prediktori usamljenosti.

Tablica 3.

Analizirajući tablicu 3, vidi se da srednja vrijednost adolescenata – ispitanika u istraživanju koji su imali normalnu tjelesnu težinu iznosi 41,53, dok je standardna devijacija 11,95. Srednja vrijednost u slučaju adolescenata koji su definirani kao pretili iznosi 71,77, a standardna devijacija je 4,43. Utvrđeno je da je t-vrijednost statistički značajna (t= −34,48 p<,001). Nakon provedene analize srednjih razlika između skupina, pokazalo se da su pretili adolescenti usamljeniji nego adolescentni s normalnom tjelesnom težinom.

Diskusija

U istraživanju što su ga proveli Goodwin i sur. zabilježena je negativna korelacija između usamljenosti i životnog zadovoljstva u sljedećim kulturološkim skupinama: talijanska, kinesko-kanadska i anglo-kanadska (Goodwin, Cook i Yung, 2001). To snažno pokazuje da se usamljenost, koja potiče neuravnoteženo emotivno stanje i sprečava pojedinca u postizanju vlastitih ciljeva i sveukupnog životnog zadovoljstva, povećava dok pojedinac ne uspostavi psihološku ravnotežu u životu. Osim toga, povećanje ciljeva vodi povećanju subjektivnog blagostanja, što općenito unapređuje životno zadovoljstvo (Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008). Slično tome, u jednom drugom istraživanju, jasno se navodi kako se usamljenost, životno zadovoljstvo, depresija i zdravstveno stanje kreću u istom pravcu. Primjerice, veće životno zadovoljstvo otvara put većem blagostanju, što pridonosi većem životnom zadovoljstvu (Swami i sur., 2007). U slučaju djece i adolescenata, kod društveno „neželjene" djece od trećeg do šestog razreda zabilježen je veći stupanj usamljenosti tako da su u društvenom smislu više nezadovoljni (23%) nego zanemarena (8%) i omiljena djeca (3%) (Gladstone, 2009). Sve se to može pokazati i u našem istraživanju. Primjerice, s obzirom na višedimenzionalnost životnog zadovoljstva (samopoštovanje, prijatelji, škola, sredina, obitelj i vlastito ja), može se zaključiti da postoje samo negativne korelacije između usamljenosti i tih dimenzija životnog zadovoljstva.

Što se tiče dimenzije obitelji, prema istraživanju na uzorku učenika sedmih i osmih razreda, životno zadovoljstvo je izravno povezano s obiteljskim odnosima kako ih vidi ova skupina (Huebner, Gilman i Laughlin, 1998). S obzirom na naše rezultate, obitelj i

usamljenost su u negativnim odnosima s naglaskom na paralelizmu (vidi Tablicu 1). U drugim istraživanjima navodi se kako su roditeljski odnosi s razlogom povezani s blagostanjem adolescenata (Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter i Keehn, 2006) koje im povećava životno zadovoljstvo s obzirom na usamljenost (vidi Tablicu 1). Zanimljivo, ono što je bitno jest to da razvod može imati manji negativni učinak na životno zadovoljstvo u usporedbi s nedostatkom bliske povezanosti s obitelji. Ukazuje se na to da razvod dovodi do slabijeg blagostanja djece i adolescenata, ali razina roditeljskih odnosa ponekad zasjeni taj negativni učinak (Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008).

Veći indeks tjelesne mase (BMI) očekivano rezultira većom stopom nezadovoljstva, osobito pripadnica ženskog roda (Ball, Crawford i Kenardy, 2004) i srednjoškolskih učenika (Coccia, 2011). Kao što se vidi u tablici 2, razina usamljenosti pretilih adolescenata bit će vjerojatno veća nego kod normalnih adolescenata, što potvrđuje rezultate jedne druge studije o pozitivnom odnosu između usamljenosti i pretilosti (Schwimmer, Burwinkle i Varni, 2003). Osim površnih strana pretilosti, ostale komponente životnog zadovoljstva adolescenata mogu utjecati na njihove životne uvjete, kao što su poteškoće pri odlučivanju i rješavanju problema, što će ih dovesti do nekontroliranih prehrambenih obrazaca ponašanja (Valois, Zullig, Huebner i Drane, 2003).

Kako neka istraživanja određuju, fizički izgled je prediktor samopoštovanja, što znači da pretilost može biti još jedan čimbenik samopoštovanja. Budući da životno zadovoljstvo ima sasvim različite aspekte, samopoštovanje se još više povezuje sa školom (možemo dodati školski uspjeh za tu varijablu), kao i s prijateljima, društvenom sredinom, obitelji i vlastitim ja (Huebner, Gilman i Laughlin, 1998). Osim pretilosti, kako je razmotreno pod dimenzijom „obitelj", ponašanje roditelja blisko se povezuje s blagostanjem, što pridonosi većem životnom zadovoljstvu i samopoštovanju (Milevsky, Schlechter, Netter i Keehn, 2006).

Potpora prijatelja i njihova stajališta o adolescentu važna su i potrebna. Jedno je istraživanje pokazalo da imati potrebu za prijateljskom podrškom može donekle predvidjeti koliko će netko biti zadovoljan životom jer adolescenti ističu potporu roditelja i prijatelja (Saha, 2011). Određeni se utjecaj roda može doista primijetiti. Primjerice, u istoj se studiji jasno navodi da roditeljska podrška i samopoštovanje pozitivno uvjetuju jedno drugo, bez obzira na to je li riječ o dječacima ili djevojčicama. Tako se takva pozitivna korelacija kod dječaka može zapaziti u školi kada prijateljska podrška, koja dovodi do većeg samopoštovanja, otvara put boljem pristupu školi (takva korelacija nije pronađena među djevojčicama), što samo ukazuje na važnu ulogu podrške koju društvo pruža adolescentima.

S druge strane, unatoč nedostatku istraživanja o životnom zadovoljstvu u školskoj sredini, navodi se da su životno zadovoljstvo i školski čimbenici (kao što su zadovoljstvo školom u dovoljnoj mjeri, akademski uspjeh, stvaranje prijateljstava i dr.) u određenim korelacijskim odnosima (Suldo, Riley i Shaffer, 2006). U jednoj drugoj studiji, koju su proveli Suldo i Huebner (2006), pokazuje se da srednjoškolci koji su

itekako zadovoljni svojim životom imaju znatne akademske i kognitivne sposobnosti, društvenu potporu u svojoj sredini sa svih strana i emotivno zadovoljstvo. Obrnuto, prema Gilman i Huebner (2006), slabije životno zadovoljstvo među adolescentima povezano je sa školskim neuspjehom i negativnim odnosom prema školi i učiteljima (Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008), što samo naglašava da, osobito među adolescentima, životno zadovoljstvo može biti pod pozitivnim i negativnim utjecajem događaja u školi.

Dimenziju „vlastito ja" možemo vrednovati s različitih aspekata: primjerice, može se promatrati u smislu ispunjenja nečijih ciljeva i standarda. Prema jednom istraživanju postoji negativna korelacija između podljestvice Standardi i podljestvice Nesklad. Potrebno je zabilježiti kako istraživanja uglavnom pokazuju pozitivnu korelaciju između životnog zadovoljstva i zadovoljenja vlastitih standarda (Proctor, Linley i Maltby, 2008).

Ukratko, možemo jasno tvrditi da je životno zadovoljstvo različito u odnosu na usamljenost, kao što je navedeno u uvodnom dijelu. Ako ljudi (obitelj, prijatelji, bliski prijatelji, školsko osoblje i svi kulturni subjekti) i ostali elementi zadovoljstva (fizičko i mentalno zdravlje, uspjeh, radna sredina, primanja itd.) ne mogu, primjerice, potvrditi životno zadovoljstvo, ono možda neće potpuno odgovarati nečijim životnim zahtjevima. Potrebni su daljnji podaci o adolescentima, a mogu se primijeniti i drugačije varijable za različite aspekte životnih stilova adolescenata.

Zaključak

S porastom razine samopoštovanja kod adolescenata koji su sudjelovali u ovom istraživanju smanjena je razina usamljenosti. Nadalje, uočeno je da s porastom razine samopoštovanja kod adolescenata također raste i razina zadovoljstva povezana s čimbenicima kao što su prijatelji, škola, okruženje, obitelj i vlastito ja.

Porast usamljenosti kod adolescenata koji su sudjelovali u istraživanju smanjuje životno zadovoljstvo kada su u pitanju prijatelji, škola i okruženje. Nadalje, porast razine usamljenosti ima pozitivan učinak na domenu „ja" u sklopu životnog zadovoljstva.

Analizom razine usamljenosti pretilih i adolescenata normalne tjelesne težine koji su sudjelovali u istraživanju utvrđeno je da je razina usamljenosti adolescenata normalne tjelesne težine niža od one pretilih adolescenata.