

The Influence of Optimism on the Happiness and Life Satisfaction of Young Adults

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Abstract: *In the recent times with the growing human realm there is lot of disturbances in the peace and fulfilled working. In order to restore it is suggested that more happiness should be ensured for a human being. Happiness is alive as long as the human civilization is and in the changing time people tend to be more easily stress out thereby increasing the rates of sadness , anger and depressed individuals. The people who have more of a positive outlook to their lives are more prone to be happy as the studies suggested. These individuals are termed as Optimistic people and hence they also score high on the scales of the satisfaction they have in their lives*

Keywords: happiness

I. INTRODUCTION

In the recent times with the growing human realm there is lot of disturbances in the peace and fulfilled working. In order to restore it it is suggested that more happiness should be ensured for a human being. Happiness is alive as long as the human civilization is and in the changing time people tend to be more easily stress out thereby increasing the rates of sadness , anger and depressed individuals. The people who have more of a positive outlook to their lives are more prone to be happy as the studies suggested. These individuals are termed as Optimistic people and hence they also score high on the scales of the satisfaction they have in their lives.

With the help of this study it is aimed to investigate the influence of optimism of young adults on their happiness and satisfaction levels of life.

Baltaci &Yagli (2020) conducted a study to determine “the optimism, life meaning, happiness and life satisfaction levels of the Theology student’s faculty”. It was also aimed at determining the relations between these concept within the scope of research. The multi sample group consisted of 943 students that were studying the theology faculties at the university of Istanbul, Ankara, Ataturk and were determined by maximum diversity sampling. As for the collection of data tools like : “Oxford Happiness Scale Short Form”, “Life Meaning”, “Life Satisfaction Scale” and “Life Orientation Scale”.It came out that the level of happiness and optimism of the students was medium whereas for the perception of life satisfaction and meaning of life were low. The men have more perception about the meaning of life than women do and as for the optimism, happiness and life satisfaction is more for the women then the men. A significant and positive relation was seen between the optimism, happiness, life satisfaction and meaning of life.

Baykose& Erdogan (2021) conducted a study to “examine mediating role of life satisfaction in the relationship between happiness levels and optimism of the physical education teacher candidates”. A group of 278 physical education teacher candidates were taken who were trained in the formation program of education opened at the Akdeniz University in 2018 - 19 academic year. For the collection of data in research Happiness Scale, Optimism Scale and Life Satisfaction were used and for analyzing it Pearson Correlation Analysis was used at first to determine relationships of variables with each other. From the finding it can be said that life satisfaction has a mediating role in relationships between happiness levels and optimism to that of physical education teacher candidates. It is also recommended that relevant rule makers/ managers who want to increase quality and quantity of education should take this into consideration.

As many of the previous study have already suggested about optimism, happiness and the life satisfaction in an individual works hand in hand. There are many examples supporting the fact about how these three components affect each other. The above mentioned two cases talks about the same effects between the connection in three of them in recent years.

Before going any further it is important to understand these components.

Optimism

Optimism refers to the set of attitudes that reflects the beliefs or hope on the basis of which the outcome for some specific goal or outcomes in general, come out to be positive, desirable or favorable.

In laymen terms it can be referred to a person who is likely to see the glass half-filled rather half empty.

There are many variables that have been associated with optimism from many years like: life satisfaction, well being, happiness, physical and mental aspects of will.

Optimism is the result of one's rational expectations, self efficacy, and the meaning of life (Peterson, 2000).

The following are few such examples showing optimism in day-to-day life:

- Rita woke up in the morning and decided to take a walk. After that she came back home and prepared for the day. She was feeling happy as she was about to be a part of her dream project. She went to her workplace and went to her team excited. As she was the manager she was feeling a sense of pride. But due to the just a small mistake from her team lead to a circumstance where they lost the project. She was feeling devastated and sad for the same and she went home after the meeting and avoided everyone which was unlikely of her. To this her elder brother went to her and talked about the same after which she had this new faith which was resolute. Finally, after a month of hard work they got the project and did well in that.

In the above case had she not being optimistic that is someone with positive thoughts enough then there might be a lot of chances that she might get upset and further depressed. But as she was optimistic that helped her to overcome the situation and get the best out of it.

Characteristics of Optimistic Person

Some signs that you tend to be optimistic:

- One feels that good things will happen in future.
- One expect things to work out for their best.
- Individual feels like he/she will succeed in the face of life's challenges.
- One feels that even good things can happen under negative situations.
- Individual tend to see the challenges/ obstacles as opportunities.
- One feels gratitude for the good things in your life.

Happiness

Happiness is an emotional state that comes over to someone when the person knows life is good and you can't help but be generally enthusiastic about it further characterized by feelings of joy, fulfillment, satisfaction and contentment.

Happiness is defined as an increase in positive emotions (excitement, joy, trust, pride, etc.), a decrease in negative emotions (hopelessness, frustration, anxiety, insecurity, etc.), but it has elements that can be determined as a visible change in pleasure from life (Kahneman, 1999).

A good example for happiness can be when a child gets the desired toy then the sense of feeling and the laughter caused due to that can be referred to as happiness.

Similar way when working on the dream project and the success is achieved in that that sense of pride and accomplishment can be called as happiness.

Characteristics of Happy Person

Some signs of a happy person can be as follows :

- They tend to enjoy themselves more.
- They tend to have more sense of accomplishment.
- These individuals are at peace with themselves and others.
- At the particular moment of happiness they tend to forget other things of worry.
- These individuals have an optimistic outlook to situations.

Life Satisfaction

Satisfaction in life refers to the way people show their feelings (moods), emotions and the feeling they have about their options and directions for the future. Satisfaction, which can be defined as the degree to which an individual's expectations, intentions, desires, and needs are met (Peterson, Park, and Seligman, 2005), is an important concept that gives direction to life. Life satisfaction is the difference between the individual's expectations and the degree to which these expectations are met (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985).

A good example of life satisfaction can be when an individual after has a fixed plan let say to be a doctor and for that from they work hard and then finally after years of working they finally achieve that aim and is now satisfied in their lives.

Characteristics of a Person with Life Satisfaction

Some of the signs of satisfied person in life are as follows :

- They tend to be more fulfilled.
- They are more happy individuals.
- These people are more optimistic.
- These individual accept and complete challenges more actively.

II. METHODOLOGY

Aim: The influence of optimism on the happiness and life satisfaction of young adults.

Hypothesis:

There are two parts of the hypothesis here :

- H1 - The optimism influences the happiness of an individual
- H2 - The optimism influences the life satisfaction of an individual.

Objective:

- To examine the relationship between the optimism on happiness of young adults
- To examine the relationship between the optimism on life satisfaction of young adults.

Sample

A sample size of 150 participants were taken for the purpose of study within the age of 19 - 30. The selected participants were physically, mentally fit.

Sampling Method:

Maximum variation sampling is a purposive sampling technique used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the thing that you are interested in studying; that is, maximum variation sampling is a search for variation in perspectives, ranging from those conditions that are view to be typical through to those that are more extreme. (Baltacı, 2018; Baran, 2016). The convenient sampling method was used.

Variables:

The two variables are mentioned below:

- Independent Variable : Optimism
- Dependent Variable : Happiness & Life satisfaction

Instruments Used :

In the study, a questionnaire consisting of four different measurement tools was used to determine the characteristics of the sample group. It was designed as a six point Liker-type rating (1. Strongly Disagree, 6. Strongly Agree). While the highest score that can be obtained from each scale in the form is six, the lowest score is one.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

To determine the happiness levels of the sample group, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire Short Form developed by Hills and Argyle (1987) and adapted to Turkish by Doğan and Çötök (2016) was used. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the five-point Likert-type scale, which consisted of one dimension and seven items, was 0.74. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale used in this study was calculated as 0.81.

The Life Orientation Test

Originally developed by Scheier and Carver (1987) and adapted to Turkish by Aydın and Tezer (1991). It is a 12-item self-report survey designed to measure global optimism on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (4). The LOT is composed of four positively expressed, four negatively expressed (reverse scored), and four filler items to disguise the purpose of the test that are not included in the scoring. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the adaptation form of the scale was 0.77. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale used in this study was calculated as 0.84.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale

The scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) and adapted by Dağlı and Baysal (2016) has a one-dimensional, five-question, five-point Likert-type rating. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the adaptation form of the scale was 0.88. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale used in this study was calculated as 0.91.

Procedure for Data Collection :

The questionnaire was applied carefully so as not to interrupt the syllabus of the relevant universities. The sample group was given the necessary ethical information about the research and it was stated that the identity information would not be used within the scope of the research. The necessary practice permits were obtained before the scales were applied. It took approximately 15 minutes for the participants to respond to the data collection booklet, and the scales were collected. An online questionnaire was created to collect the data. The total of 150 questionnaires were filled in with complete and relevant information after providing the consent from the participants.

Data Analysis :

The analysis of the data of research was conducted using the excel program. The number of participants along with their responses was tabled down and hence using the interpretation table after doing the final scoring the interpretations were done. After that the Pearson Correlation was used in order to check the interdependence of the independent variable to the dependent variables separately. The use of three scales namely Life Orientation Test - R, Oxford Happiness Questionnaire - short and Life Satisfaction Questionnaire were used.

III. RESULT & INTERPRETATION

The result came out to be as following :

Optimism & Happiness

The p-value equals 0, ($P(x \leq 13.2201) = 1$). It means that the chance of type I error (rejecting a correct H0) is small: 0 (0%). The smaller the p-value the more it supports H1.

This is a **strong positive correlation**, which means that high X variable scores go with high Y variable scores.

Optimism & Life Satisfaction

The p-value equals 0, ($P(x \leq 13.2201) = 1$). It means that the chance of type I error (rejecting a correct H0) is small: 0 (0%). The smaller the p-value the more it supports H1.

This is a **strong positive correlation**, which means that high X variable scores go with high Y variable scores.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Results of the Pearson correlation came out to be $r = 0.8485$. Hence, indicated that there is a significant large positive relationship between Final scores for LOT - R and Final scores for OHQ - short, The p-value equals 0, ($P(x \leq 13.2201) = 1$). It means that the chance of type I error (rejecting a correct H_0) is small: 0 (0%). The smaller the p-value the more it supports H_1 . Hence, the first hypothesis stating that the optimism is strongly influences the happiness of an individual.

From the findings it clearly implies that Optimism and Happiness of an individual have a strong positive correlation with each other that means if any of the two is increased or decreased the other will follow and hence first part of the hypothesis that is “influence of optimism on happiness of an individual” proved to be true with strong correlation.

On a similar line, Mohammaddi et al (2018) conducted a research on “optimism specific interventions in a person with cardiovascular illness”. The objective of the study was to examine the feasibility and impacts of optimism promoting program among the patients with any heart illness. For the purpose of study 80 such subjects from medical hospital were taken between the age group of 35- 60 years referring to the coronary artery disease in controlled trail with 8 weeks given as a target to achieve the target of optimism training intervention under the controlled condition for attention matched education. It was indicated from the results that the positive intervention enhancing the optimism in such patients turned out to be helpful as the patients responded better to the treatment and even recovered at faster pace. As for the results of the Pearson correlation came out to be $r = 0.8306$. Hence, indicated that there is a significant large positive relationship between Final scores for LOT - R and Final scores for Life satisfaction , The p-value equals 0, ($P(x \leq 13.2201) = 1$). It means that the chance of type I error (rejecting a correct H_0) is small: 0 (0%). The smaller the p-value the more it supports H_1 . Hence, the second hypothesis stating that the optimism is strongly influencing the life satisfaction of an individual.

From the findings it clearly implies that Optimism and Life satisfaction of an individual have a strong positive correlation with each other that means if any of the two is increased or decreased the other will follow and hence second part of the hypothesis that is “influence of optimism on life satisfaction of an individual” proved to be true with strong correlation.

On similar line, Kapikiran (2012) conducted a study to “examine the mediator and moderator role of negative and positive affective variables on the relationship between the life satisfaction and optimism among the university students”. The sample size of 397 students from university was taken ranging from the age of 18 to 27 years from the different departments from the faculty of education at the Pamukkale university, Turkey. As for the collection of data tools and tests like “PANAS” , “Life Orientation Test (LOT)” and “SWLS” were used. The findings suggested that the relationship between satisfaction and optimism was partially mediated by both the positive and negative affective. Hence indicating that the positive and negative affective didn't moderate the relationship between the life satisfaction and optimism.

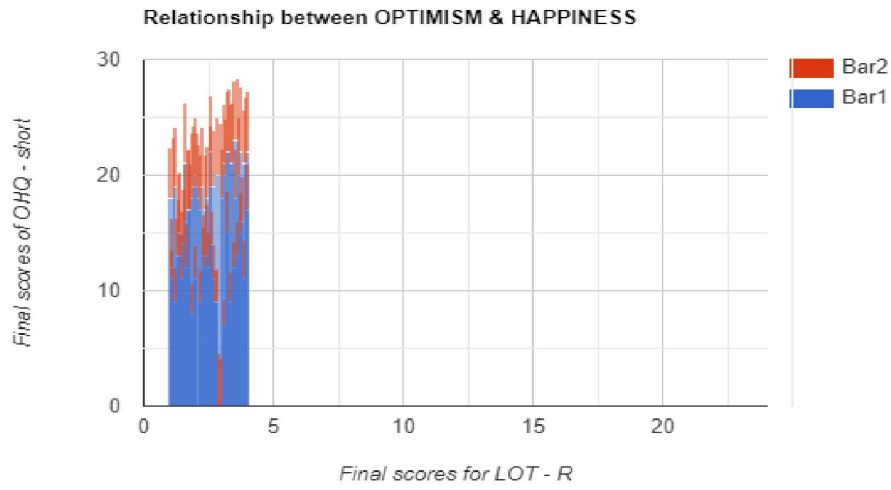
Limitation & Suggestion :

Based on the previous studies it can be clearly seen in the busy realm of life individual often tends to have negative thoughts hence creating a situation of stress and anxiety. As a result more pessimistic individual are there and it further leads to a less happy individual with the lack of life satisfaction.

Furthermore, in the conducted research there were certain limitations like : the sample size taken was 150 participants which was smaller. In order to generalize the research and apply it on larger population a bigger sample size is required. The precautions clearly states that the environment should be disturbance free so that the participant can focus but in online filling of the questionnaire this requirement can't be personally ensured by the researcher.

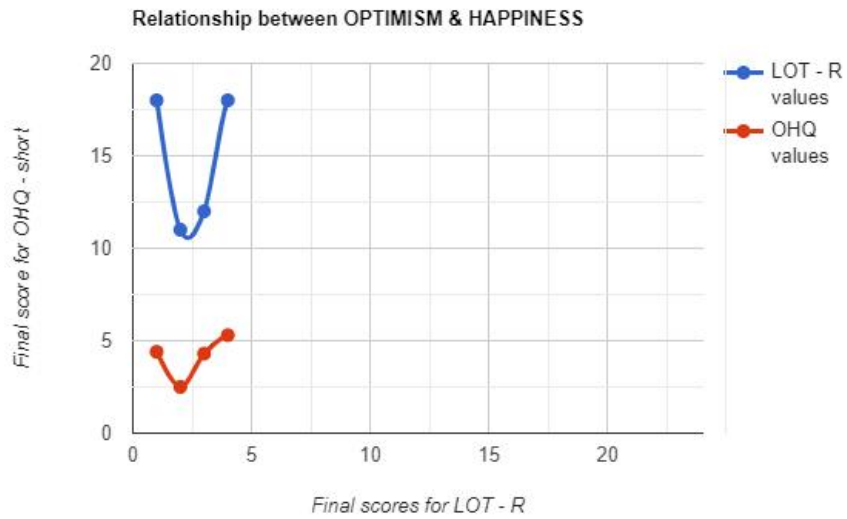
V. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OPTIMISM AND HAPPINESS

Bar graph :



Graph 2: bar graph optimism vs happiness

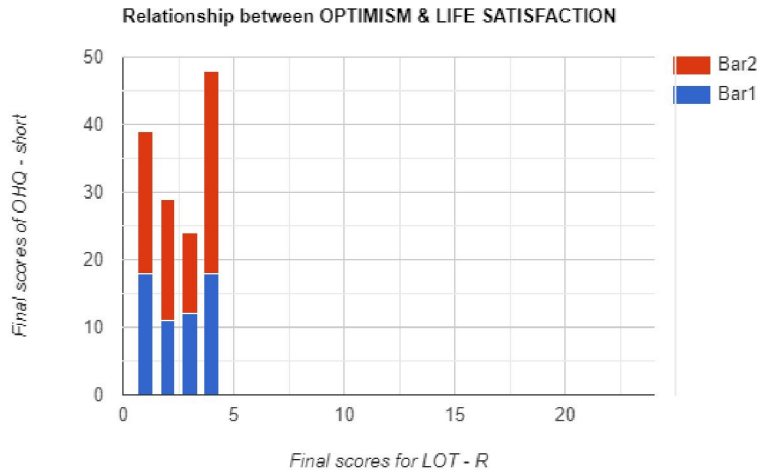
Line graph



Graph 3: line graph optimism vs happiness

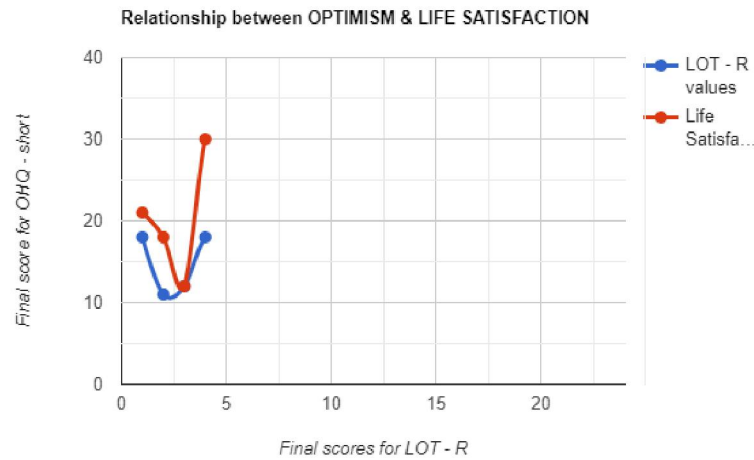
VI. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OPTIMISM & LIFE SATISFACTION

Bar graph :



Graph 4 : bar graph optimism vs life satisfaction

Line graph :



Graph 5: line graph optimism vs life satisfaction

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