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# Investigation of teacher trainees' psychological well-being in terms of time management

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**Abstract**

This study is on teacher trainees' well-being in terms of time management, gender, family relationships, incomes, parents' education levels, residence and grade averages. The participants were 186 students between the ages of 20 and 25. The data were collected with a personal information form, time management inventory and psychological well-being scale and analyzed with Pearson correlation technique, t-test and one-way ANOVA. A positive relationship was found between psychological well-being and time planning but those between the former and attitudes toward time and time-consuming things were not significant. The other significant differences were about family relationships and father's education level.
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*Keywords:* Psychological well-being; well-being; time management; teacher trainees; university student; level of education.

## 1. Introduction

People have always tried to find out how a good life can be achieved and associated it with well-being and happiness. The concept of "well-being" is used as a general mental health term in the literature of psychology (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2002; Diener, Sapyta & Suh, 1998; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It is grouped into two as subjective and psychological well-being and also mentioned that it can be considered to be a multidimensional phenomenon including both subjective and psychological well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). While subjective well-being means happiness, relaxation and a relative absence of problems, psychological well-being is usually defined as taking on challenges and making efforts for personal development and growth (Waterman, 1993). Lent (2004) distinguishes between them with counseling psychology perspective. Psychological well-being serves as a guide to clinical studies that can help counselors and clients achieve their objectives and it provides information about the aims and goals of psychological counseling (Cristopher, 1999).

According to Ryff (1989), who made important contributions to the studies on a good life, psychological well-being involves life purposes, awareness of individual potential and the quality of interpersonal relations. Ryff's (1989) model of well-being has a literature basis comprising such concepts as self-realization (Maslow, 1968), the

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fully functioning person (Roger, 1961), maturity (Allport, 1961) and individualization (Jung, 1933). It consists of six psychological dimensions. Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) explain them as follows: Self-acceptance is being satisfied and happy with yourself even if you are aware of your limits and having positive feelings about your past. Positive relations with others is developing and maintaining close relationships with different people, empathizing and caring about their happiness. Environmental control is shaping the environment and taking the opportunities to meet personal needs. Autonomy is the efforts to have individuality in the social environment and developing thoughts and codes of behavior according to personal standards in spite of social pressure. Life purposes is having aims in life and seeing a meaning in it. Personal development is being aware of your capacity, making efforts to improve your skills and being open to new experiences.

The literature on psychological well-being includes studies on issues such as value systems, socioeconomic conditions, social support, worldview, age, gender and life purposes (Constantine & Sue, 2006; Lang, Muñoz, Bernal & Sorensen, 1982; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2002). Researchers have stated that social support (Mahon & Yarcheski, 2001; Gençöz & Özlale, 2004), academic performance (Tofi, Flett & Timuthorpe, 1996) and progression towards the achievement of personal aims (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Myers & Diener, 1995; Diener, Suh & Oishi, 1997; Ryff & Singer, 1998) are positively associated with psychological well-being. Although the concept of life purposes does not explain psychological well-being fully; it connotes meanings, goals and duties in life, which are at the core of it (Ryan & Deci, 2001). It has also been found that life purposes are negatively associated with depression and positively associated with self-esteem (Ryff, 1989; Cenkseven, 2004). Social skills level and relationships with friends and family are major determinants of the positive relations with others dimension of psychological well-being (Cooper, Okamura & McNeil, 1995; Gülaçtı & Özen, 2007). Walen and Lachman (2000) claimed that spouse and family support affect psychological well-being positively. Some researchers mentioned that there is a positive relationship between age (Bortner & Hulsch, 1970; Medley, 1980) and psychological well-being while some others found that gender (Palmore & Kivett, 1977; Hamdan-Mansour & Marmash, 2007) does not cause any change. It has also been claimed that there are differences between psychological well-being levels due to gender (Cenkseven & Akbaş, 2007;Gülaçtı & Özen, 2007). Some studies showed that personal satisfaction about home, neighborhood and place of residence predicts psychological well-being (Carp & Christensen, 1986). Several others reported that children and adolescents with a wealthy family keep away from bad habits and have higher levels of psychological well-being, self-esteem and sense of control (Abernathy, Webster & Vermeulen, 2002; Chen, Matthews, Boyce & Thomas, 2002; Cohen, Kaplan & Salonen, 1999; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). The concept of psychological well-being, which the recent studies abroad frequently investigate, means having a positive self-image and life purpose, self-satisfaction and developing positive relationships with others. In our country, Cenkseven (2004) and Çeçen and Cenkseven (2007) carried out studies on it and adapted the Psychological Well-being Scale to Turkish (Cenkseven, 2004). Contrary to the ones abroad, the studies in Turkey are not sufficient. This study aims to make up that deficiency and investigate the psychological well-being levels of teacher trainers in terms of time management and some other variables.

## 2. Method

The study aims to determine the relationships between the time management skills of teacher trainers and their psychological well-being levels.

### 2.1. Research group

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## 2.2. Data collection instruments

### 2.2.1. Time management inventory

The "Time Management Inventory", developed by Britton and Tesser (1991) and tested by Alay and Koçak (2002) for our country in terms of validity and reliability, was used as the data collection instrument. It consists of three subscales, which are "time planning", "attitudes toward time" and "time-consuming things". The reliability coefficients calculated with alpha correlations are .88, .66 and .47 for the three subscales respectively. The reliability coefficient for the whole inventory is .87. It was designed with five-level Likert items and the responses were "always", "often", "sometimes", "rarely" and "never" with points from 1 to 5. The "time planning" subscale consists of 16 items and includes long-term and short-term planning. The "attitudes toward time" subscale has 7 items on how time is managed. The "time-consuming things" subscale comprises 4 items about the activities that make students spend time negatively. The sum of the points from those three subscales creates the Time Management Inventory result and shows that students with high scores manage their time well.

### 2.2.2. Psychological well-being scale

The psychological well-being scale, which includes 14-item sub-dimensions of well-being on autonomy, environmental control, personal development, positive relationships with others, life goals and self-acceptance, was developed by Ryff (1989). It was adapted to Turkish by Cenkseven (2004). The reliability studies were conducted with 475 university students. It was found that the correlations of the 84 items with the total score obtained in the psychological well-being scale varied between .25 and .57. The internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) coefficients of the scale for positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental control, personal development, life goals and self-acceptance were .83, .78, .77, .74, .76 and .79 respectively. The total internal consistency coefficient of the scale was .93. The correlation coefficients for test-retest reliability were .74, .77, .77, .74, .75 and .76 about positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental control, personal development, life goals and self-acceptance respectively. Besides, the test-retest correlation coefficient for the total score was calculated as .84. The scale is a 6-point Likert one and consists of 84 items.

## 3. Findings

The findings provided by the analyses done in accordance with the aims of the study are presented below with tables and explanations about the tables.

### 3.1. The findings on whether psychological well-being changes according to gender

T-test was used to find if the students' average scores varied according to gender and the results are given in Table 1. As is seen in Table 1, it was found no significant difference in terms of gender between the teacher trainees' average scores in the psychological well-being scale ($P \geq 0,05$).

Table 1. The t-test results on whether the teacher trainees' scores in the psychological well-being scale changed according to gender

| | Gender | N | Average | Standart Deviation | t | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Psychological Well-being Scale** | Female | 134 | 380,2164 | 44,6753 | 0,137 | 0,892 |
| | Male | 50 | 379,2000 | 45,5689 | | |

p > .05

## 3.2. The findings on whether psychological well-being varies according to relationships with family, income, mother's education, father's education, place of residence and success

In order to find if the teacher trainees' average scores changed according to the abovementioned variables, one-way ANOVA was made and the results are presented below in Table 2.

Table 2. The one-way analysis of variance results on whether psychological well-being varies according to relationships with family, income, mother's education, father's education, place of residence and success

| Psychological Well-being Scale | | Sum of Squares | SD | Average of Squares | F | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relationships with Family | Between Groups | 30176.798 | 2 | 15088.399 | 8.196 | **0.000**\*\* |
| | Intragroup | 335056.424 | 182 | 1840.969 | | |
| | Total | 365233.222 | 184 | | | |
| Income | Between Groups | 6140.372 | 2 | 3070.186 | 1.555 | 0.214 |
| | Intragroup | 361416.575 | 183 | 1974.954 | | |
| | Total | 367556.946 | 185 | | | |
| Mother's Education | Between Groups | 6218.0 | 3 | 2072.6 | 1.044 | 0.374 |
| | Intragroup | 361338.8 | 182 | 1985.3 | | |
| | Total | 367556.9 | 185 | | | |
| Father's Education | Between Groups | 17858.308 | 3 | 5952.769 | 3.098 | **0.028**\* |
| | Intragroup | 349698.638 | 182 | 1921.421 | | |
| | Total | 367556.946 | 185 | | | |
| Place of Residence | Between Groups | 2600.1 | 3 | 866.7 | 0.441 | 0.724 |
| | Intragroup | 355897.3 | 181 | 1966.2 | | |
| | Total | 358497.5 | 184 | | | |
| Success | Between Groups | 8126.3 | 2 | 4063.1 | 2.046 | 0.133 |
| | Intragroup | 295893.6 | 149 | 1985.8 | | |
| | Total | 304020.0 | 151 | | | |

\*p > .05
\*\*p > .01

The one-way ANOVA results suggest that there was a significant difference in terms of the family relationships variable ($P<0.01$). According to the results of the Tukey b test done in order to find the source of the difference, the total psychological well-being scale score of the students who had weak family relationships was lower than those of the ones with strong and very strong relationships. It was found no significant difference in terms of the variables of family income and mother's educational level ($P\geq0.05$). According to the results of the one way ANOVA about whether psychological well-being changes under the influence of father's education, there was a significant difference in terms of the variable of father's education level ($P<0.05$). According to the results of the Tukey b test done in order to find the source of that difference, the total score of the students whose father was a primary school graduate was lower than those of the ones who had a secondary school or high school graduate father. The score averages of the teacher trainees did not vary significantly according to the variables of place of residence and success (academic standing) ($P\geq0.05$).

## 3.3. The correlations between the scores obtained in the psychological well-being and time management scales

As is seen in Table 3, there is a positively significant relationship between the psychological well-being and time management subscale scores ($r =-.307$, $p<.01$). It was found no significant relationship between the psychological well-being scores and those about attitudes toward time and time-consuming things. These results suggest that the more time planning skills students have, the higher their psychological well-being levels are.

Table 3. The correlations between the scales

| | Time Planning | Attitudes Toward Time | Time-Consuming Things |
|---|---|---|---|
| Psychological well-being | .307\*\* | .143 | .028 |

\*\*p < .01

## 4. Discussion

According to the findings, the teacher trainees' psychological well-being did not vary significantly according to gender, incomes, parents' education levels, residence and success. However, it was found significant differences about the family relationships and father's education level variables. In terms of some studies in the literature, there is a parallelism between the finding about gender and those of Palmore and Kivett (1977) and Hamdan-Mansour and Marmash (2007). On the other hand, the finding in question does not support Cenkseven and Akbaş's (2007) finding which suggests that gender predicts psychological well-being and Gülaçtı and Özen's (2007) finding that psychological well-being changes according to gender. Psychological well-being involves struggle, effort and personal development (Waterman, 1993). The fact that gender did not cause any change can be explained with the participants who were all last year education faculty students similar to one another in terms of their experiences, expectations, responsibilities, aims etc. While the finding about the income variable agrees with Cenkseven and Akbaş's (2007) finding that socioeconomic level does not predict psychological well-being, it does not support the findings of some studies suggesting that adolescents from high socioeconomic levels have higher well-being levels as well (Abernathy, Webster & Vermeulen, 2002; Chen, Matthews, Boyce & Thomas, 2002; Cohen, Kaplan & Salonen, 1999; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). It is thought that high income helps one take the opportunities of personal development but it does not guarantee life satisfaction and psychological well-being. For teacher trainees who prepare for an occupation that does not bring in much, it could be a more important factor contributing to their well-being that they are studying in an education faculty and will be able to find a job easier as a teacher after graduation.

The psychological well-being points of the teacher trainees who declared that they had poor family relationships were lower than those who defined theirs strong and very strong. This agrees with the findings of different studies reporting that psychological well-being is affected positively by social support (Mahon & Yarcheski, 2001; Gençöz & Özlale, 2004), friend and family relationships (Cooper, Okamura & McNeil, 1995; Gülaçtı & Özen, 2007) and spouse and family support (Walen & Lachman, 2000). Besides one's awareness of his goals in life and potential, psychological well-being encompasses the quality of relationships with others as well (Ryff, 1989). Considering the fact that strong family relationships support and reassure people, the finding in question can be thought to suggest that support, trust and love contribute to well-being. It was seen that there was a parallelism between the teacher trainees' fathers' education levels and their well-being levels. In Turkish society and traditions, mothers are always affectionate and loving while fathers are more authoritarian. It can be thought that educated fathers are more empathetic and democratic and able to develop healthier and equitable relationships with their children to contribute to their well-being.It was not found any significant differences between the trainees' psychological well-being levels in terms of the places where they had lived for most of their lives. This can be explained with the fact that the mass media and means of transport of our day have lessened the differences between metropolises, towns and villages. Apart from that, the students had already been living and studying in a metropolis for at least four years and this might be the reason why their psychological well-being levels did not vary according to the variable in question. The finding about the success variable does not support Tofi, Flett and Timuthorpe's (1996) finding that there is a positive relationship between academic performance and psychological well-being. The participants had to have a particular level of success to graduate but they did not need it to work as a teacher. This could be the reason why their success at university did not affect their well-being in a positive or negative way.The concept of psychological well-being applies to one's life purposes as well (Ryff, 1989). It is important to set goals in life and do time planning to achieve them. Time planning would help one work out a route to the achievement of his goals and have faith in it, which can contribute to his well-being. This is thought to be the source of the positive significant relationship between time planning and psychological well-being.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendation

While the teacher trainees' psychological well-being levels did not vary significantly according to gender, incomes, mother's education, place of residence and success, the variables of family relationships and father's education made some significant differences. It was found a positive significant relationship between time planning and psychological well-being but none was found between the psychological well-being points and those obtained from the subscales of attitudes toward time and time-consuming things. From this point of view, it can be

investigated teacher trainees' psychological well-being levels in terms of such variables as their friendships, perceptions of where they live, future expectations, views on their university education process and how happy they are with their occupations in the future and departments. In the light of the findings about time planning, they can be trained on effective time planning and implementing plans.

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