


Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

The Effect of Coping Strategy on Life Satisfaction in Faculty of Sports Sciences: The Mediating Role of Perceived Social Support

Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Öğrencilerinde Başa Çıkma Stratejisinin Yaşam Doyumu Üzerine Etkisi: Algılanan Sosyal Desteğin Aracı Rolü¹

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of coping strategies on life satisfaction and how this relationship is mediated by perceived social support. A total of 331 students (216 males, 115 females) studying at the Faculty of Sport Sciences participated in the study designed with a relational survey model. Data were collected using the Effective Coping Strategies Scale (SCA), Satisfaction with Life Scale (LSS) and Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale (SMPSS). The validity of the measurement model was tested through confirmatory factor analysis with the AMOS 26 program. Hypotheses were tested with Pearson correlation analysis and bootstrap-based regression analysis using Hayes' Process Macro (Model 4). A positive and significant relationship was found between coping strategies and life satisfaction ($r = 0.44, p < 0.001$). Similarly, a strong positive correlation was found between coping strategies and perceived social support ($r = 0.84, p < 0.001$). Regression results showed that coping strategies significantly influenced perceived social support. When the mediator variable was included in the model, coping strategies remained a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Perceived social support also had a significant effect on life satisfaction, controlling for coping strategies. Furthermore, the indirect effect of coping strategies on life satisfaction was significant through perceived social support. The findings suggest that effective coping strategies are an important mediator of perceived social support in increasing life satisfaction. These results emphasize the role of social support on psychological well-being and support the positive contribution of coping strategies to life satisfaction.

Keywords: Mediation, coping strategy, social support, life satisfaction

Öz

Bu çalışma, başa çıkma stratejilerinin yaşam doyumu üzerindeki etkisini ve bu ilişkinin algılanan sosyal destek aracılığıyla nasıl şekillendiğini araştırmayı amacıyla yapılmıştır. İlişkisel tarama modeli ile tasarlanan araştırmaya, spor bilimleri fakültesinde öğrenim gören 331 öğrenci (216 erkek, 115 kadın) katılmıştır. Veriler,

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Etkili Başa Çıkma Stratejileri Ölçeği (EBÇSÖ), Yaşam Doyumu Ölçeği (YDÖ) ve Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği (ÇBASDÖ) ile toplanmıştır. Ölçüm modelinin geçerliliği AMOS 26 programı ile doğrulayıcı faktör analizi yoluyla sınanmıştır. Hipotezler, Pearson korelasyon analizi ve Hayes'in Process Macro'su (Model 4) kullanılarak bootstrap temelli regresyon analizi ile test edilmiştir. Başa çıkma stratejileri ile yaşam doyumu arasında pozitif ve anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur ($r = 0,44$, $p < 0,001$). Aynı şekilde, başa çıkma stratejileri ile algılanan sosyal destek arasında güçlü bir pozitif korelasyon saptanmıştır ($r = 0,84$, $p < 0,001$). Regresyon sonuçları, başa çıkma stratejilerinin algılanan sosyal desteği anlamlı biçimde etkilediğini göstermiştir. Aracı değişken modele dahil edildiğinde, başa çıkma stratejileri yaşam doyumunun anlamlı yordayıcısı olmaya devam etmiştir. Algılanan sosyal desteğin de, başa çıkma stratejileri kontrol edilirken, yaşam doyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi görülmüştür. Ayrıca, başa çıkma stratejilerinin yaşam doyumu üzerindeki dolaylı etkisi algılanan sosyal destek aracılığıyla anlamlı bulunmuştur. Elde edilen bulgular, etkili başa çıkma stratejilerinin yaşam doyumunu artırmada algılanan sosyal desteğin önemli bir aracı olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu sonuçlar, sosyal desteğin psikolojik iyi oluş üzerindeki rolünü vurgulamakta ve başa çıkma stratejilerinin yaşam doyumuna olumlu katkısını desteklemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aracılık, başa çıkma stratejisi, sosyal destek, yaşam doyumu.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coping Strategy and Life Satisfaction

Coping skills are defined as cognitive and behavioral strategies used to solve problems or reduce the impact of the problem on the individual (Folkman & Lazarus, 1986; Oh, Arañez Litam, & Chang, 2022). In another definition, it is explained as adapting to the difficulties encountered (Oancea et al., 2023), overcoming these situations, and the individual's ability to control their own reactions (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2016). Coping strategies include various behaviors and cognitions such as confrontation, distancing, self-control, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, planned problem solving, and positive reevaluation (Savage & Woloshyn, 2022; Simione & Gnagnarella, 2023). It is stated that the skills of individuals to cope with the problems they encounter are skills to be acquired throughout life, starting from infancy and supported during childhood and adolescence (Zhang et al., 2020). Students often encounter problems in their lives and schoolwork. In order to find solutions to these problems, problem-solving skills are required (Gömlüksiz & Bozpolat, 2012). It is stated that applications aimed at developing individuals' coping strategies should be increased since this skill will make it easier for them to cope with the events encountered (Zhou et al., 2023). Especially in educational institutions, supporting students' social relationships (Klusmann, Richter, & Ludtke, 2016; Wu, Styra, & Gold, 2020) and ensuring that they establish positive relationships (Kidger et al., 2012) supports academic development and helps them cope with negative emotional states (Buric, Sliskovic, & Penezic, 2019; Reupert, 2020). It is also noteworthy that, in situations that are exposed to negative situations or cause a crisis, life satisfaction is a protective factor in helping individuals cope with these situations (Trzebiński, Cabański, & Czarnecka, 2020).

In recent years, positive psychology has come to the forefront as one of the important fields of study in psychology. One of the basic structures of the literature in the field of positive psychology is life satisfaction. In addition to the general cognitive and affective evaluation of the quality of one's life according to the criteria one chooses (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2016), life satisfaction is the subjective observation of one's life with a reflective and evaluative approach (Ng et al., 2018). In short, it is the ability of an individual to realize the plans they desire in the short and long term (Lee & Lee, 2023). According to Diener et al. (1999), life satisfaction includes satisfaction with current life, desire to change life, satisfaction with the past, satisfaction with the future, and the opinions of the person's relatives about that person's life. Satisfaction areas include work, family, free time, health, money, self, and the person's close circle.

Life satisfaction is closely related to positive personal, psychological and social outcomes. For example, individuals with high life satisfaction experience better life outcomes such as economic success, academic success, self-confidence, self-efficacy, mental health, supportive relationships, effective coping, physical health and longevity. Individuals with low life satisfaction experience high levels of anxiety and depression, emotional and behavioral problems (Suldo & Huebner, 2006). In addition, since it is among the components of happiness, it has a significant role in making sense of human life (Ward et al., 2023) and increasing motivation (Albertove & Bolekova, 2022). Studies have also shown that coping strategies have an important place in the life satisfaction of university students (Karavardar & Korkmaz, 2018; McFadden et al., 2021). In a different study conducted with university students, it is stated that the positive use of coping strategies significantly increases life satisfaction (Centeno & Fernandez, 2020; Haider et al., 2022).

The Mediating Role of Perceived Social Support

In addition to studies examining the factors that lead to psychological stress, there are also studies emphasizing the importance of identifying protective factors against stress. These studies draw attention to the fact that social support and coping strategies are processes that can help reduce anxiety (Crocket et al., 2007). Social support, characterized by the feeling that one is valued and the perception that one is part of a supportive environment (Shelley, 2011), defines the mutual interactions between individuals, such as emotional interest, physical assistance, information and value (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support is also defined as the material and psychological assistance provided to the person by his/her environment during times of stress. In another definition, it is explained as a dominant resource that is focused on psychological emotion, whose existing power is obtained through the individual's interactions with his/her environment, is multifaceted and supports coping with the encountered problems (Feeney & Collins, 2015). Studies showing that social support is an effective method for coping strategies strengthen this mechanism (Chan & Wong, 2017; Mora-Merchán, Espino Penate, & Rey Alamillo, 2021). It is suggested that individuals who feel valued, loved, supported and cared for have higher physical and emotional well-being, are better adapted to their environment and have higher satisfaction with life (Rankin et al., 2018).

A person's belief in the physical and emotional support they can receive from their family, friends, or people they care about during difficult times is an important protective mechanism against stress (Rook, 1987). In particular, it acts as a protective shield in terms of overcoming crisis-causing periods in a healthy way and holding on to life (Li et al., 2021). It has been observed that people with more social support tend to cope better with life stressors, and it is thought that the perception that social support sources can be reached when there is a need to cope with a stressful situation facilitates the use of psychological resources. This enables the person to re-evaluate stressful situations and reduces the negative effects of stress (such as depression and anxiety) (Banks & Weems, 2014). In this way, it is thought to support the individual in having the desired living standards (Trepte & Scharkow, 2016). Indeed, Henton and Swanson (2023) state in their study that social support has a positive effect on coping skills, thus individuals gain a state of mental well-being. In a different study, Xiong, Xie, and Zhang (2023) found that social support has a mediating role in achieving life satisfaction by coping with risky situations. Liu et al. (2023) also found in their study that perceived social support increases life satisfaction.

This study was conducted to examine the effects of coping strategies of university students studying in the field of sports sciences on their life satisfaction and the mediating role of perceived social support in this effect. The hypotheses of the study for this purpose are:

H1: There is a positive relationship between coping strategy and life satisfaction. Coping strategy positively affects life satisfaction. (Relationship).

H2: Perceived social support has a mediating role in the relationship between coping strategy and life satisfaction (Mediation).

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model

This study aims to examine the influence of coping strategies employed by university students enrolled in sports sciences programs on their overall life satisfaction. Furthermore, the research explores the mediating role of perceived social support within this relationship. The study adopts a relational screening model, a quantitative research approach commonly utilized to investigate associations among multiple variables (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015; Karasar, 2023).

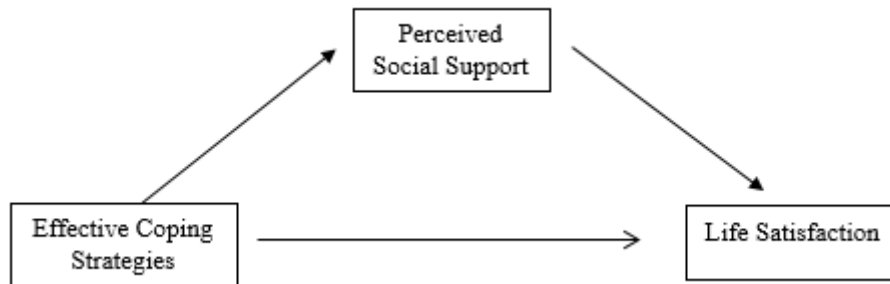


Figure 1. Research model

In social field studies, the relationships between variables are complex. Therefore, a simple or direct relationship may not always be sufficient. The mechanism by which the relationship between two variables occurs (mediation) or in which situations this relationship changes (moderation) is important for a full understanding of social reality. From this point of view, one way to take the existing knowledge on a subject one step further or to make an original contribution to the relevant theory and relationship pattern is to test the mediating or moderating effects (Gürbüz, 2021).

2.2. Research Group

Convenience sampling was used to determine the research sample. This non-probability sampling technique involves researchers selecting participants who are easily accessible and including these individuals in the study until the desired sample size is reached (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). The G*Power analysis program was used to determine the required sample size. In this context, it was determined that at least 193 participants were needed for a correlation analysis with 80% test power ($1-\beta$), a 0.05 significance level (α), and a 0.20 effect size (Richard, Bond, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003). Additionally, considering the possibility of withdrawal from the study or missing data, the literature suggests increasing the sample size by 10% (Suresh and Chandrashekara, 2012). Within this framework, a total of 331 university students (115 women and 216 men) enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences at universities voluntarily participated in the study. The age range of female participants was 18–41, with an average age of 22.17 (± 3.865); the age range of male participants was 18–43, with an average age of 22.20 (± 3.910). Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection.

2.3.Data Collection Tools

Scale of Coping for Adolescents (SCAS): The Turkish version of the Coping Scale for Adolescents (SCA), developed by Spirito, Stark, and Williams (1988) and known as KIDCOPE in the international literature, was adapted by Bedel, Işık, and Hamarta (2014). The scale consists of 11 items and 3 sub-dimensions (Active Coping [3, 6, 8, 10], Avoidant Coping [1, 2, 9, 11], Negative Coping [4, 5, 7]). The scale items are in the 4-point Likert type with responses ranging from “0 = Never, 3 = Almost Always). The Cronbach alpha (a) internal consistency coefficient of the scale during the adaptation stage was calculated as .72 for Active Coping, .70 for Avoidant Coping, and .65 for Negative Coping. The model fit values of the scale were found as $r(\chi^2/df = 2.1, GFI = .97, AGFI = .95, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .047)$. $r(\chi^2/df = 2.1, GFI = .97, AGFI = .95, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .047)$.

Scale of Multidimensional Perceived Social Support (SMPSS): The scale was developed by Zimet, Dahlem and Farley in 1988. The validity and reliability study of the Turkish form of the study in our country was carried out by Eker and Arkar (1995). The second validity and reliability study of the revised form of the scale was repeated by Eker, Arkar and Yıldız (2001). The scale consists of 12 items and three sub-dimensions (family, friend, important person) in a seven-point Likert scale. The Cronbach alpha (a) internal consistency coefficients of the scale and sub-dimensions are 0.89 for the total, 0.85 for the family, 0.88 for the friend, and 0.92 for the other important person.

Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS): The scale developed by Diener et al. (1985) was adapted into Turkish by Dağlı and Baysal (2016). The scale is a single-factor 5-item 5-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from “1: I completely disagree – 5: I completely agree”. The Cronbach alpha (a) internal consistency coefficient of the scale during the adaptation phase was calculated as .88. The value of χ^2/sd , one of the fit indices of the model, was determined as 1.17. In addition, the NFI value of the fit indices was determined as 0.99, the NNFI value as 1.00, the CFI value as 1.00, and the SRMR value as 0.019. This indicates that the scale has a good fit with one factor structure as a result of the confirmatory factor analysis. The RMSEA value of 0.030 indicates that it yields acceptable and valid results. The GFI value was determined as 0.99 and the AGFI value as 0.97.

In this study, first and second-level confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted to examine the construct validity of the measurement tools used. Since the data met the multivariate normality assumption, the Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation method was used in the analyses. The CFA findings were evaluated according to the goodness-of-fit indices frequently referenced in the literature, and modifications were made based on theoretical foundations when necessary to improve the fit of the model. The model fit indices, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients, skewness and kurtosis values of the scales used in the study are presented in the table. The fit level of the model was interpreted by considering the criteria suggested by Byrne (2016). To assess the reliability of the scales, a Cronbach's Alpha value above .80 was accepted as a good level of internal consistency, as stated by George and Mallery (2019).

Table 1. Goodness of fit indices used in SEM, normality skewness-distinctness of scales, reliability cronbach alpha values

Indeks	Good harmony	Acceptable	SCAS	SMPSS	LSS
X^2/df	<3	<3(X^2/df)<5	3.896	2.156	2.261
GFI	>.95	>.90	.926	.949	.987
CFI	>.95	>.90	.814	.980	.991

RMSEA	<.05	<.08	.064	.059	.062
Cronbach Alpha	-	-	.79	.91	.86
Skewness	-	-	-.513	-.408	.073
Kurtosis	-	-	.793	.910	-.580

2.4.Data Analysis

Before the data were analyzed in the study, extreme value and missing value examinations were performed using SPSS software (version 25.0). Initially, the normality of the data was assessed. To evaluate the relationships among the independent, dependent, and mediating variables, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. Normal distribution was examined using Mahalanobis distances, Z-scores, as well as skewness and kurtosis values. According to Hair et al. (2013), skewness and kurtosis values between +1 and -1 indicate normal distribution, which was confirmed in this study. Additionally, Z-scores fell within the acceptable range (-3 to +3). Scatter plots were used to assess linearity, and no significant deviations were observed. Multicollinearity was also checked; tolerance values above 0.20 and VIF values below 10 indicated no collinearity issues.

To examine the factor structure of the measurement tools, AMOS 26 was employed for confirmatory factor analysis. Following confirmation of the factor structure, regression analyses were conducted using the Bootstrap method. Hypothesis testing was performed using Model 4 of the Process Macro developed by Hayes (2022). The mediating role of Perceived Social Support was examined with Model 4. In the analyses, the 5000 sample option was preferred with the Bootstrap technique (Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017). In the mediation effect analyses conducted using the Bootstrap technique, the values obtained as a result of the 95% confidence interval (CI) should not include 0 (zero) to support the research hypothesis.

2.5.Ethical Approval and Procedure

Data collection commenced following the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee for Health and Sports Sciences at Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University. Ethical approval was obtained with decisions numbered 05/02 and 03 taken at the meeting of the Human Research Health and Sports Sciences Ethics Committee dated May 26, 2023, and numbered 05. Prior to participation, informed consent was obtained from all individuals involved in the study. Participants were explicitly informed of their right to voluntarily withdraw from the research at any stage without any consequences. All research procedures adhered to the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and were conducted in line with established ethical standards for human subjects research.

3. FINDINGS

Table 2. Correlations between variables and descriptive analyses

Variables	SCA	LS	SMPS	X	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach
SCA	1			29.04	7.148	-.513	.793	.668
LS	.442**	1		14.35	5.087	.073	-.580	.863
SMPS	.842**	.459**	1	59.66	17.258	-.500	-.408	.910

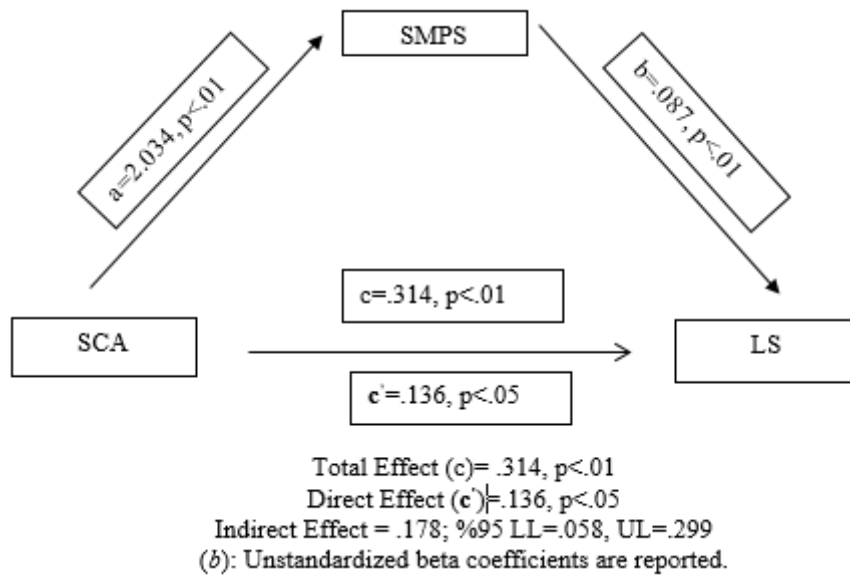
*p<.05, **p<.01

When the table is examined, it is seen that there are statistically significant relationships between SCA, LS and SMPS. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that there were medium-level positive relationships between SCA and LS ($r=.442$, $p<.001$), high-level positive relationships between SCA and SMPS ($r=.842$, $p<.001$) and medium-level positive relationships between LS and SMPS ($r=.459$, $p<.001$).

Table 3. Regression analysis results for mediation test (n=331)

Prediction Variables	Result Variables							
	M (Perceived Social Support)				Y(Life Satisfaction)			
		<i>b</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	LLCI-ULCI		<i>b</i>	<i>S.H.</i>	LLCI-ULCI
X (SCA)	<i>a</i>	2.034**	.071	1.893-2.175	<i>c'</i>	.136	.064	.010-.263
M (SMPS)	-	-	-	-	<i>b</i>	.087**	.267	.035-.140
Constant	<i>I_M</i>	.586**	2.144	-3.633-4.805	<i>I_Y</i>	5.166**	1.037	3.125-7.207
	$R^2=.709$				$R^2=.221$			
	$F(1.329)=804.651; p<.001$				$F(2.328)=46.526; p<.001$			

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$; S.H: Standard Error, (b): Unstandardized beta coefficients)

**Figure 2.** Regression analysis results for mediation test

The bootstrap-based regression analysis revealed that SCA significantly influenced SMPS[($b = 2.034$; $p < 0.001$; 95% CI = 1.893–2.175)]. When the mediating variable was included in the model, SCA remained a significant predictor of LS [($b = 0.136$; $p < 0.05$; 95% CI = 0.01–0.263)]. Moreover, controlling for SCA, SMPS had a meaningful positive effect on LS [($b = 0.087$; $p < 0.001$; 95% CI = 0.035–0.140)]. Finally, the indirect effect of effective SCA on LS via SMPS (Hypothesis II) was statistically significant [($b = 0.178$; $p < 0.001$; 95% CI = 0.058–0.299)]. These results suggest that the link between students' SCA and their LS is partially explained by SMPS perception.

4. DISCUSSION

In the study, it was determined that an effective coping strategy positively affects life satisfaction and that perceived social support has a mediating role in this effect. In this section, the findings obtained from the study are evaluated in the light of the literature.

In the study conducted by Dubey and Agarwal (2007), it was stated that the participants' coping strategies had positive effects on their life satisfaction. In the study conducted by Barnes and Lightsey (2005) on African and American students, it was observed that there were positive relationships between the students' coping strategies and their life satisfaction. In the study conducted by MacCann et al. (2012), it was determined that there were positive relationships between the coping strategies of university students and their life satisfaction and that coping

strategies played an important role in the students' academic success. In a study conducted during the COVID-19 period, it was determined that effective coping played a mediating role in life satisfaction and was a variable affecting life satisfaction (Gori, Topino, & Di Fabio, 2020). In another study, it is noted that individuals who feel psychologically strong and have high coping skills have higher life satisfaction than other individuals (Tamarit et al., 2023). In a study conducted in China, it is stated that students have problems coping with life stressors and need education on this subject in order to enjoy life enough, and that the main source of these stressors is the social environment (Zhou et al., 2023). Another study found that there is a positive relationship between parental support (social support) and life satisfaction, and thus, the positive use of coping skills is ensured (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2023). When studies examining coping strategies are examined, they determined that social support has an important role in the use of these strategies (Chan and Wong, 2017; Mora-Merchán et al., 2021). It was found that negative coping skills negatively affect life satisfaction (Utsey et al., 2000) and trigger negative emotional states (Smida et al., 2021). In a different study, it was determined that high depression (Bianca, Ramona, & Ioana, 2022) and peer pressure negatively affect life satisfaction (Moksnes et al., 2023).

As a result of an experimental study conducted to determine the relationship between perceived social support and life satisfaction, it was determined that the group with frequent social interaction had higher life satisfaction (Kasprzak, 2010). Studies conducted on university students also concluded that as perceived social support increases, life satisfaction increases (Alorani & Alradaydeh, 2018; Mahanta & Aggarwal, 2013; Oh et al., 2014; Shahyad et al., 2011). It was determined that individuals with a higher level of education are more willing to solve problems and have higher coping skills than individuals in situations where their social relationships are stronger (Baumstarck et al., 2017). It is recommended that individuals use coping skills to get rid of negative emotional states and achieve spiritual satisfaction, even if they live in different social environments (Savage & Woloshyn, 2022). It is stated that the support received from social circles, especially family and friends, is very supportive in coping with problems (Mwape et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2020). In the study conducted by Ma and Song (2023), it was observed that when the social support provided to university students by their peers was high, parental attitudes became moderate and life satisfaction increased. Individuals who established healthy relationships with their peers and educators gained a sense of connectedness with a sense of safe social environment, their motivation increased (Schwabe, Korthals, & Schils, 2019), thus their life satisfaction increased (Diener et al., 1999), and it was found that it alleviated negative situations (Cao et al., 2020; El-Zoghby, Soltan, & Salama, 2020; Rehman et al., 2023). In a study conducted on university students, it was determined that perceived social support, which emerged with various cognitive and emotional regulations, helped the adaptation process to university and provided a sense of satisfaction (Restrepo et al., 2023). It is stated that family and peer support can positively affect the individual's life satisfaction by reducing negative emotional states and determining appropriate conditions (Görzig et al., 2023).

Fleishman (1984) emphasized that individuals can live healthier lives when they struggle to confront and solve problems, that is, to cope with the problems they encounter. Studies have also shown that when these individuals receive social support, this satisfaction increases (Cook et al., 2000; Judge et al., 1998). Social support, which is considered a psychological need, is considered an important factor in making individuals happy and providing life satisfaction (Rankin et al., 2018). In addition, it is stated that support from family or close circle increases positive emotional states and supports coping with problems (Diener & Fujita, 1995), as well as providing life satisfaction (Gayathri & Karthikeyan, 2016) and increases it (Tompkins et al., 2016). It was reported that social support, supported by positive coping skills, is positively

associated with quality of life (McFadden et al., 2021) and that it is a protective factor with systematic support (De Kock et al., 2021). In fact, research results showing that psychological strength has positive effects on individuals' coping skills and quality of life are also observed (Abolghasemi and Taklavi Varaniyab, 2010; Lin et al., 2019; Shi et al., 2015). It is stated that high social support not only reduces depression, stress, etc., but also provides fighting power by activating coping strategies (Liu et al., 2023).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the research, it was determined that the high life satisfaction level of the students created by effective coping strategies can be explained by perceived social support. Therefore, it is evaluated as the most important result of the research that the support received from the social environment in the problems faced by the individual directly or indirectly contributes to life satisfaction.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that various practical interventions be developed to support the life satisfaction and psychological well-being of university students. In particular, programs aimed at increasing students' perception of social support should be carefully planned and structured within higher education institutions. In this regard, peer mentoring systems, psychoeducational group work, workshops aimed at developing stress management skills, and social skills training can be implemented within the university. Such supportive programs can positively impact students' overall life satisfaction by enhancing their ability to cope with stress.

Some limitations of the study should be considered in terms of the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. First, the fact that the data were collected through self-report scales may increase the risk of social desirability bias or subjective bias in participants' responses. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the study imposes limitations on explaining the causal aspects of the relationships between variables. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted solely at the correlational level, and causal assumptions should be avoided.

In future research, some methodological improvements to the study design are recommended. In particular, longitudinal studies that aim to examine the effects of coping strategies and perceived social support on life satisfaction over time will allow for more robust testing of causal relationships between variables. However, conducting similar studies in different faculties, departments, or interdisciplinary groups will increase the generalizability of the results. Additionally, examining the effects of sociodemographic variables (such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status) through comparative analyses will contribute to a deeper understanding of coping and social support mechanisms.

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Research Article

Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Öğrencilerinde Başa Çıkma Stratejisinin Yaşam Doyumu Üzerine Etkisi: Algılanan Sosyal Desteğin Aracı Rolü

*The Effect of Coping Strategy on Life Satisfaction in Faculty of Sports Sciences:
The Mediating Role of Perceived Social Support*

Emrah SEÇER & Oğuz Kaan ESENTÜRK & Nadide YILDIZ & Ekrem Levent İLHAN

GENİŞ ÖZET

Giriş

Başa çıkma stratejileri, bireylerin stresle başa çıkmalarını ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkilerini azaltmalarını sağlamak amacıyla kullandıkları bilişsel ve davranışsal çabalar olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Folkman ve Lazarus, 1986; Oh vd., 2022). Bu stratejiler, problem çözme, sosyal destek arayışı ve bilişsel yeniden yapılandırma gibi çeşitli davranışları içermektedir (Savage ve Woloshyn, 2022; Simione ve Gnagnarella, 2023). Özellikle akademik ortamlarda, akademik, sosyal ve kişisel zorluklarla sıkça karşılaşan üniversite öğrencileri için etkili başa çıkma becerileri hayati bir öneme sahiptir (Zhang vd., 2020; Gömleksiz ve Bozpolat, 2012). Bu süreçte çeşitli koruyucu faktörler devreye girmekte olup, yaşam doyumu bireylerin psikolojik iyi oluşlarının temel bileşenlerinden biri olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Yaşam doyumu, bireyin yaşam kalitesine ilişkin bilişsel değerlendirmesini yansıtmakta; hem mevcut doyum düzeyini hem de geleceğe yönelik beklentilerini içermektedir (Diener vd., 2016; Lee ve Lee, 2023). Yapılan araştırmalar, yüksek yaşam memnuniyetine sahip bireylerin daha iyi zihinsel ve fiziksel sağlık düzeylerine, güçlü sosyal ilişkilere ve daha etkili başa çıkma becerilerine sahip olduklarını ortaya koymaktadır (Suldo ve Huebner, 2006; Albertove ve Bolekova, 2022). Öte yandan, bireyin önemsendiğine ve destekleyici bir sosyal çevreye sahip olduğuna dair algısı olarak tanımlanan algılanan sosyal destek, başa çıkma becerileri ile yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkide aracılık edebilecek önemli bir faktör olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Feeney & Collins, 2015). Bu destek, stresin olumsuz etkilerine karşı koruyucu bir tampon işlevi görmek ve duygusal dayanıklılığı artırmaktadır (Chan ve Wong, 2017; Liu vd., 2023). Bu bağlamda, mevcut çalışma, spor bilimleri öğrencilerinde başa çıkma stratejilerinin yaşam doyumları üzerindeki etkisini ve algılanan sosyal desteğin bu ilişkide aracılık rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Yöntem

Bu araştırmada, başa çıkma stratejileri, yaşam doyumu ve algılanan sosyal destek arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek amacıyla ilişkisel tarama modeli benimsenmiştir. Nicel araştırma yaklaşımı çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilen çalışmada, aracılık etkisini test etmek üzere Hayes'in geliştirdiği PROCESS Macro Model 4 kullanılmıştır. Araştırma örneklemi, Türkiye'deki çeşitli üniversitelerin spor bilimleri fakültelerinde öğrenim görmek olan öğrenciler arasından kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile belirlenmiş olup, toplam 331 öğrenciden (115 kadın, 216 erkek) oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama sürecinde, geçerlilik ve güvenilirliği daha önce kanıtlanmış üç ölçüm aracı kullanılmıştır.

- Ergenler için Başa Çıkma Ölçeği (EBÇÖ)
- Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği (ASDÖ)
- Yaşam Doyumu Ölçeği (YDÖ)

Veri analizi, SPSS 25.0 ve AMOS 26 programları kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Hipotez testlerine geçilmeden önce, normallik, doğrusallık ve çoklu doğrusal bağlantı gibi temel analiz varsayımları kontrol edilmiştir. Ölçüm araçlarının geçerliliğini test etmek amacıyla Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi (DFA) uygulanmış ve elde edilen bulgular, ölçeklerin yapısal geçerliliğini desteklemiştir. Aracılık analizinde ise, dolaylı etkileri değerlendirmek üzere Hayes'in PROCESS Macro Model 4 kullanılmış; analizler, 5000 örneklem üzerinden Bootstrap yöntemi ve %95 güven aralıkları (GA) çerçevesinde yürütülmüştür.

Bulgular ve Tartışma

Korelasyon analizi sonucunda, değişkenler arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düzeyde pozitif yönlü ilişkiler olduğunu belirlenmiştir.

- Başa çıkma ile yaşam doyumu: $r = .442, p < .001$
- Başa çıkma ile algılanan sosyal destek: $r = .842, p < .001$
- Algılanan sosyal destek ile yaşam doyumu (LS): $r = .459, p < .001$

Bootstrap yöntemine dayalı regresyon analizi sonucunda;

- Başa çıkma stratejileri algılanan sosyal desteği anlamlı şekilde yordamaktadır: $b = 2.034; p < .001; 95\% GA = [1.893, 2.175]$
- Modele aracı değişken algılanan sosyal destek eklendiğinde, başa çıkma stratejileri yaşam doyumunu yordamaktadır: $b = 0.136; p < .05; 95\% GA = [0.01, 0.263]$
- Algılanan sosyal desteğin yaşam doyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi vardır: $b = 0.087; p < .001; 95\% GA = [0.035, 0.140]$
- Başa çıkma stratejisini algılanan sosyal destek vasıtasıyla yaşam doyumu üzerindeki etkisi istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düzeydedir: $b = 0.178; p < .001; 95\% GA = [0.058, 0.299]$.

Bu çalışmanın bulguları, öğrencilerin psikolojik iyi oluşunu ve yaşam doyumunu artırmada başa çıkma stratejilerinin kritik rolünü vurgulayan mevcut literatürle örtüşmektedir (Dubey ve Agarwal, 2007; MacCann vd., 2012). Etkili başa çıkma mekanizmalarına sahip öğrencilerin duygusal sıkıntı düzeylerinin azaldığı, akademik ve kişisel doyumlarının ise arttığı daha önceki çalışmalarla da ortaya konmuştur (Gori vd., 2020; Tamarit vd., 2023). Ayrıca, algılanan sosyal desteğin aracı bir değişken olarak işlev gördüğü bulgusu, sosyal destek algısı yüksek bireylerin daha fazla psikolojik dayanıklılık ve yaşam doyumu bildirdiklerini gösteren önceki araştırmalarla tutarlılık göstermektedir (Rankin vd., 2018; Xiong vd., 2023). Aile, akran ve okul ortamı kaynaklı duygusal ve araçsal destek unsurlarının varlığı, öğrencilerin stresle başa çıkma becerilerini ve yaşamlarına yönelik olumlu bakış açılarını güçlendirmektedir (Ma ve Song, 2023; Schwabe vd., 2019). Elde edilen bulgular, üniversite öğrencilerinin hem başa çıkma becerilerini geliştirmeye hem de etkili sosyal destek sistemlerine erişimini artırmaya yönelik kurumsal düzeyde müdahalelerin gerekliliğine işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, akran mentorluğu programları, psikoeğitim atölyeleri ve sosyal beceri eğitimleri gibi müdahaleler, öğrencilerin yaşam doyumunu artırmada önemli koruyucu faktörler olarak değerlendirilebilir.