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Decision-making and problem-solving as a well-being indicator among adolescents

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The purpose of this study is to examine subjective well-being with respect to problem solving, self-esteem in decision-making and decision-making styles in adolescents. For this purpose, Positive and Negative Affect Scale, Satisfaction with Life Scale, Adolescent Decision Making Scale and Problem Solving Inventory were administered to 377 adolescents (52.8% females; M=15.72; SD=1.21). The data were analyzed through stepwise regression analysis. The results of the analysis showed that "problem solving" and "self-esteem in decision making" significantly predict subjective well-being and its dimensions. The results also revealed that "vigilance style" is a significant predictor of subjective well-being and positive affect while 'panic style' is a significant predictor of negative affect. In contrast, "cop-out style" in decision making is found be a non-significant predictor of subjective well-being and its dimensions. The most important predictors of life satisfaction have been respectively found to be "problem solving" and "self-esteem in decision making". Results also showed that "problem solving", "panic style" and "self-esteem in decision making" are predictors of negative affect. The results are discussed in relation to previous research; study limitations and further research directions are also outlined.

Key words: Subjective well-being, life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, decision-making styles, problem solving.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period in which significant experiences such as problem solving, and decision making (Albert and Steinberg, 2011; Reyna et al., 2011) in professional areas and social relations survive. In this period, problem solving and decision-making have a significant effect on well-being of adolescents. Researches show that problem solving (Myers, 1991, 1992; Witmer and Sweeney, 1992) and decision making (Cenkseven-Önder, 2012; Deniz, 2006) skills are effective on well-being.

A substantial part of the positive psychology studies in the last ten years consists of subjective well-being (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Subjective well-being studies focus on how individuals evaluate their current and ongoing living conditions (Diener, 2000). Researchers consider subjective well-being as a three dimensional phenomenon, with the dimensions of perceived satisfaction of life, availability of positive affect and absence of negative affect (Diener, 2000; Diener and Suh, 1997; Schimmack et al., 2002). Satisfaction with life, as the cognitive component of subjective well-being, is defined as a cognitive evaluation of the quality of the individual's whole life (Diener et al., 1999). Components of subjective well-being such as positive affect,
willingness, being energetic, spiritual stimulation and determination reflect a wide range of pleasant affects, while negative affect reflects the same such as sadness, anxiety, fear, anger, guilt and despise (Watson, 1988; Watson and Pennebaker, 1989). Also in this study subjective well being has been examined with such three dimensions, separately dealt with both in terms of its cognitive and affective components.

D’Zurilla (1988) defines problem solving as “a cognitive-emotional-behavioral process which includes effective ways to cope with the problems experienced in daily life and to define and explore individual (or group) efforts”. Problem solving consists of the following steps: (a) focusing on the problem, (b) defining the problem, (c) generating alternative solutions, (d) selecting / deciding on the best solution, (e) implementing the selected / decided solution and (f) evaluating the result (D’Zurilla and Nezu, 1982). Problem solving is synonymous with the concept of coping with problems. Individuals evaluate the problems they face in their daily lives differently. While some believe that they have the skills to cope with the problem they face, others may believe that they do not possess such skills to cope with these problems. This directly affects the individual’s performance in solving problems (Heppner and Krauskopf, 1987).

In the process of problem solving, it is necessary to decide on what the best solution is for the given problem. In this context, a relation between the process of problem solving and decision making exists. Researchers who have studied on decision making have defined decision making in different ways. Kuzgun (1992) defines decision making as an orientation that alleviates the experienced difficulty when there is more than one way which is believed to lead to an object that would fulfill a need. According to Güçray (1996), decision making is the selection of the most convenient choice among the available choices intended to fulfill a need. According to Furby and Beyt-Marom (1992); Miller and Byrnes (2001); Nelson (1984); Scott (2003); Von Winterfeldt and Edwards (1986); Welton and Mallan (1999) and Zunker (1998), decision making is the process of selecting one of the probable choices. According to the rational decision making model, decision making process starts once the individual realizes that he has to make a decision. After this the process continues as the individual determines his objectives, generates choices in line with the objectives, gathers information regarding his choices, determines the difficulties of the choices and selects the most convenient one by unifying the information he has obtained (Beyt-Marom et al., 1989; Fischhoff, 1988).

Some researchers argue that problem solving and decision making processes share similarities and thus these concepts need to be used together (Adair, 2000; Ivey et al., 1993; Churney, 2001). As per another opinion, the concepts of decision making and problem solving are different (Baron and Brown, 1991; Elstein and Schwarz, 2002; Isen, 2001). While problem solving is to prepare an action plan which would close the gap between the current situation and the desired situation, decision making defines a solution. In this sense, in decision making the importance of the targets are determined rather than determining different probable solutions; the matter is envisioned, alternative solutions are compared and the most convenient one is selected (Beyt-Marom et al., 1989; Newel and Simon, 1972; Baron and Brown, 1991). In the end, there are similarities and overlaps in problem solving and decision making processes. When the related literature of both of the concepts is examined, it is evident that their combined usage increases (Korkut, 2004).

Janis and Mann (1977) have developed the conflict theory in decision making. In conflict theory, there are four coping styles used in decision making situations. The first coping style is vigilance. Vigilance coping style is choosing the appropriate alternative when the individual is optimistic for finding a solution and believes that there is enough time to elaborately examine the alternatives and results before making the ultimate decision. In the second coping style, panic, the individual may choose the least bad alternative when he/she is not optimistic about finding a solution in the present condition and believes that there is no adequate time for an elaborative review. In the third coping style, cop-out, the individual is pessimistic for finding a solution so he/she escapes from the discrepancy by passing the buck or postponing the decision. The final coping style is complacency in that perception of threat or challenge determines the decision making. That is, if the individual does not perceive a threat in the present situation he/she adheres to the given decision but in the opposite perception over the present situation, the individual makes a decision to change without examination. In this condition, the individual may not experience stress or stress may emerge in lower levels. These four coping styles can be classified as ‘maladaptive’ and ‘adaptive’ coping styles. Vigilant coping style is considered to be an adaptive coping style while other coping styles are placed in maladaptive coping style.

Adolescence is an important period in which problem solving and decision making skills are developed and vital decisions need to be made. Decisions made in this period form the adolescent’s life and may expand or restrict him or her (Çolakkadioğlu and Güçray, 2007). Choices made during adolescence may have lifelong importance for the individual’s biological and spiritual health, as well as his career and social acceptance (Albert and Steinberg, 2011; Galotti, 2001; Klaczynski et al., 2001; Kuhn, 2009; Mann et al., 1989). From this point forth, if the individual can take effective decisions he may increase the satisfaction he gets from life and feel better; while if the individual cannot take effective decisions, his life may get harder and he may feel worse. For that reason, researchers are trying to teach decision making skills and develop programs to increase the life
satisfaction of adolescents (Çolakkadioglu and Güçray, 2012; Mann et al., 1989, 1988; Nickerson et al., 1985). Likewise, Cenkeseven-Önder (2012), in her research with pre-adolescents, found that decision making styles and self-esteem in decision making are related to life satisfaction and except panic styles, all other coping styles and self-esteem are predictors of general life satisfaction. Moreover, DeNeve (1999) states that those individuals who express their subjective well-being needs the most have the feeling that they are not able to control the incidents in their lives. Having an effective problem solving and decision making skill is an important factor for subjective well-being.

The present study intends to remedy these research needs by examining subjective well-being with respect to problem solving, self-esteem in decision-making and decision-making styles in adolescents. This research seeks answers to the following questions:

1) Do problem solving, self-esteem in decision-making and decision-making styles predict life's satisfaction?
2) Do problem solving, self-esteem in decision-making and decision-making styles predict positive affect?
3) Do problem solving, self-esteem in decision-making and decision-making styles predict negative affect?

METHOD

Participants

The study was conducted on a total of 377 adolescents, of which 199 were females (52.8%) and 178 were males (47.2%); they attended two primary and three secondary schools located in the central districts of the City of Adana. Their ages are between 14 and 18, and their age average is 15.72 (SD = 1.21). 10.3% (39) of the participants' mothers are illiterate while the same is true for 1.1% (4) of their fathers. While 42.4% (160) of the adolescents' mothers and 31.6% (119) of their fathers are primary school graduates, 17.5% (66) of their mothers and 18.5% (69) of their fathers are secondary school graduates. Also, 21.5% (81) of the adolescents' mothers and 32.9% (124) of their fathers are high school graduates, and 6.4% (24) of their mothers and 13.3% (50) of their fathers have bachelor's degree. 1.8% (7) of the participants did not provide information on the education level of their mothers, while 2.9% (11) of the participants did not give any information on their father's education level.

Data collection tools

Positive and negative affect scale

The scale was developed by Watson et al. (1988) to measure positive and negative affect and is a five point Likert scale which consists of 20 items of which 10 is positive and 10 is negative. The inventory was adapted to Turkish by Gençöz (2000). In conclusion of the factor analysis, Gençöz (2000) has determined that the terms mainly concentrate under the positive and negative affect factors, as they do in the original scale. While the internal consistency of the scale for positive and negative affect has been observed as .83 and .86 respectively, its test-retest reliability is .40 for positive and .54 for negative items. For this study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients have been examined and observed as .72 for "positive affect" sub-scale and .75 for "negative affect" sub-scale.

Satisfaction with life scale

The "satisfaction with life scale" (Diener et al., 1985) contains five items rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (4)". Higher scores on the satisfaction with life scale represent high satisfaction in life. Köker (1991) has found the test-retest correlation coefficient of the Turkish form as .85 and observed item-total correlation coefficients between .71 and .80. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the satisfaction with life scale, for this study is .77.

Adolescent decision making scale

The adolescent decision making scale was developed by Mann et al. (1989) in order to determine decision making styles and self-esteem in decision making. The 30 item scale consists of two sections and 5 sub-scales. These two sections are self-esteem in decision making and coping styles in decision making. The mentioned sub-scales are "self-esteem in decision making" and the sub-scales that measure the coping styles used in decision making; namely "Vigilance", "Panic", "Cop-out " and "Complacency". The items are rated by choosing one of the four categories as 3 (Always true for me), 2 (Mostly true for me), 1 (Sometimes true for me) and 0 (Never true for me). In order to prove the validity of the adolescent decision making scale, which was adapted into Turkish by Çolakkadioglu (2003), structural validity and criteria dependent validity studies have been carried out. As a result of the factor analysis, it has been determined that the Turkish form has a structure consistent with the original form. The Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale were .79 for the self-esteem sub-scale, .78 for the vigilance sub-scale, .77 for the panic sub-scale, .65 for the cop-out sub-scale and .73 for the complacency sub-scale. Its test-retest reliability coefficients were .80 for the self-esteem sub-scale, .81 for the vigilance sub-scale, .82 for the panic sub-scale, .80 for the cop-out sub-scale and .86 for the complacency sub-scale.

Problem solving inventory (PSI)

The inventory which was developed by Heppner and Petersen (1982) in order to measure the individual's perception of himself concerning his problem solving skills is of six point Likert type and consists of 35 items. The inventory has three sub-scales named as "Problem Solving Confidence", "Approach - Avoidance Style" and "Personal Control". The inventory can be applied as total points. While the maximum point that can be scored with PSI is 192, the minimum is 32. A high point to be scored with PSI indicates a low problem solving skill, while a low point indicates a higher problem solving skill. Şahin et al. (1993) have found Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of Turkish form to be .88 and the corrected split-half coefficient as .81. In the result of factor analysis, six factors distinctively are from the original form of the scale. In this study, the total point obtained from the scale was utilized. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the problem solving inventory, for this study is .85.

Procedures

Before data collection, all of the necessary permissions were taken
Table 1. Arithmetic mean, standard deviation and correlation matrix used in the study.

<table>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subjective well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Positive affect</td>
<td>.59***</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Negative affect</td>
<td>-.66***</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Life satisfaction</td>
<td>.71***</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Problem solving</td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>-.41***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Self-esteem</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>-.36***</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>-.48***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Vigilance</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>-.53***</td>
<td>.52***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Panic</td>
<td>-.32***</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>.37***</td>
<td>-.46***</td>
<td>-.31***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Complacency</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>.28***</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>-.33***</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>.43***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cop-out</td>
<td>-.32***</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>-.42***</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
<td>.46***</td>
<td>.53***</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>20.57</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

and information about the purpose and voluntarism was explained to the participants. The questionnaires took 40 min to complete and were completed in classes under teachers’ supervision.

Data analysis

Stepwise multiple regression analysis has been employed in the study. Before conducting the stepwise regression analysis, it has been determined that the sample meets the "linearity" and "normality" premises. The subjective well-being scores obtained from the positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction scores have been calculated with the following formula (Vittersø, 2001):

Subjective well-being = Life Satisfaction + Positive Affect - Negative Affect

Before calculating subjective well-being scores, the scores obtained from the variables have been converted into z-scores. Collected data have been evaluated with the SPSS (11.5) package software. A significant level of .05 is used as basis for evaluating whether the findings are significant or not.

FINDINGS

In the stepwise regression analysis conducted to determine the variables that predict adolescents' subjective well-being, positive affect, negative affect and satisfaction with life, as well as its dimensions, the relations among the variables were examined. Arithmetic mean, standard deviation values and the correlation values among the variables are given in Table 1.

In the stepwise regression analysis, self-esteem in decision making, coping styles used in decision making (complacency, vigilance, panic and cop-out) and problem solving variables were included in the equation. The stepwise regression analysis results regarding the prediction of satisfaction with life, positive affect, negative affect and subjective well-being are shown in Table 2.

Stepwise regression analysis was done to determine what degree self-esteem in decision making, the coping styles used in decision making (complacency, vigilance, panic and cop-out) and problem solving explain satisfaction with life. According to the results of the analysis, the most important predictor of satisfaction with life is the "problem solving" variable and it explains 6% of the total variance observed in satisfaction with life scores $[F_{reg}(1, 375)=26.76, p<.001]$. With "self-esteem in decision making", as the second and the last predicting variable, the explained total variance was raised to 7% $[F_{reg}(2, 374)=16.08, p<.001]$. As it can be seen from Table 2, "self-esteem in decision making" $[F_{reg}(1, 375)=36.50, p<.001]$, "problem solving" $[F_{reg}(2, 374)=25.40, p<.001]$ and "vigilance style" $[F_{reg}(3, 373)=18.65, p<.001]$ respectively predicts positive affect as one of the affective components of subjective well-being on a significant level. It has been determined that these three variables explain 12% of positive affect.

As a result of the stepwise regression analysis, and as it can be seen in Table 2, "problem solving" $[F_{reg}(1, 375)=74.43, p<.001]$, "panic style" $[F_{reg}(2, 374)=51.22, p<.001]$ and "self-esteem in decision making" $[F_{reg}(3, 373)=37.03, p<.001]$ variables respectively predict negative affect on a significant level. It has been determined that these three variables explain 22% of negative affect.

As another result of the stepwise regression analysis it has been determined that "problem solving" $[F_{reg}(1, 375)=118.20, p<.001]$, "self-esteem in decision making" $[F_{reg}(2, 374)=79.77, p<.001]$ and "vigilance style" $[F_{reg}(3, 373)=56.04, p<.001]$ explain 31% of subjective well-being.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the study it is observed that having high problem solving skills predicts subjective well-being the most. Also it has been observed that the same variable
Table 2. Stepwise regression analysis regarding the prediction of adolescents' satisfaction with life, positive affect, negative affect and subjective well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Predictive variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>Std. error of the estimate</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>F regression</th>
<th>F change</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>26.76***</td>
<td>26.76***</td>
<td>-.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>16.08***</td>
<td>5.11*</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive affect</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>36.50***</td>
<td>36.50***</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>25.40***</td>
<td>13.12***</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vigilance</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>18.65***</td>
<td>4.67*</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative affect</td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>74.43***</td>
<td>74.43***</td>
<td>5.05</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Panic</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>51.22***</td>
<td>23.54***</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.48</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>37.03***</td>
<td>7.01**</td>
<td>-2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective well-being</td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>118.20***</td>
<td>118.20***</td>
<td>-.31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>79.77***</td>
<td>31.66***</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vigilance</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>56.04***</td>
<td>6.32*</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001.

significantly predicts satisfaction of life, as the cognitive component of subjective well-being, and positive and negative affect, as the affective components of the same. A high problem solving skill shows that the individual is successful in focusing on the problem, defining the problem, generating alternative ways of solutions, determining the solution he will implement, implementing the solution and evaluating the result. The results of the previous researches were consistent with the present study as there is a positive relation between higher problem solving skills and well-being (Chang et al., 2009; Deniz, 2006; Myers, 1991, 1992; Witmer and Sweeney, 1992). Also many researches conclude that deficiencies in problem solving skills are related with suicidal ideation (Nezu et al., 2004; Schotte and Clum, 1987; Siu and Shek, 2010), anxiety (Belzer et al., 2002; Bond et al., 2002; Nezu et al., 2004; Nigro, 1996) and depressive symptoms (Nezu et al., 2004; Siu and Shek, 2010), which all indicate weakness in the individual's well-being (Chang et al., 2009).

Bacanli (2000) has argued that the individuals who utilize effective decision making styles obtain more satisfaction from their lives. Similarly, Mann et al. (1998) state that the individuals who have high levels of self-esteem perceive their decision making competencies more positively. In this study, it has been determined that self-esteem in decision making, as one of the indicators of being able to take effective decisions, is the second place predictor in explaining subjective well-being. Also it is observed that the same variable significantly predicts satisfaction from life, as the cognitive component of subjective well being, and positive and negative affect, as the affective components of the same. Being in parallel with the findings of our study, Cenkseven-Önder (2012) and Deniz (2006) have proposed that the individuals, whose levels of self-esteem in decision making are high, get also higher levels of satisfaction from life. As for Radford et al. (1986), they have ascertained with their studies that the individuals who have low levels of self-esteem in decision making have higher levels of depression. Individuals who have high depression levels get less satisfaction from life and experience more negative effects. Accordingly, it can be asserted that such individuals' subjective well-beings are weak. One of the most important predictors of self-esteem in decision making is the general self-esteem (Çolakkadioglu and Gucray, 2007; Gucray, 2001; Thunholm, 2004). A lot of researches on adolescents (Casas et al., 2007; Civitci and Civitci, 2009; Gilman and Huebner, 2006; Huebner and Gilman, 2006; Neto, 1993, 2001; Zhang and Leung, 2002), in a way, support our research finding, that there is a positive relation between self-esteem and cognitive component of subjective well-being, that is, satisfaction with life.

The decision making style of vigilance, as the other indicator of effective decision making, stands for the individual to scrutinize a series of alternatives when it has to make a decision and to give the decision by evaluating the positive and negative aspects of the alternatives. The individuals, who use this effective decision making style and approach the decision requiring situation optimistically, tend towards selecting the most convenient alternative for themselves when they do not feel any pressure of time and do not experience high levels of stress (Friedman and Mann, 1993). The adolescents who adopt the vigilant selecting style in decision making have
higher self-esteem levels in decision making (Josephs et al., 1992), have less depressive thinking and use maladaptive decision making styles seldomly (Çolakkadioglu, 2003; Mann et al., 1988). Moreover, when the individual feels good, he/she makes better decisions resulting from being emotionally stimulated (Rivers et al., 2008; Steinberg et al., 2009). Also Cenkseven-Önder (2012) and Deniz (2006) determined that there is a significant relation between vigilance and satisfaction of life, as the cognitive component of subjective well-being. Also in this study, it has been similarly ascertained that vigilance and self-esteem in decision making have a strong correlation with positive affect and subjective well-being, and negative relations with negative affect. It has been understood that vigilance style is a significant predictor of positive affect, negative affect and subjective well-being.

In the study it is determined that there are negative relations between the two maladaptive decision making styles of panic and cop-out and satisfaction from life, positive affect and subjective well-being, and a positive relation with negative affect. It has been understood that, from these maladaptive decision making styles, the style of panic is the significant predictor of negative affect, as one of the affective components of subjective well-being. Negative affect reflects a wide range of the unpleasant emotional statuses such as sadness, anxiety, fear, anger, guilt and despise (Rivers et al., 2008; Steinberg et al., 2009; Watson, 1988; Watson and Pennebaker, 1989). In order to relieve themselves from the decision making stress and anxiety, the individuals who use the panic style try to alleviate their stress and anxieties by deciding at once, without generating any alternatives (Casey et al., 2008; Freiedman and Mann, 1993; Gleded, 2008). Similarly also Çolakkadioglu (2003) has stated in his study that the individuals who use this style have higher trait and state anxieties.

When the findings obtained from the study are considered, it is understood that problem solving skills and decision making styles are influential on the individual's well-being. It is proposed that group guidance works, within the scope of developmental guidance, intended for developing problem solving and adaptive decision making skills of the adolescents, who experience many decision making and problem solving circumstances, should be carried out in order to enable them to get more satisfaction from their lives, experience more positive affects and develop healthy identities. According to the findings of many studies (Byrnes et al., 1999; Poikolainen et al., 1995; Wills et al., 1995), adolescents exhibit more reliable behaviors with their raising levels of education and increasing ages. However, this study has been conducted on adolescents of the ages of 14 and 18, and thus the relations between the subjective well-being and decision making styles of the students in different stages of adolescence have not been examined. The study has also other limitations other than this one. When the concerned literature which considers the gender difference of the students is examined, it is observed that in decision making self-esteem and in the usage of vigilant and complacency styles, there is a significant difference in favor of the males, and in the usage of the styles of panic and cop-out there is a significant difference in favor of the female students (Friedmann and Mann, 1993; Gucray, 1998; Radford et al., 1993). It is proposed that the relation between subjective well-being and decision making styles should be examined by also considering the factors of age and gender in future studies. In this study, the level in which the adolescents’ problem solving skills explain their subjective well-being and its dimensions has been dealt with. In other studies, the relation between the problem solving styles of the adolescents with their subjective well-being can be dealt with. Also life satisfaction in general has been examined within this study and its dimensions such as family, friend and school. In another study the relation between the satisfaction the adolescents perceive from different aspects of life and their problem solving skills and decision making styles can be examined.

REFERENCES


