



## ANXIETY AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING RELATIONSHIP IN INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED PARENTS

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of individuals between the ages of 18-30, whose mothers and fathers are visually impaired but they don't have any disabilities by their own. 50 individuals were participated in the study whose both of their parents are visually impaired. Research data were collected using the Beck Anxiety and Subjective Well-being Scale and SPSS software was used to analyze the data. As a result of the study, no significant difference was found in terms of anxiety level according to the congenital status of the mother / father visual impairment, but a significant difference was found in terms of subjective well-being only compared to the congenital state of the mother's visual impairment. In addition, a negative, weak and significant relationship was found between individuals' anxiety and subjective well-being levels. It is thought that supporting the children of visually impaired parents from birth will play a protective role for the high anxiety that may be seen in the future.

**Keywords:** Visually impaired, anxiety, subjective well-being.

### Introduction

Anxiety comes to the fore as a concept that is frequently encountered in the current period. Anxiety is a situation that every person can experience in a different level. It can be a mental, behavioral and physical symptoms that occur spontaneously according to the negative situations that individuals encounter (Carlson, Martin & Buskist, 2004). The concept of subjective well-being is a concept that tries to reveal how individuals evaluated themselves and their lives in the past and now (Diener, 1984). All of the cognitive and personal evaluations of people related to their positive or negative emotions and the satisfaction they feel about their own life are included in the concept of subjective well-being (Diener, 1994).

When all the elements in the concept of subjective well-being are considered, the person with high subjective well-being, that is, the happy person, is an individual who is rarely anxious and generally happy and cheerful in his life (Diener, Lucas & Oishi, 2003). In other perspective, when these individuals feel positive emotions intensely and frequently and are satisfied with their lives, they feel negative emotions at a relatively low level and their subjective well-being levels increase. This situation shows that anxiety can have a significant relationship with the concept of subjective well-being.

Parents are among the individuals who have the most impact on individuals' lives. Their attitude towards their children is very influential on the psychological state of children. These

effects can seriously affect people in the long term. From this point of view, it is evaluated that the attitudes of the parents, the situations they are in, can also have an effect on the anxiety and subjective well-being of the children.

The lives of individuals with disabled parents naturally differ from those whose parents are not disabled (Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), 2009). Due to the disability of their parents, it is seen that these individuals are raised under different conditions from birth compared to other people (Kirschbaum & Olkin, 2002). It is thought that this situation may have an effect on their anxiety and subjective well-being of individuals with visually impaired parents.

### **Importance of the Study**

When the literature on anxiety, subjective well-being and visually impaired people is searched, it is seen that generally studies conducted with a sample of parents with visually impaired children (Deniz et al., 2009; Avşaroğlu & Gilik, 2017; Becan, 2017; Avşaroğlu & Çavdar, 2018; Nergiz & Uluç, 2018) or directly on visually impaired individuals (Van der Aa et al., 2015; Stevelink & Fear, 2016; Kumar, 2017). On the other hand, no study on children whose parents are visually impaired has been found in the available literature. Because of its originality, it is thought that this study will made a new contribution to the literature.

### **Objective of the Study**

The general aim of this research is to examine the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of individuals between the ages of 18-30, whose parents are visually impaired and who do not have any disabilities. According to this general aim the study try to answer the below questions,

1. Do the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of individuals whose mothers and fathers are visually impaired differ significantly according to the congenital or acquired status of the parents' visual impairment?
2. Is there a significant relationship between anxiety and subjective well-being levels of individuals whose mothers and fathers are visually impaired?

## **Method**

### **Research Model**

The present study, which is a descriptive one, in of relational screening model among the screening models. It aims to describe a situation that existed in the past or today without changing it and to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Karasar, 2013).

### **Sample Group**

The study group consists of 50 individuals between the ages of 18-30 in Ankara whose mothers and fathers are visually impaired but they don't have any disabilities by their own. For this reason, criterion from sampling methods was chosen for sampling. Criterion sampling includes studying and reviewing situations that meet a set of pre-determined importance criteria (Patton, 2014), and these criteria can be created by the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006).

## Data Collection Tools

"Beck Anxiety Scale" and "Subjective Well-Being Scale" were used in the study. The original scale of "Beck Anxiety Scale" developed by Beck, Epstein, Brown and Steer (1988) to determine the frequency of anxiety symptoms and it was adapted into Turkish by Ulusoy (1993). While Ulusoy (1993) determined the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient as 0.930, it was determined as 0.744 in the reliability analysis conducted in this study. The scale consists of 21 questions and in the results, 0-7 points indicate "minimum", 8-15 points "mild", 16-25 points "moderate" and 26-63 points indicate "severe" anxiety level.

The other scale used in the study is "Subjective Well-Being Scale" and it developed by Tuzgöl Dost (2005). It consists of judgments about living spaces and expressions about positive and negative feelings. It consists of 46 items (26 positive and 20 negative) with 12 dimensions. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was determined as 0.788 in the reliability analysis conducted in this study. The scores that the participants can get from the scale are between 46 and 230, and the high scores are interpreted as the positive subjective well-being of the individual.

## Statistical Analysis of Data

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the analysis of the data, and the significance level for the analysis was accepted as  $p \leq 0.05$ . After the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Abnormality it was seen that the data fit the normal distribution ( $p = 0.195$ ). In addition, with the Levene test, it was determined that the data were homogeneously distributed. In this context, parametric tests (Independent t-test) were used in the analysis of the data. In addition, Correlation Analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of the participants.

## Findings

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the statistical analysis of the collected data are included.

**Table 1.**

*Anxiety and subjective well-being scores of the mother / father by the variable congenital visual impairment*

Variable		Congenital Visual Impairment		N	$\bar{x}$	sd	t	p
Anxiety	Mother	Yes		24	11,58	6,16	1,6	0,116
		No		26	9	5,24		
	Father	Yes		22	9,45	5,27	-0,847	0,401
		No		28	10,85	6,19		
Subjective well-being	Mother	Yes		24	134,54	8,98	2,45	<b>0,019*</b>
		No		26	125,11	17,24		
	Father	Yes		22	130,95	12,11	0,561	0,577
		No		28	128,6	16,39		

\* $p \leq 0.05$

Anxiety level score averages of the participants and Independent Sample t-Test results regarding the congenital state of the mother / father visual impairment are presented in Table 1. According to the analysis, no statistically significant difference was found between the

anxiety level score averages of the participants according to the congenital state of the mother /father visual impairment. ( $t_{\text{mother}}= 1,600$ ;  $p> 0.05$ ; ( $t_{\text{father}} = -, 847$ ;  $p> 0.05$ ).

On the other hand, according to congenital state of the mother / father visual impairment according to the variable of subjective well-being of the participants, again Table 1 shows that the subjective well-being score mean of the participants was statistically significant related to the congenital state of the mother's visual impairment. The difference was found ( $t_{\text{mother}} = 2,450$ ;  $p\leq 0.05$ ). This result indicates that subjective well-being levels differ significantly according to the congenital condition of the mother's visual impairment, and when the mean values are considered, it is determined that the subjective well-being levels of individuals with congenital visual impairment of the mother are higher. There was no significant difference found between the mean scores in anxiety levels of the participants ( $t_{\text{father}} =, 561$ ;  $p> 0.05$ ).

**Table 2.**  
*Anxiety and subjective well-being correlation analysis*

Variable	N	r	p
Anxiety			
Subjective well-being	50	-0,307	0,030*

\* $p\leq 0.05$

According to the result of the Pearson correlation analysis conducted to determine the relationship between the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of the participants, as seen in Table 2, a weak negative and significant relationship ( $r = -0.307$ ,  $p\leq 0.05$ ) was found. In other words, it was found that when the anxiety levels of the participants decreased, their subjective well-being levels increased.

### Discussion

When the anxiety levels of individuals were examined according to whether their parents' visual impairments were congenital or not, it was found that the anxiety levels of the participants did not differ. Although there is no study on parental visual impairment in the searched literature, it is seen that parents with congenital visually impaired children have high anxiety levels (Sakkalou et. al, 2018; Sola-Carmona et. al, 2016a). In addition, it is thought that individuals who became visually impaired later may have difficulties in accepting to continue their lives with disabilities and adapting to their new lives. Before the study, it was predicted that individuals with visually impaired parents may have more anxiety / fear and anxiety levels may be higher compared to individuals with congenital visually impaired parents. However, the research findings did not support this assumption. Although there is no different research finding to compare this finding in the literature, it is thought that the expected result can be achieved by increasing the sample size.

When the subjective well-being levels of individuals were considered according to the congenital condition of their mothers' visual impairments; it has been found that individuals whose mothers have congenital visually impairment have higher levels of subjective well-being compared to those who became visually impaired later in life. Although there is no study related to parental visual impairment in the searched literature, it is seen that the level of well-being decreases as the anxiety level increases in parents with congenital visually impaired children (Sola-Carmona et. all., 2013; 2016a). In order to have a high level of subjective well-being it is also stated that; being married in first nuptials, perceiving the child's condition as not affecting leisure and perceiving one's health as good are important

variables on subjective well-being (Sola-Carmona et. all, 2016b). For this reason, the findings of the research can be interpreted as that individuals with congenital visual impairment parents may have more successful adaptive skills in life or successful other life events which protect their subjective well-being more than the others. However, within the scope of the study, it was observed that there was no difference between the subjective well-being levels of the individuals according to the congenital condition of their father's visual impairment. It is thought that this result may due to the cultural and hereditary attachment of children to mother rather than the father.

Finally, within the scope of the research, it was examined whether there is a significant relationship between the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of the participants. In the literature on the subject, subjective well-being is considered as a protective factor against the psychological disorders. In the studies of Balázs et al. (2018) and Vancamfort et al. (2011), it was reported that there is a negative relationship between subjective well-being and anxiety. In this study, in accordance with the literature, it was determined that there was a weakly negative and significant relationship between anxiety and subjective well-being levels of individuals, in other words, when the anxiety levels of the participants decreased, their subjective well-being levels increased.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

As a result of the study, the anxiety levels of the individuals do not differ according to the congenital state of the parent's visual impairment. However, the subjective well-being levels of individuals whose mothers have congenital visually impairment is higher than those whose mother became visually impaired later in life. Also, there is a weak and negative relationship between the anxiety and subjective well-being levels of the participants.

Considering the studies on families with disabilities in the literature, although there are many studies on anxiety, there are limited number of studies on subjective well-being. In addition, it is seen that almost all of the studies on both subjects are directed at families and parents with disabled children. On the other hand, studies on disabled parents are quite limited. In this framework, it is possible to offer some suggestions regarding future studies and applications:

- In the studies to be carried out, using a qualitative method, both anxiety and other variables that affect subjective well-being can be examined. In this context, more comprehensive research can be conducted by referring to the views and experiences of both parents with disabilities and their children.
- Based on the conclusion that there is a negative relationship between anxiety and subjective well-being obtained as a result of the research, it can be suggested that individuals with visual impairment should be supported with psychoeducational programs that increase their subjective well-being levels in order to prevent low anxiety in individuals.
- In order to prevent the high anxiety that may be encountered in the children of visually impaired parents, it is thought that it would be appropriate to support the children of visually impaired parents throughout their childhood from birth.

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