Domain Specific Hope Levels of University Students in Turkey: The Predicting Roles of Personal Belief in a Just World and Gender

Mine Muyan-Yılık[a*] & Ayhan Demir [b]

a. Asst. Prof. Dr., Izmir Democracy University, (http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9366-9173) * mine.muyan@idu.edu.tr

b, Prof. Dr., Middle East Technical University, (http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2113-2761)

ABSTRACT

The aim of the current study was to investigate the predicting roles of personal belief in a just world and gender in university students' hope levels in specific life domains (i.e., social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, and leisure activities). The participants were 168 university students from a major state university in Turkey. Data was collected with the Domain Specific Hope Scale, the Personal Belief in a Just World Scale, and a personal information sheet. Results of Multivariate Regression Analysis showed that both personal belief in a just world and gender were significant predictors of domain specific hope levels of university students. More specifically, personal belief in a just world was found to significantly predict university students' hope levels in academics, family life and leisure activities. In addition, female students were found to have higher hope levels in social relationships. Taken together, the findings highlighted the importance of studies on domain specific hope levels. Current findings were discussed within the context of the hope and just-world literature and gender roles in Turkey.

Keywords: Domain specific hope, personal belief in a just world, gender

Türkiye'deki Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Özel Yaşam Alanlarına İlişkin Umut Düzeyleri: Kişisel Adil Dünya İnancı ve Cinsiyetin Yordayıcı Rolü

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinin özel yaşam alanlarına (sosyal ilişkiler, romantik ilişkiler, aile yaşamı, akademik yaşam, iş yaşamı ve serbest zaman aktiviteleri) ilişkin umut düzeylerini yordamada kişisel adil dünya inançları ile cinsiyetlerinin rollerini incelemektir. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'de büyük bir devlet üniversitesinde okuyan 168 üniversite öğrencisidir. Veriler Özel Yaşam Alanlarına İlişkin Umut Ölçeği, Kişisel Adil Dünya İnancı Ölçeği ve kişisel bilgi formu ile toplanmıştır. Çok Değişkenli Regresyon Analizi sonuçları hem kişisel adil dünya inancının hem de cinsiyetin üniversite öğrencilerinin özel yaşam alanlarına ilişkin umut düzeylerinin anlamlı yordayıcıları olduğunu göstermiştir. Kişisel adil dünya inançlarının, üniversite öğrencilerinin akademik yaşamlarındaki, aile yaşamlarındaki ve serbest zaman aktivitelerindeki umut düzeylerini anlamlı şekilde yordadığı bulunmuştur. Ek olarak, kız öğrencilerin sosyal ilişkilerde daha yüksek umut düzeylerine sahip olduğu bulunmuştur. Sonuç olarak, bulgular özel yaşam alanlarına ilişkin umut çalışmalarının önemine işaret etmektedir. Mevcut bulgular, umuda ve adil dünya inancına ilişkin alanyazın ile Türkiye'deki cinsiyet rolleri kapsamında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Özel yaşam alanlarına ilişkin umut, kişisel adil dünya inancı, cinsiyet

1 | INTRODUCTION

As a psychological strength and a well-known predictor of mental and physical health, hope is one of the well-studied concepts among university students (Cheavens & Ritschel, 2014). Hope Theory (Snyder, 1994; 2002) defines hope as a cognitive and goal-oriented thinking process which contains two distinguishable but related thinking processes, namely pathways thinking and agency thinking. Pathways thinking was introduced as one's perceived ability to produce primary and alternative routes to his/her desired goals whereas agency thinking was defined as one's goal-directed energy or motivation (Snyder, 2000). These components of hope are reciprocal, additive, and interact throughout the hope process (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 2002). Hope Theory (Snyder, 1994; 2002) offers three levels of hope, namely dispositional hope, state hope, and domain-specific hope. According to Snyder and his colleagues (1996) people do not only have an enduring type of hope, dispositional hope, that is probably applied across different situations and times, but also people have state hope which is a representation of their current hope levels in a given time which may be affected by specific events. Moreover, Snyder and his colleagues (1997) indicated that there was a need for domain specific perspective for hope research. Snyder et al. (1997) stated that as people's hope levels vary depending on situations, it is important to examine their hope levels manifested in different life domains (i.e., social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work and leisure) which produced the concept of domain-specific hope.

Looking at hope literature, most of the hope studies are based on the first two levels of hope, dispositional and state hope (Cheavens & Ritschel, 2014; Çetin Gündüz, 2016 for reviews). However, as it can be easily observed, university students may behave or think very differently based on different life domains because of their developmental level. For instance, social life may have a greater role in their life since they are really interested in making friendships and love because of their developmental stage (Arnett, 2007). Similarly, Shorey et al. (2012) stated that life domains such as social relationships and achievements become more important rather than spirituality or health among college students. Shorey et al. (2012) highlighted that roles of college students are mostly based on their peer, romantic and family relations and academic achievement, and these life domains are more central to their self-concept. Consistently, studies on domain specific hope levels, which are quite limited in the literature, have pointed to the different levels of hope in these specific life domains among university students (e.g., Sympson, 1999; Şakar, 2019). Therefore, it may be better to investigate the third level, domain specific hope levels of university students and its predictors to reach a more holistic perspective among this specific sample of university students.

One predictor that may be worth to examine is people's own belief in a just world. Lerner's just world hypothesis stated that, "people want to and have to believe they live in a just world so that they can go about their daily lives with a sense of trust, hope, and confidence in their future." (Lerner, 1980, p. 14) Belief in a just world is conceptualized as one's belief that life events she/he has been experiencing are just (Kamble & Dalbert, 2012). In other words, it is the belief that one is living in a stable and orderly world which prevents her/him from unforeseen injustices (Correia et al., 2007; Lerner & Miller, 1978). Moreover, Correia et al. (2009) stated that even when facing with unfair treatments, one's belief in a just world may help the person to relieve the anxiety and increase the sense of control and hope for handling with the psychological threat of unfair treatments. Furthermore, Hafer and Gosse (2011) presented belief in a just world as a source for the sense of security and control which may help people engage in long-term goals. Given these explanations, one's belief in a just world may provide the basis for identifying goals, providing pathways to reach those goals and having the necessary motivation to follow those pathways which all together may refer to one's hope level. Research has also supported this contention as personal belief in a just world was found to be associated with higher hope levels (e.g., Otto & Dalbert, 2005; Uğur, 2007; Xie et al., 2011). For instance, Xie and her colleagues (2011) found personal belief in a just world to be a significant predictor of hope among 494 university students. However, the literature on belief in a just world-hope link is lack of findings on the relationships between belief in a just world and hope levels in

specific life domains of family, work, social relationships, romantic relationships, leisure, and academic life. To contribute to the literature, it may be important to understand the role of belief in a just world in university students' domain specific hope levels. Considering the just world literature, two types of belief in a just world is stated, namely personal belief in a just world and general belief in a just world (Dalbert, 1999; Lipkus et al., 1996). Personal belief in a just world refers to one's belief that the events in her/his own life are just whereas general belief in a just world refers to one's belief that the world is a just place (Kamble & Dalbert, 2012). This study focused on the role of personal belief in a just world rather than general belief in a just world since personal belief in a just world is suggested to be a better predictor of personal outcomes and mental health (Dalbert, 1999; Dzuka & Dalbert, 2002).

Another variable that may play a significant role in hope studies is gender. Hope studies provided controversial findings on gender differences. In scale development studies of Snyder and his colleagues (1991; 1996), gender was not found to have a significant association with hope. Similarly, some forthcoming studies abroad and in Turkey presented non-significant findings for gender differences on hope (e.g., Chang, 1998; Kemer & Atik, 2005; Snyder, 2002; Tarhan, 2012). However, some studies in Turkey found significant gender differences (Kemer & Atik, 2012; Küsgülü, 2014; Tarhan & Bacanlı, 2016; Türkmen & Demirli, 2011; Usta, 2013). For instance, Küsgülü (2014) found significant gender differences in hope among 526 university students. Therefore, the role of gender differences on hope in Turkish samples is still debatable (for a review, Çetin Gündüz, 2016). Moreover, despite these controversial findings of gender differences on dispositional or state hope levels of individuals, studies regarding gender differences on domain specific hope levels is quite limited both abroad and in Turkey (e.g., Mutlu, 2017; Sympson, 1997; 1999; Şakar, 2019; Yıldız Akyol & Işık, 2018). Sympson (1997) found significant gender differences on hope levels in family life and academics whereas she (1999) could only find significant difference on family life in her later study. Considering studies conducted in Turkey, in their study on hope in romantic relationships, Yıldız Akyol and Işık (2018) reached non-significant gender differences while Mutlu (2017) found female university students to have higher hope levels in family life and lower hope levels in romantic relationships, compared to male students, and Şakar (2019) found non-significant gender differences in domain specific hope levels among Turkish university students. Regarding the limited study on domain specific hope both abroad and in Turkey, it may be important to study this concept with its possible significant predictors, such as gender and personal belief in a just world.

PURPOSES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Given the possibilities presented above, we conducted this study to:

1) examine the relationships between university students' hope levels in social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, leisure activities and their personal belief in a just world.

2) investigate the predicting roles of personal belief in a just world, and gender in their hope levels in social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, and leisure activities.

2 | METHOD

The nature of the currently is correlational design. Correlational design is defined as investigating the possibility of relationships between two or more variables without applying any manipulation or intervention (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Correlational design is used for two general purposes, namely "to help explain important human behaviors or to predict likely outcomes" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 332). We benefitted the prediction revealing characteristic of correlational design since the main purpose of the current study was to examine the prediction of personal belief in a just world and gender in domain-specific hope levels of university students. In prediction studies, under correlational design, the relationship between criterion variables and a combination of predictor variables is investigated (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

In the present study, domain specific hope levels were criterion variables whereas personal belief in a just world and gender were predictor variables.

Participants

Target population was Turkish university students who were native in Turkish and enrolled in an undergraduate program at a state university in Ankara, Turkey. The data were obtained from 168 voluntary university students from a major state university via convenience sampling. Among the participants, 93 were female (55.4%), and 75 were male (44.6%). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 32 with a mean of 21.11 years (SD = 2.12). Participants included 20.2% freshman, 36.3% sophomore, 10.7% junior, 31% senior, and 1.8% who didn't indicate their class grade.

Data collection tools

In this study, the data collection tools were the Domain Specific Hope Scale, the Personal Belief in a Just World Scale, and a personal information sheet prepared by the researchers. The questions in the sheet were about gender, age and class grades of the participants.

Domain specific hope levels. The Domain Specific Hope Scale (DSHS; Sympson, 1999) was used to measure domain specific hope levels of the participants. The DSHS is a 48-item scale of hope levels in six life domains, namely social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life and leisure activities. Respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they agree with the statements using an 8-point scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 8 (totally agree). Higher scores on the DSHS are indicative of greater hope levels in the related life domain. The Turkish adaption of the DSHS was made by Özbay and his colleagues (2011). Cronbach alpha coefficients for the life domains were ranged between .86 and .92 in Sympson (1999) and .83 and .93 in the adaptation study (Özbay et al., 2011). The Cronbach alpha coefficients in this study were found to be ranged between .81 and .89.

Personal belief in a just world. The Personal Belief in a Just World Scale (P-BJW; Dalbert, 1999) was used to measure the personal belief in just world levels of the participants. The P-BJW is a 7-item self-report of the belief that the events in one's own life are just. Respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they agree with the statements using a 6-point scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree). Higher scores on the P-BJW indicate greater personal beliefs in a just world. The Turkish adaption of the P-BJW was made by Göregenli (2003). Cronbach alpha coefficients for the scale were .86 and .85 in Dalbert's (1999) study and Göregenli's (2003) study, respectively. The Cronbach alpha coefficient in this study was found as .89.

Data collection

The researchers supervised the implementation of the data collection tools in classroom settings. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the current study, anonymity of their identities, confidentiality of the data obtained, their rights during and after the data collection, and contact information of the researchers. The data collection process lasted for approximately 20 minutes.

Data analysis

In order to benefit from parametric or non-parametric tests, normality of the distribution was checked through a variety of values such as Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, skewness-kurtosis, Q-Q plots, and histograms. As for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, all study variables had significant values, although it is suggested that they must have non-significant values. Field (2009) suggests that these normality tests are very sensitive for detecting any minor deviations from normal distribution and they must be consulted with the values of skewness-kurtosis, histograms, and Q-Q plots. Consistent with this suggestion, these values were checked. Skewness values are expected to be lower than 3.00 whereas kurtosis values are expected to be lower than 10.00 for satisfying normality assumption (Kline,

2011). In this study, skewness values were ranged between -.12 and -2.02 while kurtosis values were ranged between .03 and 6.28. The histograms and Q-Q plots presented normal patterns for most variables. Taken together, it is decided to conduct parametric tests. To understand the relationships between study variables, bivariate correlations were checked. Subsequently, after checking necessary assumptions, multivariate linear regression was conducted to investigate the prediction of personal belief in a just world and gender in hope levels of university students in six life domains (social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, and leisure activities). Moreover, independent sample t-test was conducted to check the gender differences in domain-specific hope levels of university students. Data were analyzed by the Statistical Package Program for Social Sciences 22 (SPSS 22).

Research ethics

The ethical standards as specified by the APA were followed before and during the study. Prior to data collection, the necessary ethical permission was obtained from Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee with the decision number of 28620816/187-353. In addition to ethical permission, a voluntary participation form was utilized to the participants which informed them about the confidentiality, anonymity, purposes of the study, and contact information of the researchers and psychological counselling units in the campus. Moreover, all sources used in this study were cited in the references section, consistent with APA standards.

3 | Findings

Correlations, means, and standard deviations for all study measures in the present study are presented in Table 1. As seen in the table, hope levels in each life domain significantly correlated with each other with a correlation coefficient ranged between .15 and .58. Moreover, personal belief in a just world was found to be significantly and positively correlated with hope in academics ($r = .19$, $p \le .01$), hope in family life ($r = .35$, $p \le .001$), and hope in leisure activities ($r = .20$, $p \le .01$).

Table 1. Correlations among Study Variables

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. P-BJW	--						
2. DSHS-Social	.55***	--					
3. DSHS-Academics	.23***	.58***	--				
4. DSHS-Romantic	.37***	.42***	37***	--			
5. DSHS-Family	.18**	.52***	.46***	.46***	--		
6. DSHS-Work	.27***	.06	-.01	.01	-.17**	--	
7. DSHS-Leisure	-.08	.18**	.20***	-.01	.29***	-.26***	--
Range	7-35	9-45	4-20	5-25	4-20	6-30	20-72
M	22.09	23.10	10.95	15.13	8.28	23.08	35.24
SD	5.26	7.64	3.35	4.85	3.28	5.04	11.50

$N = 168$. *$p \le .05$, **$p \le .01$, ***$p \le .001$. P-BJW = Personal belief in a just world; DSHS-Social = Hope in social relationships; DSHS-Academic = Hope in academics; DSHS-Romantic = Hope in romantic relationships; DSHS-Family = Hope in family life; DSHS-Work = Hope in work life; DSHS-Leisure = Hope in leisure activities.

Belief in a just world and gender as predictors of domain specific hope levels of university students in Turkey

In order to examine whether personal belief in a just world and gender account for unique variances in hope levels of Turkish university students in six life domains (social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, and leisure activities), a multivariate linear regression analysis was

conducted. Results of the Multivariate Regression Analysis are presented in Figure 1. As Figure 1 presents, personal belief in a just world was found to be a significant predictor of domain specific hope levels of Turkish university students, V = 0.16, F (6, 160) = 5.02, p < .001. Similarly, gender was found to be a significant predictor of domain specific hope levels of Turkish university students, V = 0.09, F (6, 160) = 2.70, p ≤ .01.

Variable	Multivariate			DSHS-Social			DSHS-Academics			DSHS-Romantic			DSHS-Family			DSHS-Work			DSHS-Leisure		
	F^a	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2	F^b	p	η^2
P-BJW	5.02	.00	.16	2.31	.13	.01	7.05	.01	.04	2.76	.10	.02	25.10	.00	.13	3.43	.07	.02	7.19	.01	.04
Gender	2.70	.02	.09	8.55	.00	.05	3.80	.05	.02	1.69	.19	.01	.78	.10	.02	.03	.86	.00	.89	.35	.01

Note. Multivariate F ratios were generated from Pillai's statistics. P-BJW = Personal belief in a just world; DSHS-Social = Hope in social relationships; DSHS-Academic = Hope in academics; DSHS-Romantic = Hope in romantic relationships; DSHS-Family = Hope in family life; DSHS-Work = Hope in work life; DSHS-Leisure = Hope in leisure activities

[a]Multivariate df = 6,160. [b]Univariate df = 1, 165.

Figure 1. *Multivariate and Univariate Regression Analyses for Domain Specific Hope Levels*

Accordingly, the unique predicting roles of personal belief in a just world and gender in different life areas were checked. In order to understand the significance of the predictors but also avoid Type I error, we benefitted from Bonferroni corrections by diving the alpha to our comparison number. Therefore, the new alpha was set as .008 (.05/6). Considering the prediction of hope in different life areas, personal belief in a just world significantly predicted hope in academics (V = 0.04, F (1, 165) = 7.05, p ≤ .01), family life (V = 0.13, F (1, 165) = 25.10, p < .01), and leisure activities (V = 0.04, F (1, 165) = 7.19, p ≤ .01). Moreover, gender significantly predicted hope in social relationships (V = 0.05, F (1, 165) = 8.55, p < .01). In order to test the gender differences, an independent samples t-test was run for hope in social relationships. According to the results, significant gender differences were found [t (166) = 2.83, p < .01]. More specifically, results indicated that females (M = 51.12, SD = 7.41) had significantly higher hope levels in social relationships than males (M = 47.57, SD = 8.83).

4 | Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, it was aimed to investigate how well university students' personal belief in a just world and gender predicted their hope levels in social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life and leisure activities. As the previous studies suggested, it was expected that belief in a just world would be a significant predictor of hope. Consistent with previous studies (Otto & Dalbert, 2005; Uğur, 2007; Xie et al., 2011), we found personal belief is a just world to significantly predict hope levels of university students. The prediction of personal belief in a just world in hope levels of individuals may be explained by Lerner's contention (1980) that belief in a just world is a necessity for engaging in making long-term goal plans and providing the necessary effort to reach those goals. As Hafer and Gosse (2011) indicated, the sense of security and control over situations, which is fed by one's personal belief in a just world, may provide the necessary energy and motivation for hopeful thinking process.

Moreover, it was also expected that the prediction of personal belief in a just world might vary depending on life domains, especially in this specific group of university students. Consistently, personal belief in a just world was found to play different roles in predicting hope levels in different life domains. More specifically, personal belief in a just world was found to significantly predict hope levels in academics, family relationships, and leisure activities whereas it failed to predict hope levels in social relationships, romantic relationships and work life. In other words, the university students believed that only in academics, family life, and leisure activities they could get whatever they deserved in this study. Although studies indicate the importance of peer relations, romantic relationships, family relationships and

achievements in school for university students (Arnett, 2007; Shorey et al., 2012), our findings which are limited to significance of personal belief in a just world on academics, family life and leisure activities may be explained by the unique characteristics of this specific sample of university students. Recalling the sample characteristics, these students are very high achievers who succeed in enrolling and continuing their education in one of the best universities in Turkey; and most of them are in their first or second year in the university. Based on these characteristics, we may think that they may have more experiences in family life, leisure activities and academics, and may have the chance to see the results of their efforts in these life areas. To exemplify, their own experience as they worked really hard and deserved to be in this successful academic life may provide a personal evidence for these university students that they can set goals, produce pathways, and maintain the necessary motivation to follow these pathways in academic life. Hafer (2000) indicated that believing that you will be treated as you deserve helps individuals to invest more into their own future. Consistently, our participants who believed that their personal world was just may have invested their academic life, family life, and leisure activities more, which may predict higher levels of hope in these life areas. Considering the non-significant prediction of personal belief in a just world in hope in other life areas (i.e., social relationships, romantic relationships, and work life), the participants may have the belief or experiences that engaging in goal-oriented thinking processes and sustaining these processes in social or romantic relationships may require more than one's personal efforts and one's related belief of a just world. For instance, in addition to one's effort, the effort of other individuals in the relationship, luck or circumstances may also play an important role in these life domains. Moreover, some life domains may be unclear for the participants because of the limitation of experiences in these life areas. To clarify, since our participants are university students, their understanding of work life may be unclear or if they haven't got significant romantic relationships, this life area may also be unclear for them, which may influence their indications and prevent us from finding a significant link between personal belief in a just world and hope levels in these life areas. Given the very few studies on the relationships between personal belief in a just world and domain specific hope levels, further studies are strongly needed to better understand and discuss current findings.

Another important question of this study was investigating the gender differences in terms of predicting domain specific hope levels of university students. The role of gender has been controversial in the Turkish studies (for a review, Çetin Gündüz, 2016). Moreover, there are rather limited studies on the gender differences for hope levels in different life domains (Mutlu, 2017; Sympson, 1997; 1999; Şakar, 2019; Yıldız Akyol & Işık, 2018). In this study, it was found that gender played a significant predicting role only in hope levels in social relationships. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of previous studies (Mutlu, 2017; Sympson, 1997; 1999; Şakar, 2019) which ended with non-significant prediction of gender on social relationships. Gender differences on hope levels are usually explained by gender roles (e.g., Sympson, 1999; Tarhan & Bacanlı, 2016). Our finding related to the higher hope levels of female students in social relationships may also be explained with the gender roles in Turkey. Women may be provided with more skills and opportunities to set goals, produce pathways and maintain the necessary motivation towards those social goals than men in Turkish culture. For instance, previous studies indicated that compared to men, women are more inclined to open themselves (Gültekin, 2001; Gündoğdu, 2010) and perceived themselves more positively than men in communication skills (Korkut, 2005). Moreover, Knox et al. (2007) provided the findings that male university students had lower knowledge on how to make friends, therefore had limited socializing experiences on starting, developing and maintaining social relationships. Furthermore, stronger relational tendencies of women in Turkey was highlighted in previous studies (İmamoğlu, 2003; İmamoğlu & İmamoğlu, 1992). Taken together, gender differences on socializing processes and gender roles in Turkey which provides more opportunity for women to socialize may prepare the basis for gender differences in hope levels in social relationships.

The non-significant gender differences in domain specific hope levels of university students is consistent with the findings of Şakar (2019). According to her comparison with 1227 university students,

domain specific hope levels did not differentiate in terms of gender of the participants. Regarding the non-significant gender differences in hope in other life areas may be related to several explanations. Firstly, this finding may indicate that hope could be a gender-free variable where neither women nor men differentiate in these life areas. More specifically, our female or male students have similar hopeful thinking process in romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life and leisure activities. Hafer and Gosse (2011) explained that for hopeful thinking processes, individuals may need the sense of security and control over situations. Our participants' sense of security and control in these related life areas could be at similar levels. Another explanation for reaching non-significant findings in these life areas may refer to decreases in the effect of gender roles in romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life and leisure activities in this sample who spent most of their time with their friends in the university campus. Taken together, varying predicting role of gender in hope levels in different life areas in this study supports the controversial findings in the hope literature (Cheavens & Ritschel, 2014; Çetin Gündüz, 2016).

The findings of the current study provided evidence for the predicting role of one's personal belief in a just world in her/his domain specific hope levels. Previous studies clearly showed that higher hope is associated with higher positive outcomes whereas lower hope is a predictor of adverse outcomes (see reviews, Cheavens & Ritschel, 2014; Çetin Gündüz, 2016). Therefore, enhancing hope levels of university students gains importance. To do so, in addition to the direct interventions to increase hope levels (Cheavens et al., 2006; Feldman & Dreher, 2012), focusing on one's belief in a just world may also work. For instance, university counseling centers may develop or adapt activities and interventions for increasing the just world understanding of their students. Experiences supporting belief in a just world in universities may be provided more frequently. For instance, even providing stories with a just world was found to be associated in higher belief in a just world levels in Correia et al.'s (2009) study. Additionally, university counseling centers may offer trainings or seminars to instructors about the belief in a just world and its possible influences on students' lives, and how to support this belief by their teaching and evaluation processes. Moreover, this study reached significant gender differences on domain specific hope levels. As the just world literature suggests the sense of control and security for goal pursuits (Hafer & Gosse, 2011), universities may work on strengthening their students' sense of control and security in life areas. Furthermore, considering the gender difference on hope in social relationships in favor of female students, university counseling centers may provide programs or interventions for socialization skills, especially for male students.

Despite the importance of the current study as being one of the first studies on belief in a just world, gender and domain specific hope levels among university students, it also has some limitations. Firstly, since this is not an experimental study, it could not provide a cause-and-effect relationship between study variables. Secondly, as the design was cross-sectional, it could not detect the changes on study variables across time. Thirdly, since the sample of this study was gathered through convenience sampling procedure, the findings could be generalized limited to similar samples. To enhance the generalizability, future studies may benefit from random sampling procedures in their studies. Fourthly, this study investigated the predictor role of personal belief in a just world and gender; following studies may benefit from different variables in understanding domain specific hope levels of university students.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This study was conducted to investigate whether personal belief in a just world and gender predicted hope levels in social relationships, romantic relationships, family life, academics, work life, and leisure activities among Turkish university students. Our findings indicated that personal belief in a just world and gender not only were significant predictors of domain specific hope levels of university students, but also they played different roles in predicting hope in different life domains. Thus, this study provided evidence for the importance of more-nuanced hope studies which go beyond investigating only dispositional or state hope levels of individuals. The current study has important contributions for domain specific hope research in Turkey. However, it also revealed the need for more research on individuals' just world beliefs

and its influence on hope, and gender-sensitive approaches for enhancing university students' hope levels in specific life domains.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION ETHICS

The author of the current study declare that the research has not any ethical problem and the research and publication ethics were considered in the study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that the study has not any conflicts of interest with respect to the research and/or authorship

REFERENCES

Arnett, J. J. (2007). Emerging adulthood: What is it, and what is it good for? *Child Development Perspectives*, *1*(2), 68-73.

Chang, E. C. (1998). Hope, problem-solving ability, and coping in a college student population: Some implications for theory and practice. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *54*(7), 953-962.

Cheavens, J. S., Feldman, D. B., Gum, A., Michael, S. T., & Snyder, C. R. (2006). Hope therapy in a community sample: A pilot investigation. *Social Indicators Research*, *77*, 61-78.

Cheavens, J. S., & Ritschel, L. A. (2014). Hope theory. In M. M. Tugade, M. N. Shiota, & L. D. Kirby (Eds.), *Handbook of positive emotions* (pp. 396-410). The Guildford Press.

Correia, I., Batista, M. T., & Lima, M. L. (2009). Does the belief in a just world bring happiness? Causal relationships among belief in a just world, life satisfaction and mood. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, *61*(4), 220-227.

Correia, I., Vala, J., & Aguiar, P. (2007). Victim's innocence, social categorization, and the threat to the belief in a just world. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *43*(1), 31-38.

Çetin Gündüz, H. (2016). 21. yüzyılda Pozitif Psikoloji'nin parçası olarak umut ve Türkiye'deki yeri [Hope as a component of Positive Psychology in 21th century and its place in Turkey]. In A. Demirli Yıldız (Ed.), *Pozitif Psikoloji bağlamında umut: Hedefe giden yolda sınırları aşmak [Hope within the context of Positive Psychology: Overcoming boundaries on the way to the goal]* (pp. 41-66). Nobel Publishing.

Dalbert, C. (1999). The world is more just for me than generally: About the Personal Belief in a Just World Scale's validity. *Social Justice Research*, *12*, 79-98.

Dzuka, J., & Dalbert, C. (2002). Mental health and personality of Slovak unemployed adolescents: The impact of belief in a just world. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *32*, 732-757.

Feldman, D. B., & Dreher, D. E. (2012). Can hope be changed in 90 minutes? Testing the efficacy of a single-session goal-pursuit intervention for college students. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *13*, 745-759.

Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. Sage Publishing.

Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012*). Internal validity. How to design and evaluate research in education*. McGraw-Hill.

Göregenli, M. (2003). *Şiddet, kötü muamele ve işkenceye ilişkin değerlendirmeler, tutumlar ve deneyimler [Evaluations, attitudes, and experiences regarding violence, maltreatment and torture].* İzmir Barosu Yayınları [Publication of İzmir Bar Association].

Gültekin, F. (2001). Lise öğrencilerinin kendini açma davranışlarının kimlik gelişim düzeyleri açısından incelenmesi [Investigation of high school students' self-disclosure attitudes according to their identity development levels]. *Uludağ Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 14*(1), 231-241.

Gündoğdu, R. (2010). Farklı puan türüne göre eğitim fakültesine gelen öğrencilerin kendini açma davranışlarının incelenmesi [Investigation of self-disclosure behaviors of students from different points of species at faculty of education]. *Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi, 7*(2), 748-777.

Hafer, C. L. (2000). Investment in long-term goals and commitment to just means drive the need to believe in a just world. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*, 1059-1073.

Hafer, C. L., & Gosse, L. (2011). Predicting alternative strategies for preserving a belief in a just world: The case of repressive coping style. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 41*, 730-739.

İmamoğlu, E. O. (2003). Individuation and relatedness: Not opposing but distinct and complementary. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs, 129*, 367-402.

İmamoğlu, E. O., & İmamoğlu, V. (1992). Life situations and attitudes of the Turkish elderly toward institutional living within a cross-cultural perspective. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences, 47*, 102-108.

Kamble, S. V, & Dalbert, C. (2012). Belief in a just world and wellbeing in Indian schools. *International Journal of Psychology, 47*(4), 269-278.

Kemer, G. & Atik, G. (2005). Kırsal kesimde ve kent merkezinde okuyan lise öğrencilerinin umut düzeylerinin aileden algılanan sosyal destek düzeyine göre karşılaştırılması [Comparing the level of hope of high school students in rural and urban centers to the perceived level of social support from the family], *M.Ü. Atatürk Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi, 21*, 161-168.

Kemer, G. & Atik, G. (2012). Hope and social support in high school students from urban and rural areas of Ankara, Turkey. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 13*, 901-911.

Kline, R. B. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*. The Guildford Press.

Knox, D., Vail-Smith, K., & Zusman, M. (2007). The lonely college male. *International Journal of Men's Health, 6*(3), 273-279.

Korkut, F. (2005). Yetişkinlere yönelik iletişim becerileri eğitimi [Communication skills training program for adults]. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education, 28*, 143-149.

Küsgülü, Ü. (2014). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin mutluluk, umut ve narsisizm düzeylerinin incelenmesi [Investigating the levels of happiness, hope, and narcissism of university students].* (Unpublished master's thesis). Gaziosmanpaşa University, Tokat, Turkey.

Lerner, M. J. (1980). *The belief in a just world: A fundamental delusion*. Plenum Press.

Lerner, M. J., & Miller, D. T. (1978). Just world research and the attribution process: Looking back and ahead. *Psychological Bulletin, 85*(5), 1030-1051.

Lipkus, I. M., Dalbert, C., & Siegler, I. C. (1996). The importance of distinguishing the belief in a just world for self versus for others: Implications for psychological well-being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 22*(7), 666–677.

Mutlu, D. (2017). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin özel yaşam alanlarına yönelik umut düzeyleri ile stresle başa çıkma tutumları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi [The relationship between the level of hope of university students and their attitudes to cope with stress in terms of their private living areas].* (Unpublished master's thesis). Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkey.

Otto, K., & Dalbert, C. (2005). Belief in a just world and its functions for young prisoners. *Journal of Research in Personality, 39*(6), 559-573.

Özbay, Y., Terzi, Ş., & Aydoğan, D. (2011). Özel Yaşam Alanı Umut Ölçeğinin geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması [Validity and relability study of Domain Specific Hope Scale]. XI. Ulusal Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik Kongresi, İzmir, Turkey.

Shorey, H. S., Roberts, C. R., & Huprich, S. K. (2012). The roles of domain specific hope and depressive personality in predicting depressive symptoms. *Personality and Mental Health, 6*(3), 255-265.

Snyder, C. R. (1994). *The psychology of hope: You can get there from here.* Free Press.

Snyder, C. R. (2000). *Handbook of hope: Theory, measures, and applications.* Academic Press.

Snyder, C. R. (2002). Hope theory: Rainbows in the mind. *Psychological Inquiry, 13*, 249-275.

Snyder, C. R., Cheavens, J., & Sympson, S. C. (1997). Hope: An individual motive for social commerce. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 1*, 107-118.

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigmon, S. T., et al. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*(4), 570-585.

Snyder, C. R., Sympson, S. C., Ybasco, F. C., Borders, T. F., Babyak, M. A., & Higgins, R. L. (1996). Development and validation of the State Hope Scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2*, 321-335.

Sympson, S. C. (1997). *Domain specific hope: An exploratory study.* Unpublished manuscript, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Sympson, S. C. (1999). *Validation of the Domain Specific Hope Scale.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Kansas, USA.

Şakar, Z. (2019). Üniversite öğrencilerinin özel yaşam alanları umut düzeyleri ile çocukluk dönemi mutluluk ve huzur anıları, kişilik özellikleri ve algıladıkları duygusal istismar arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi [Investigation of the relationship between hope levels in the private living areas, childhood happiness and peace memories, personality traits and perceived emotional abuse in university students]. (Unpublished master's thesis) Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey.

Tarhan, S. (2012). *Umudun özyeterlik, algılanan sosyal destek ve kişilik özelliklerinden yordanması [Pedicting hope through self-efficacy, perceived social support and personal characteristics].* (Unpublished master's thesis). Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey.

Tarhan, S., & Bacanlı, H. (2016). İlkokuldan üniversiteye umut kavramının tanımlanması üzerine nitel bir çalışma [A qualitative study on defining the concept of hope from primary school to university]. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education, 4*(2), 86-112.

Türkmen, M., & Demirli, A. (2011). The predictive value of gender, perceived parenting styles and loneliness in determining students' dispositional and state hope level. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, 7*(2), 347-363.

Uğur, D. (2007). *Dünyayı adil algılama ve geleceğe dair umut/umutsuzluk: Depresyon tanısı alan ve almayan kişilerde adil dünya inancı [Perceiving the world just and hope/hopelessness for future: Belief in a just*

world among individuals with and without depression diagnosis]. (Unpublished master's thesis). Mersin University, Mersin, Turkey.

Usta, F. (2013). *Üniversite öğrencilerinin psikolojik iyi olma ve umut düzeyleri arasındaki ilişki [The relation between psychological well-being and hope level considering college students].* (Unpublished master's thesis). Sakarya University, Sakarya, Turkey.

Xie, X., Liu, H., & Gan, Y. (2011). Belief in a just world when encountering the 5/12 Wenchuan earthquake. *Environment and Behavior, 43*(4), 566-586.

Yıldız Akyol, E., & Işık, Ş. (2018). Romantik ilişkilerde umut: Bağlanma stilleri ve olumlu-olumsuz duygu [Hope in romantic relations: Attachment styles and positive-negative affect introduction]. *Journal of Turkish Educational Sciences, 16*(2), 139-156.