

Positive Prevention Theory: The Investigation of Parenting Styles as A Predictor of Optimism*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between perceived parenting styles and optimism levels among university students. This study has been conducted with 513 university students from five different universities in Turkey. The results of the research demonstrate that the authoritative/democratic parenting style is a positive predictor of optimism while authoritarian parenting style is a negative predictor of optimism. Protective parenting style is found not to be a predictor of optimism. In addition, the results reveal that male students perceive their parents as more authoritarian and protective and the girl students are found to be more optimistic than male students. Furthermore, the mother education level is found not to be a predictor of optimism, however the secondary school graduate father's children are found to be more optimistic than university graduate /post graduate father's children. The current study aims to make a contribution to the future research on parenting styles and optimism levels in Turkey.

Key Words

Parenting styles • Optimism • University students

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With the beginning of the industrial revolution, there has become many changes in social life of individuals. From industrialization period up to this century, the massive transformation in family types, education styles, transportation vehicles, communication channels, social relations and economic developments has continued with its fastest rate (Yılmaz, 2018; Çelenoğlu, 2018). With the rapid developments in technology, the shift from man power to mechanisation is now preparing to leave its place to artificial intelligence (Minsky, 2007). Today, the term artificial intelligence has started to take its place in our daily lives (Yılmaz, 2018) and there are scientific research over this issue (Jiang, Jiang, Zhi, Dong, Li, Ma, Wang, Dong, Shen, & Wang, 2017; McArthur, Lewis, & Bishary, 2005; Minsky, 2007; Russell & Norvig, 2016). The vagueness of the future has duplicated its obscurity with the new technological developments and these rapid changes related to the future establish stress and anxiety for the new generations (Çelenoğlu, 2018; Yılmaz, 2018).

Children fall into depression in younger ages and higher rates every year (Shatte, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1999). In order to cope and overcome the stresses of the new developments in the future technologies, the individuals and society need strong optimistic world view in order to tackle with the rapid changes in life. The definition of optimism is broadly the positive expectancy for the future (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstorm, 2010). Optimism is one of the dynamics of positive psychology which is related to constructive cognitions about the future (Seligman, 2002). Studies related to anxiety and stress reveal that optimistic people develop effective coping strategies and they are effective copers (Carver et al., 2010; Nes & Segerstorm, 2006).

Güleri (1998)'s study demonstrates that the Turkish youth's pessimism levels (56.0%) are higher than optimism levels (44.0%). Seligman (2002) claims that in this new century, the prevention of unwanted outcomes will be established by creating a science of human resilience which its duty will be understanding and learning the ways how to foster these qualities in young people. This explanation opens new paths to the understanding of psychology and it forms a base for our study. In the light of positive prevention theory, we aim to seek the core process of the optimal functioning for optimism.

According to psychoanalytic and psychosocial theory, every adult behaviour and trait roots back to childhood experiences (Freud & Bonaparte, 1954; Erikson, 1963, 1968). As optimism is a dynamic of positive psychology, our aim is to take precautions and to nourish optimism and examine which parenting style leads to more optimistic individuals. The effects of parenting styles has been investigated in many areas like personality and moral development (Loudová & Lasek, 2015), emotion regulation (Manzeske & Stright, 2009), problem behaviour (Aunola, & Nurmi, 2005), academic achievement (Spera, 2005), overweight status of child (Rhee, Lumeng, Appugliese, Kaciroti, & Bradley, 2006), substance use (Cohen & Rice, 1997), anxiety (Van Gastel, Legerstee, & Ferdinand 2009; Wolfradt, Hempel, & Miles, 2003), addiction (Çevik & Çelikkaleli, 2010), coping behaviour and depersonalization (Wolfradt et al., 2003), these examples could be widened as the examples are numerous. The results demonstrate the significance of parental effect on future behaviour. Many parents despite the best intentions, unwittingly undermine their children's capacity for optimism and positive thinking by choosing the incorrect attitudes in their parenting. The most effective parenting styles and practices should be known by parents, in order to prepare children for the challenges of the future's world.

Our investigation of which parental style facilitates optimism, is an effort to contribute to the flourishing process. The answer to the question "which parenting style can best nourish the child's optimism potentials? is

sought in this study. Building buffering strengths, nourishing positive functioning of optimism will lead to happier, healthier individuals and in the broader level to healthier generations (Seligman, 2002).

Seligman (2002) gives the definition of the objectives of positive psychology as prevention and taking precautions of misbehaviour by flourishing positive strengths and directing the individual to the right behaviour. Until the 90's, the science of psychology concentrated on the negative sides and behaviours of human beings, aiming to find solutions to the problems individuals face; while neglecting the positive emotions of psychology like happiness, well-being and optimism (Alex Linley et al., 2006; Öztürk & Çetinkaya, 2015). In the recent years, the field of psychology has changed its tendency to the positive sides of human being, investigating peace and positive human attitudes rather than negative attitudes like aggression, hatred, hopelessness and depression (Güloğlu, 2015).

Positive psychology's aim is to find the ways to strengthen the positive sides and seek ways to understand the facilitating factors for optimal functioning of human behaviour while preventing the negative outcomes (Seligman, 2002). Consistently, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) makes the definition of positive psychology as preventing and taking precautions of misbehaviour by flourishing positive strengths and directing the individual to the right behaviour.

Positive psychology serves a central role as every individual is interested in factors that are best for their happiness, health and fulfillment and which factors could best fulfill their psychological needs (Alex Linley et al., 2006). According to Positive Prevention Theory (Seligman, 2002), there are human strengths that act as buffers against mental illnesses; these are traits of positive psychology like optimism, interpersonal skill, faith, hope, honesty and perseverance if to name several.

As mentioned earlier, Seligman (2002) claims that the prevention of unwanted outcomes will be established by creating a knowledge of wisdom on human strength with the mission to understand and learn how to nourish these qualities in young people. This explanation opens new paths to the understanding of the science of psychology and it forms a base for our study. In the light of positive prevention theory, we aim to seek the core process of the optimal functioning for optimism. Our investigation of which parental style facilitates optimism, is an effort to contribute to the flourishing process. The answer to the question "which parenting style can best nourish the child's optimism potentials?" is sought in this study. Building buffering strengths, nourishing positive functioning of optimism will lead to happier, healthier individuals and in the broader level to healthier generations (Seligman, 2002).

Method

Research Design

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship among university students' perceived parenting styles and their optimism levels. Our study is a quantitative study and a non-experimental design is used. In this study, relational survey model which is a subtype of general survey model has been applied. Relational survey is a research model that is conducted in order to define the relationship between two or more variables, and to obtain clues related to cause and effect relationships (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2008).

Study Group

The sample of this study is university students in Turkey. 513 college students from five different universities in Turkey have been participated in the present study. These universities are Istanbul Sebahattin Zaim University, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (AYBU), Konya Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya Selçuk University and Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University. The students that have participated in the study Preparation Department, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Health Sciences. The grades vary from English preparation class to 4th grade and postgraduate students. The students have been chosen by cluster random sampling technique.

Table 1

Distribution of Students by the University Type

Name of University	N	Percent
Necmettin Erbakan	106	20,7
Selçuk	112	21,8
Karaman Mehmet Bey	100	19,5
İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim	105	20,5
Yıldırım Beyazıt	90	17,5
Total	513	100,0

Data Collection Tools

In order to measure perceived parenting styles and optimism levels, two different pencil and paper tests has been conducted. In addition, the students have been asked to fill in a informed consent form and also a form that demands demographic variables. “Parents’ Attitude Scale” has been used in order to measure perceived parenting styles and “Optimism Scale” to measure optimism.

Parents Attitude Scale. To measure students’ perceived parenting styles “Parents Attitude Scale” (Anne Baba Tutum Ölçeği- ABTÖ) has been conducted. “Parents Attitude Scale” is a scale developed by [Kuzgun and Eldeleklioglu \(2005\)](#) in order to evaluate university students’ perceived parenting attitudes.

The test consists of 40 statements which contains three sub-scales: 15 of the statements evaluates authoritative/democratic parenting attitude and the other 15 evaluates protective/demanding parenting attitude and 10 of the statements evaluate authoritarian parenting attitudes. The statements which refer to the warm, supportive and welcoming approaches of the parent measures the authoritative/democratic parenting attitude subscales; while, the statements which refer to the overprotective and strictive attitudes of the parents measures the protective/demanding parenting attitude sub-scale; on the other hand, the statements which refer to the strict, harsh, punitive approach of the parent measures authoritarian parenting attitudes sub-scale. The scale is a 5-point Likert type scale, which is graded as: 1=nonrelevant; 2=slightly relevant; 3=partially relevant; 4=very relevant; 5=totally relevant.

For determining reliability of the scale, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each subscale. The internal consistency reliabilities were .90 for authoritative/democratic, .84 for protective-demanding and .77 for authoritarian parenting styles. For the validity of the scale, Confirmatory Factor Analysis has been conducted.

The results show that the structure has been confirmed. It has been seen that the factor loads obtained from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis varies between .30 and .77. The factor loads being greater than .30 shows the sufficiency of the factor loads of the statements (Seçer, 2015). The analysis reveal the following results: $\chi^2 /sd = 2.45$, RMSEA= 0.07, SRMR=0.06, NFI =0.90, CFI= 0.95, GFI=0.92, AGFI=0.89, TLI = 0.91. We see that the results has the desired level of fit criteria, in general. All the paths in the tested model are significant in the 0.001 level.

Optimism Scale. To measure students' optimism levels, "Optimism Scale" has been conducted to the students. The scale was developed by Balcı and Yılmaz (2002) to evaluate university students' optimism levels. The scale is a 4-point Likert type scale which has 24 statements at total. The students have been asked to choose one of the four statements: (1) Definitely not like me, (2) Not like me (3) Sometimes like me (4) Definitely like me. The lowest point recieved from the scale could be 24 and the highest 96 points. High points refer to individual's optimism. The 1st, 6th, 8th, 9th and 11th statements have been reverse-coded.

In order to measure the scale's reliability Cronbach Alpha coefficients has been calculated. The results of Cronbach Alpha coefficients are .84 . For the validity of the scale, Confirmatory Factor Analysis has been conducted. The results show that the structure has been confirmed. It has been seen that the factor loads obtained from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis varies between .292 and .713. The analysis reveal the following results: $\chi^2 /sd = 3.17$, RMSEA= 0.06, SRMR=0.05, NFI =0.94, CFI= 0.96, GFI=0.92, AGFI=0.90, TLI = 0.92. It has been seen that the results has the desired level.

Procedure

After obtaining the AYBU ethics committee's approval permission from Mrs. Eldeleklioğlu and Mrs. Balcı has been obtained to use their scale in our study. Later, a petition has been written to the rectorates of the universities to obtain permission to administer the instruments to the students and the approval has been recieved from the universities. To measure students' percieved parenting styles "Parents Attitude Scale" and to measure students' optimism levels "Optimism Scale" has been applied to the students. In addition, the students filled in an informed consent form and a demographic variables form. The survey forms were conducted in their regular class hour by either their lecturer or the researcher. The approximate time of the survey took about 5-10 minutes. of fit criteria, in general. All the paths in the tested model are significant in the 0.001 level.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with the help of SPSS18 programme. To make a general evaluation about the items in the demographic variables form, the descriptive statistics (e.g. frequency, percentages etc.) were calculated. To examine the correlational relationship between percieved parenting styles and optimism levels correlational analyses have been applied. To understand the predictors of optimism, multiple regression analysis has been utilized. To learn the significance of the differences in gender variable t-tests have been applied. The N, x, Ss values of the point averages of the university students' optimism levels have been calculated related to the variable of mother and father education level. Also ANOVA and Scheffe test has been applied in order to reveal the significance of differentiation of optimism and mother-father education level variable.

Findings

Data was investigated. A total of 513 participants were examined. In this chapter, first of all, the demographic information has been given. Later, the t-test results of the gender variable, the X scores and the ANOVA results related to mother/father education level, the correlational relationship and regression results have been analysed.

Demographic Characteristic of Participants

Based on the demographic form, university type, faculty type, socio-economic status, mother-father education level, residential status and birth order were determined. Regarding the age of the participants ($N=513$), the mean age was 20.5 (range=18-42). Regarding the gender, 161 participants were males (31.4%), 352 participants were females (68.6%). A high majority of the participants (78.2%) defined their socioeconomic status as medium. The %71.7 of the participants ($N=513$) reported that the longest place they have dwelt had been Cities/Metropolis, %20.3 county/towns and %7.8 villages. We could see that the participants show almost an equal distribution in their university types (see Table.1). The highest participation is from Faculty of Education (39.8%), the Faculty of Social Sciences (27.5%) follows next.

When the family related factors are examined, the findings demonstrate that 250 of the participants' mothers were elementary school graduate mothers (48.7%) which has the highest rate, with 98 participant having secondary school graduate mothers (19.1%) following next. However in the case of fathers, the highest rate is of elementary school graduate fathers (31.2%), the following highest rate belongs to university or post-graduate fathers (26.9%). The participants are mainly the first (39.2%) or second (29.6%) child of their family.

As our study's main focus is the relationship of parenting style and optimism, only the percentages of demographic and family related factors' are given. Their effects on parenting styles and optimism are not included into this study.

Analysis for Gender Variable

First of all, the analyses of gender variable related to parenting styles has been calculated. The table below gives information about the data:

Table 2

The T test Scores Related to the Parenting Styles Sub-scale points for the Gender Variable

	Gender	N	\bar{X}	S.S	T	P
Democratic Attitude	Male	137	53.54	12.45	-1.768	.078
	Female	352	55.75	12.33		
Protective Attitude	Male	137	38.29	10.77	3.042	.002*
	Female	352	35.02	10.66		
Authoritarian Attitude	Male	137	24.29	7.98	3.924	.000*
	Female	352	21.41	7.02		

* $p < .05$

When Table 2 is examined, it has been seen that there is no significant differentiation between male and female students' perceived democratic attitude. However, for perceived protective attitude sub-scale points a significant differentiation has been encountered ($p < .05$). The male students' perceived protective attitude sub-

scale points ($X=38.29$) are higher than the female students' points ($X= 35.02$). Similarly, a significant differentiation has been encountered for authoritarian attitude sub-scale as well ($p < .05$). The average points ($X= 24.29$) male students received from the authoritarian attitude sub-scale are higher than the female students' points ($X= 21.41$). Table.3 gives information about the optimism scores related to gender. The analyses are as follows.

Table 3

The T-test Results for Optimism Scale Points for Gender Variable

	Gender	N	\bar{X}	S.S	T	P
Optimism Scale	Male	137	73.91	11.36	-2.466	.017*
	Female	352	76.34	9.09		

* $p < .05$

In Table.3, a significant differentiation has been found between male and female university students' optimism scale scores ($p < .05$). The female students' average optimism scale points ($X=76,43$), are higher than male students' average optimism scale points.

Analysis for Mother Education Level Variable

Below the analyses of X values and the the ANOVA results related to mother education level are investigated. The tables show the differentiation of the variables.

Table 4

The n, \bar{X} , Ss Values of the Point Averages that the University Students Received from the Optimism Scale Related to the Mother's Education Level Variable

	Education Status	n	\bar{X}	Ss
Optimism	Illiterate	25	75.36	8.67
	Elementary	250	76.53	8.99
	Secondary	99	75.53	9.79
	High School	71	75.39	9.43
	University	67	73.05	12.05

In Table 4., when the university students' optimism scale average points are considered, the highest mean belongs to students whose mothers are elementary school graduate ($X =76.53$) Mothers who are secondary school graduate ($X=75.53$), mothers who are high school graduate ($X =75.39$), mothers who are illiterate ($X =75.36$), mothers who have graduated from university or who are post-graduate($X=73.05$) follow the rank respectively.

Table 5

The ANOVA Results of University Students' Optimism Scale Mean Scores According to Mothers' Education Level Variable

		Source	SS	df	F	P
Optimism	Inter-group	653.704	4	163.426	1.730	.142
	In-group	47797.06	506	94.461		
	Total	48450.77	510			

When Table 5. is examined, it could be determined that there is no significant difference between optimism level and mothers' education level variable.

Analysis for Father Education Level Variable

The following analyses demonstrate the X values and the the ANOVA results related to mother education level. The tables show the differentiation of the variables.

Table 6

The n, X, Ss Values of the Point Averages that the University Students Recieved from the Optimism Scale Related to the Father's Education Level Variable

	Education Status	n	\bar{X}	Ss
Optimism	Illiterate	11	69.54	10.81
	Elementary	160	75.81	8.61
	Secondary	89	78.28	7.95
	High School	109	76.02	8.59
	University	138	73.91	11.90

When the Table 6. is examined, we could see that the highest optimism score mean was recieved by secondary school graduate fathers ($X = 78.28$). Fathers who are high school graduate ($X = 76.02$), fathers who are elementary school graduate ($X = 75.81$), fathers who have graduated from university or who are post-graduate ($X = 73.91$) and fathers who are illiterate ($X = 69.54$) followed next.

Table 7

The ANOVA Results of University Students' Optimism Scale Mean Scores According to Fathers' Education Level Variable

	Source	KT	Sd	KO	F	P	Significant Difference
Optimism	Inter-group	1406.204	4	365.498	3.993	.003*	Sec.School Graduate >
	In-group	45946.95	502	91.528			Univ./Post-Graduate
	Total	47408.95	506				

* $p < .05$

When the Table 7. is examined, the results reveal that the university students' optimism points have a significant relationship with the fathers' education level variable. The Schefee test has been conducted in order to look at the source of the differentiation. As a result, the test revealed that secondary school graduate fathers

($X=78.28$) have received significantly higher optimism points than the fathers who have graduated from university or who are post-graduate ($X=73.91$).

The Correlational Analyses of Perceived Parenting Attitudes and Optimism Scores

The main focus of this study was to investigate the relationship of perceived parenting styles and optimism. The following table demonstrates the relationship of these variables.

Table 8

The Correlation between University Students' Perceived Parenting Attitudes and Optimism Scores

	1	2	3	4
1.Authoritative/democratic	-	-.69**	-.31**	.43**
2.Protective		-	.32**	-.26**
3.Authoritarian			-	-.23**
4.Optimism				-

$p < .01$

When the correlation table is examined, there is a significant and positive relationship ($p < .01$) between university students' optimism scale points and authoritative/democratic attitude sub-scale points. On the other hand, there is a significant but negative relationship ($p < .01$) between university students' optimism scale points and protective and authoritarian attitude sub-scale points.

The Regression Analysis of Perceived Parenting Attitudes and Optimism Scores

To understand the predictors of optimism, multiple regression analysis has been conducted. The table below reveals the predictors of optimism:

Table 9

Regression Analysis Results Related to University Students' Perceived Parenting Attitudes and Optimism Scores

Variable	B	SH _B	β	T	p
Democratic Attitude	.186	.042	.235	4.418	.00
Protective Attitude	-.044	-.048	-.048	-.901	.368
Authoritarian Attitude	-.192	.084	-.144	-2.268	.024

R = .372 R² = .13
F = 27.167 p = .00***

When multiple regression analysis results are examined related to predict university students' optimism scores, it has been seen that democratic attitude and authoritarian attitude sub-scales significantly predict the optimism levels. When the t-tests scores related to the significance of the regression coefficients are examined, it has been seen that democratic attitude sub-scale is a significant predictor.

Discussion

The significance of childraising attitudes and parenting styles has been emphasized in the present study. The literature indicates that childhood is an important period of life. It is the period which the caregivers/parents' feedbacks are essential, as they are stored in the subconscious and which these accumulations shape behaviour by time (Yavuzer, 2014). While children are growing up, they are only under the shelter of their caregivers and they

have not encountered nor faced the difficulties of life yet. The thing that directs their thoughts and feelings is the feedback that they receive from their parents (Tarhan, 2015).

The outcomes of parenting mostly shows itself in the age of university period. University life is a time of great transition, where young adults have the chance to explore their independence and begin to individuate from their parents' influence. However, the effect of one's reared parenting style continues even after the child has left home (Griess, 2010; Yalm, 2007). That influence can affect the overall development of a student's ability, emotion, perception, worldview and lifestyle (Griess, 2010). Ben-Zur (2003) suggests that optimism in adolescents is established early in life.

The literature on the effects of parenting styles on future behaviour has shown that parents attitudes are an important predictor for forming personality characteristics and personality traits. Positive prevention theory is the starting point of this study as we aimed to reveal the predicting parental factors for nourishing optimism and ways to prevent pessimistic perspective. This study could indicate us that democratic parenting style is an appropriate parenting style for gaining an optimistic worldview. As mentioned earlier, what matters for an optimistic outlook is the explanatory style chosen (Gillham et al., 2001). The way individuals define and explain problems forms the individuals' optimistic or pessimistic worldview. These explanations are formed with the entity of self- efficacy or the lack of it. The preliminary efficacy experiences of a child is centered in the family. According to Bandura (1994), responsive parents create opportunities for efficacious actions by providing an enriched physical environment and allow freedom of movement for exploration; they encourage their children about their capabilities, thus, expand their child's self-knowledge of what they can and cannot do. The child who codes the self-perceptions related to self-efficacy, creates her/his optimistic or pessimistic explanatory style upon unpleasant events.

Parenting Styles and Optimism

The main purpose of this study was to put forward which parenting style is a predictor of higher optimism. The results indicate that the authoritative/democratic parenting style is a significant predictor of high optimism levels. The authoritarian parenting style is a significant predictor however it has a negative relationship with optimism. In other words, as the parents' authoritarian attitude increases, the offsprings' optimism level decreases. The results indicate that the protective parenting style is not a significant predictor of optimism.

Results indicated that when students perceive that they are parented under the authoritative/democratic parenting style, they are more likely to develop high levels of optimism than students who perceive they are raised through an authoritarian parenting style. Griess's (2010) findings supports our research. Although Griess's (2010) study measures authoritative, authoritarian, permissive parenting style; her results show consistency with our study as she has found that perceived authoritative/democratic parenting style contributes to higher levels of optimism than the authoritarian parenting style. Another study which shows similarity to our study is Weber, Brandenburg and Viezzer (2003)'s study. Although their study sample are children, their study supports our study as well. Weber et al.(2003) measured the relationship of authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful parenting style on optimism levels. Weber et al.(2003)'s study showed that authoritative/democratic parents were associated to higher optimism scores and to lower hopelessness scores. Weber et al. (2003) stated that children reared by authoritative/democratic parenting styles are more prepared to face adversities in an optimistic way and that parents have an important role on the learning processes of children's optimism. Baldwin

[et al. \(2007\)](#) has found that perceived authoritative/democratic parenting style by mother or father was associated with greater optimism in late adolescence whereas authoritarian parenting style was not found as a predictor. Also [Cenk and Demir \(2016\)](#)'s study shows consistency with the related research. [Cenk and Demir \(2016\)](#)'s study revealed that the adolescents who characterised their parents' parenting style as authoritative/democratic or permissive had higher levels of optimism than adolescents who perceived their parents as neglectful and authoritarian. Moreover, [Jackson et al. \(2005\)](#) associated authoritative/democratic parenting with higher self-esteem and lower depression, indicating that optimism may be a central mechanism by which authoritative/democratic parenting facilitates self-esteem, and it may be one of the several mechanisms by which it prevents depression.

As mentioned earlier authoritative/democratic parenting offers moderate control and high autonomy in parenting and authoritarian parenting offers high control and low autonomy; relatedly [Hasan and Power \(2002\)](#)'s results shows that mothers who controlled their children moderately had the most optimistic children, however those who allowed their children little autonomy in problem solving had the highest levels of depressive symptoms in their children. These findings are consistent with [Baumrind \(1966\)](#) theory that authoritative/democratic parenting is the convenient parenting style for raising children with positive attitudes. [Baumrind's \(1966\)](#) authoritative parenting style creates a psychologically positive environment to flourish the child's potentials and talents by the parents' warm and welcoming attitudes. The sustained democratic environment enables the child to express himself freely. The child that feels him/herself important has the tendency to think and behave positively and thus open to new and innovative ideas.

[Baumrind \(1966\)](#) defines the authoritative/democratic parents as enabling and flexible; using reasonable explanations for their demands, not forcing but supervising the child and having clear, logical expectancies for their demands. Related to this definition, we could infer that the parent's logical and reasonable expectancies and positive attitudes could be forming an atmosphere for the child to develop positive and reasonable expectancies for the future. Contrarily, [Baumrind \(1966\)](#) defines authoritarian parents as rigid, autocratic and as obedience-seekers. They demand everything done exactly as they have said so and no explanation is made to the child about the reason for their demands, they try to shape the child's behaviours in strict standards with high parental control. The authoritarian parents show lack of warmth and low parental support and conduct punishments. In this circumstances, the low responsiveness and high demandingness of the authoritarian parents form a base for developing helplessness of the child. The child who faces low warmth could be feeling suppressed and worthless thinking that nothing he/she do matters thus this high pressure could be effecting future expectancies as he/she could not be effective in the future outcome.

[Peterson and Bossio \(2001\)](#) relates optimism with self-efficacy and they state that self-efficacy is a central mediator in developing optimism. In the authoritarian style, the child is scolded, rejected and high obedience is sought for the parents' demands. In an environment like this it may not be possible to develop self-efficacy and thus the development of optimism could be destroyed. The same case is valid for protective style. Our results reveal that protective parenting style is not a predictor of optimism. The oppressive, over-powering and overwhelming attitudes of the parents may not be giving the opportunity to the child to develop self-efficacy and thus resulting in negative outcomes for optimism.

In order for the child to be optimist about his/her future, he/she should be confident about his/her potentials. The child should be supported to make him/her become aware about his/her efficiency in effecting the outcomes.

Gender

The study indicates that a differentiation has been observed between optimism and gender. We see that girls' average optimism scale points are higher than male students' average optimism scale points. When we investigate the results related to gender and parenting styles, we see a significant differentiation for authoritarian and protective parenting style. The male students' perceived protective parenting style sub-scale points and perceived authoritarian parenting style sub-scale points are higher than the female students' points.

According to our study, results indicate that male students perceive their parents more protective and authoritarian. This could be explained with the males desire for freedom. They could be perceiving their parents' normal level of control and protection as "protective and authoritarian". Also [Talib, Mohamad, and Mamat \(2011\)](#)'s study show that parents conduct authoritarian parenting to boys and authoritative/democratic parenting to girls. [Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, and Flay \(1996\)](#) state that girls are more likely to have authoritative parents than boys. However [İnci and Deniz \(2015\)](#) has not found a statistical significance between father attitudes and gender. Our results demonstrate differences between females and males regarding optimism. Although our study results might be effected from the outnumber of girls in this study, our results show that females' optimism scores are higher than males optimism scores. [Orejudo et al. \(2012\)](#)'s study shows consistency with our study and they state that girls tend to be more optimistic, showing greater communication between peers and mothers. However [Gençoğlu, Alkan, and Koçyiğit \(2014\)](#)'s study shows that there is no differentiation between gender related to optimism levels. Also [Bostancı, Oda, Gebin, and Erail \(2017\)](#) state that gender is not a predictive factor for optimism. In addition, an important point must be emphasized regarding the results related to gender; that is: the study results demonstrate that male students perceive their parents more protective and authoritarian. Consistently males optimism scores are found to be lower than female scores. This relation is an important point to be emphasized because the results related to gender verify that authoritarian and protective parenting are negative predictors of optimism.

The gender's predictive role for both parenting styles and optimism could also be explained with the parents discriminating approach to their different sex children. The parents may tend to accept girls as obedient and more easy-going so the parents might be approaching their daughters in a more democratic and enabling way; on the other hand the parents may accept boys to be more active, out-going, rebellent and invulnerable so their approach might be tending towards more strict and harsh attitudes . As a result, the gender discriminations in the application of parenting styles might be the influencing factor for the girls to be more optimistic.

Mother and Father Education Level

The study results indicate that there is no differentiation regarding mother education level and optimism; however, there is a differentiation regarding father education level. The study shows that the mother education level is not a predictor of optimism. On the other hand, the results reveal that secondary school graduate father's children are more optimist than university/post graduate fathers' children.

Although high education level is an important factor in raising children ([Bostancı, Oda, Şebin, & Erail, 2017](#)). Our data shows that mother's education level is not a significant predictor of optimism. [Bostancı et al.](#)

(2017)'s study results support our study. They have also found that mother education level is not a predictor. This indicates that no matter what the status of the mother is, it does not effect the child's optimism levels. Moreover, the data shows that father education level is a significant predictor of optimism pointing that secondary school graduate father's children are more optimist than university/post graduate fathers' children. Bostanci et al. (2017)'s study does not support our study as their results demonstrate that as the father's education level increases the optimism levels increases as well.

Our results signify that individual's optimism could not be linked with high education levels. A possibility for high optimism of children of low-educated fathers could be the father's hope and desires for the future. The low-educated father could be attributing his own positive future expectencies to his children. The father's dreams and desires which has not been actualised in the father's own life could be influencing the child about the future. The child could be directed and supported by the father to achieve the goals and dreams of his father. Especially, one of the low-educated father's main goals and desire could be giving his child high education and a high life standard. The children of the fathers who have recieved low education could be optimist about the future that his child could achieve these goals and expect that good things will happen. It could also be inferred that the parents who have low education levels have the opportunity to spend more and effective time with their children, however the high-educated parents might not have the time and chance to get involved with their children because of their workload thus the child might have to spend long hours away from the interaction with their father perhaps spending long hours in educational institutions or in the influence of TV/social media for excessive hours. Another possibility could be that the highly educated fathers' conciousness levels may not be the same with the low educated fathers. The high educated father could be more aware of the difficulties that await the child in the future and thus might make more realistic inferences and assumptions whilst reflecting these worries to his child.

Positive Prevention for the Future

From all the literature review, we see that optimism is an important criteria for coping with distress. A great number of research has demonstrated that optimists are good-copers with stressors, they show acceptance and quick adjustment to the stressful situations by searching for paths to deal, cope and overcome the distress. They are combatant personalities, not thinking of giving up and searching for ways to deal with problems. In todays world, stress is showing its prevalence day by day. Depending on the developments which showed up with the industrial revolution, the industrialization process starting with the manpower has changed its route to machinization which is a more economic and more systematic working power and now it is revolving into a new transformation which is robot revolution. The new robotic productions has established a new frame which effects the human's optimistic viewpoint while making us question the place of human in life because of the new problems starting with the employment of robots replacing human's place systematically. The artificial intelligence and the new technologies redesignates the humans' optimistic or pessimistic outlook because of the risk of loosing the job guarentee as well as the anxiety of not being employed to the departments despite high education levels. This state effects all the layers of society, no matter what the individuals' background or education level is, either illiterate or a high level manager, all the social layers in a society have anxiety for the future. It is assumed that there will be many jobs that will occur in the near future which has not been invented yet and many would disappear. The risk of future life does not make it possible to be a long term optimist.

Perhaps there are many domains of life that will go through an diversive change. We have earlier mentioned about the optimism- self-efficacy link. Individuals who do not know what to come across in the future and who do not know their capabilities, limits and self-efficacies for the new circumstances of life will have difficulties in developing positive expectancies for the future. Positive Prevention Theory aims to nourish the positive sides of individuals in order to prevent negative outcomes. For this reason, this study has concentrated on parenting styles which will be buffers for negative future expectancies and nourish the positive thinking of individuals in order to prevent pessimism.

So from the results we could infer that the high warmth and high control of the parents is an essential necessity for the children to know their limits, capabilities, and their efficacies in order to develop optimistic thinking skills. Like many other studies, our study also shows that low warmth and high control is the approach which parents should avoid from, as authoritarian parenting increases the optimism levels decreases. And we see that protective parenting is not a predictor of optimism.

Suggestions

This study offers insight into how perceived parenting styles can influence and contribute to the development of the offspring's optimistic tendencies.

From our research we have inferred that parents have an important role on their child's optimism. Understanding the needs of children and foreseeing the problems beforehand is important for prevention of problems. In order to avoid psychological problems, parents should be informed on how to react to their children's positive and negative emotions, and they should be asked to reflect their warmth, avoid negative parental behaviors like rejection and overprotection while keeping in mind the importance of choosing the appropriate time and strategy in different situations.

It is important to inform parents on how to approach to their children. In a broader level, parent training centers could be established as a state policy by governments. Community health centers could distribute books or booklets informing about the practices of authoritative/democratic parenting in order to teach the conscious of these practices. Pregnant mothers as well as their spouses could be directed by the government to take training programs within the pregnancy period. Moreover, public service ads on TV could be prepared to influence parents for a parenting that fulfills the emotional, psychological and physical needs of their children. For raising happier and more optimist individuals psychologists and psychological counselors could put more emphasis on the importance of child raising attitudes in their counselee seances. Also teachers could be effective in the parents' attitudes. Teachers could set meetings with the parents, orienting them by raising awareness to the importance of the parents' attitudes toward their children.

For a positive future and for a positive outlook, we hope that this study will make a contribution for the literature related to both parenting and optimism. For further research, it would be better if a longitudinal and observational study will be conducted. As a long time research could better show us the details of the relationship between the individual's parents' attitudes and the individual's optimism levels from childhood till their adulthood.

Ethic Approval

I declare that the research was conducted in accordance with the ethical standarts of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standarts. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. There is no conflict of interest in the research. The study was approved with the Meeting Date and Number 10.05.2017/36 by the Social and Human Sciences Ethic Committee of Yildirim Beyazit University. The author received no financial support for the authorship, research and publication of this article.

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