

OPTIMISM AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING FROM A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

POZİTİF PSİKOLOJİ PERSPEKTİFİNDEN İYİMSERLİK VE PSİKOLOJİK İYİ OLUŞ: GELENEKSEL BİR DERLEME

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ABSTRACT

Optimism refers to a positive opinion that good things would happen in the future and that negative situations are temporary or controllable. This concept, which has an important place in positive psychology, is closely related to the concept of psychological well-being, which also has a large influence in this field. Psychological well-being is the ability to reach the best possible level for various aspects in one's world, to strive for it, and to function in different aspects of life. Optimism has functional outcomes in terms of life satisfaction, happiness, positive-negative emotion, social well-being, stress, anxiety, depression, overstimulation, quality of life, and many other related variables. While studies on optimism and psychological well-being occupy an important place in literature, a very few studies exist in Türkiye. The aim of the current study is to compile studies that examine the relationships between these two concepts and present them to the experts in the field. Thus, it is expected that this research will increase the knowledge in the relevant literature and be a resource for researchers in positive psychology and other fields. The studies are discussed in the conclusion section and suggestions for future studies are provided.

Keywords: Optimism, Psychological Well-Being, Positive Psychology, Resilience, Review.

JEL Classification Codes: D91, I31.


ÖZ

İyimserlik, gelecekte iyi şeylerin olacağına ve olumsuz durumların geçici veya kontrol edilebilir olduğuna dair olumlu bir düşüncüyü ifade eder. Pozitif psikolojide önemli bir yere sahip olan bu kavram, yine bu alanda büyük bir etkiye sahip olan psikolojik iyi oluş kavramıyla yakından ilişkilidir. Psikolojik iyi oluş, kişinin dünyasındaki çeşitli yönler için mümkün olan en iyi düzeye ulaşma, bunun için çaba gösterme ve yaşamın farklı yönlerinde işlevde bulunma becerisidir. İyimserliğin; yaşam doyumu, mutluluk, pozitif-negatif duygu, sosyal iyi oluş, stres, kaygı, depresyon, aşırı uyarılmışlık, yaşam kalitesi ve daha birçok ilgili değişken açısından işlevsel sonuçları vardır. İyimserlik ve psikolojik iyi oluş ile ilgili çalışmalar literatürde önemli bir yer tutarken, Türkiye'de çok az sayıda çalışma bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, bu iki kavram arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyen çalışmaları derlemek ve alanın uzmanlarına sunmaktır. Böylece bu araştırmanın ilgili literatürdeki bilgi birikimini artırması ve pozitif psikoloji ve diğer alanlardaki araştırmacılar için bir kaynak olması beklenmektedir. Sonuç bölümünde yapılan çalışmalar tartışılmış ve gelecek çalışmalar için somut önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İyimserlik, Psikolojik İyi Oluş, Pozitif Psikoloji, Psikolojik Sağlamlık, İnceleme.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Amaç ve Kapsam:

Pozitif psikoloji alanında yapılan birçok çalışma son yıllarda araştırmacıların ilgisini çekmektedir. Bu çalışma iyimserlik ve psikolojik iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkiyi ve ilgili çalışmaları daha derinlemesine inceleyecektir. Türkiye'de bu iki kavram arasındaki ilişkiyi doğrudan inceleyen çok az çalışma bulunmaktadır (Cinalioğlu ve Gazioğlu, 2022; Kardaş vd., 2019; Meral vd., 2021; Odacı vd., 2021). Bu nedenle bu çalışma hem bu iki kavram üzerine bir derleme çalışması yapmayı hem de Türkiye'de bu konuda farkındalık yaratmayı amaçlamaktadır. İnsanların iyi oluş düzeylerini iyileştirmek için kavramları ve ilişkilerin özelliklerini iyi anlamak gerekmektedir. Bu çalışmada iyimserlik ve iyi oluş değişkenlerini içeren ve bu kavramlar arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyen çalışmalar sunulmuştur. Literatürde iyimserliğin, iyi oluşta yeri olabilecek önemli değişkenler olan yaşamın genel ya da özel alanlarından memnuniyet (ya da doyum), mutluluk (literatürde bazen öznel iyi oluş da aynı şekilde ele alınmakta ya da onun altında sınıflandırılmaktadır), olumlu-olumsuz duygu, sosyal iyi oluş, stres, kaygı, depresyon, aşırı uyarılmışlık, yaşam kalitesi ve canlılık, öz saygı ve öz yeterlilik açısından işlevsel sonuçlar getirebildiği görülmektedir. İyimserlik ile bu kavramlar arasındaki ilişkilerin ortaya konduğu çalışmaların bir kısmı kesitsel olmakla birlikte, boylamsal veya ileriye dönük çalışmalar, meta-analizler ve sistematik derleme çalışmaları da benzer bulguları desteklemektedir. Çalışma, benzer sonuçların ergenler ve yetişkinler arasında da ortaya çıkabileceğine işaret etmektedir.

Yöntem:

Bu derleme çalışmasında iyimserlik ve psikolojik iyi oluş ilişkisini ve bu ilişkide önemli yere sahip olan kavramlarla alakalı yapılmış olan çalışmalar ele alınmıştır. İyimserlik ve psikolojik iyi oluş kavramlarının yabancı alan yazında önemli bir yer işgal ettiği görülmektedir. Bu araştırmaya ışık tutan temel neden ise ilgili konuda Türkçe literatürün oldukça sınırlı kalmış olmasıdır. Dolayısıyla kaynak eksikliğini giderebilecek bir derleme makalesinin değerli olacağı düşünüldüğü için bu çalışmanın gerçekleştirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla çalışmada bu iki kavram arasındaki karmaşık dinamikleri araştırmak için anlatsal (geleneksel) bir inceleme yaklaşımı kullanılmıştır. İlgili çalışmalar; PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar ve ERIC dâhil olmak üzere başlıca akademik veri tabanlarında yapılan kapsamlı aramalarla tespit edilmiştir. Taramalar yalnızca İngilizce ve Türkçe dillerinde yapılmıştır. Arama terimleri arasında "iyimserlik", "psikolojik iyi oluş", "iyi oluş", "yaşam doyumunu", "ruh sağlığı", "duygusal dayanıklılık" ve "pozitif psikoloji" yer almıştır. Arama yayın tarihine göre sınırlandırılmamış, yalnızca İngilizce veya Türkçe olarak yayınlanan hakemli dergi makaleleri, kitaplar ve kitap bölümleri dahil edilmiştir.

Bulgular:

Literatürde iyimserliğin yaşam memnuniyeti, mutluluk, olumlu-olumsuz duygular, sosyal iyi olma hali, stres, anksiyete, depresyon, aşırı uyarılma, yaşam kalitesi, psikososyal dayanıklılık, travma sonrası büyüme, yaşamda anlam ve canlılık, öz saygı ve öz yeterlilik gibi iyi olma halinde yeri olabilecek diğer önemli değişkenler açısından önemli işlevsel sonuçları bulunmaktadır. Geleceği iyimser beklentilerle tarif eden kişilerin aktif, yaklaşma (Suls ve Fletcher, 1985) ve problem odaklı başa çıkma (Lazarus ve Folkman, 1984) tarzlarını diğerlerine göre daha uygun görüp kullandıkları bilinmektedir. Yine iyimserlik ile sosyal destek (Trunzo ve Pinto, 2003), sosyal açıdan kabul görme (Carver vd., 1994) ve daha az yalnızlık (Nurmi vd., 1996) gibi çeşitli değişkenlerin anlamlı ilişkilere sahip olduğu bilinmektedir. Alarcon vd. (2013) tarafından gerçekleştirilen bir meta-analiz çalışmasında, iyimserlik ile araştırmada kişilik değişkenleri olarak sınıflandırılmış olan olumlu duygu, öz-saygı ve öz-yeterlilik yapıları pozitif, olumsuz duygu ise negatif ilişkili bulunmuştur. He vd. (2013) tarafından yapılan araştırmaya göre iyimserlik, daha yüksek öznel iyi oluş ile hem doğrudan hem de daha fazla dayanıklılığı yordama yoluyla önemli bir ilişki göstermiştir. Prati ve Pietrantoni (2009) tarafından gerçekleştirilen bir meta-analiz çalışmasında iyimserlik, algılanan sosyal destek, sosyal destek arayarak başa çıkma, maneviyat ve kabul yoluyla başa çıkma değişkenlerinin her birisinin travma sonrası büyümeyle pozitif ilişkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ho vd. (2010) tarafından iyimserlik ile birlikte yaşamda anlam ve iyi oluş göstergeleri incelenmiştir. Sonuç olarak ise iyimserlik ve yaşamda anlam değişkenlerinin her birisi yaşam doyumuyla pozitif ve psikososyal sorunlarla korelasyona sahip olmuştur. Taylor vd. (2012) tarafından gerçekleştirilen bir çalışmada annelerin iyimserlikleri ile ekonomik sıkıntı ve depresyon, kaygı gibi içselleştirme belirtileri negatif ilişki göstermiş, ekonomik sıkıntının daha fazla içselleştirme belirtileriyle ilişkisinde iyimserliğin düzenleyici rolü olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma:

Sonuç olarak iyimserlik, psikolojik iyi oluş alanında önemli bir yapı olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Kanıtlar, iyimserliğin teşvik edilmesinin, ergenler ve yaşlı yetişkinler gibi farklı popülasyonlarda ruh sağlığı sonuçlarının iyileşmesine yol açabileceğini göstermektedir. İleride yapılacak çalışmalarda iyimserlikle alakalı deneysel çalışmalar yürütülerek bazen uyum değişkenleri, bazen de iyi oluşun olumsuz tarafı olarak ele alınabilen depresyon, stres, anksiyete gibi değişkenlerde düşüş meydana gelip gelmediği incelenebilir. Ayrıca yine aile, iş sahaları, okul, huzurevi, yetiştirme yurtları vb. birçok farklı grupta iyimserlik düzeylerinin; yaşam kalitesi, yaşam anlamı, motivasyon, işlevsellik, huzur, aidiyet, topluluk hissi, psikolojik sağlamlık, azim, metanet, sabır gibi psikolojik iyi oluşla yakından ilişkili olan kavramlarla gösterdiği ilişkilere bakılabilir. Ruh sağlığı müdahalelerinde iyimserliğe öncelik vererek, insanlarda ve toplumlarda hem dayanıklılığı hem de esenliği arttıracak çalışmalar önceliklenebilir. Türkiye'de bu araştırmalarla birlikte kesitsel araştırmaların da epeyce düşük olduğu dikkate alındığında, yapılacak çalışmaların bu büyük açığı kapatma yolundaki ilk adımlar için değerli olacağı söylenebilir. Son olarak, ruhsal bozuklukları veya sorunları önleme ve oluşan semptom düzeylerini azaltma gibi yönlerden ruh sağlığının iyileştirilmesinde, iyimserlikle alakalı çalışmaların büyük rol oynayacağı düşünülmektedir.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the World Health Organization definition, health refers to holistic physical, mental, and social well-being in addition to the absence of disability or disease (World Health Organisation, 1948, p. 100). Considering this definition together with the studies in the literature on optimism, optimism can have important functions in the context of various indicators in terms of the physical, mental, and social well-being issues in the definition. In other words, optimism deserves great value in terms of human health.

Mental health is increasingly seen to comprise optimism and psychological well-being as crucial elements, particularly in diverse cultural contexts such as Türkiye. An individual's mental health and overall life satisfaction are influenced by a variety of factors, encompassing emotional, social, and psychological aspects, which collectively contribute to this balance. In Türkiye, cultural, social, and economic factors significantly influence how people experience their lives, making it crucial to comprehend the relationship between optimism and mental health to create effective interventions and foster desirable psychological outcomes.

Studies suggest that optimism, which is characterised as a general expectation that positive outcomes will occur, has a substantial impact on mental health and wellbeing. Individuals with an optimistic outlook generally display higher levels of resilience, more effective coping strategies, and greater life satisfaction compared to those with a pessimistic outlook (Bakalım & Karçkay, 2016; Çekici, 2023). In Türkiye, this relationship has significant implications due to societal pressures and challenges affecting mental health. Research has demonstrated that optimism can serve as a protective factor against stress and anxiety, leading to improved mental well-being among people confronting difficult situations (Yeşiltepe et al., 2021). In Türkiye, where strong family bonds and community support are deeply ingrained, optimism's positive impact on mental health is likely to be amplified.

The significance of social support in promoting psychological well-being should not be underestimated. Studies have shown that perceived social support acts as an intermediary in the connection between optimism and psychological well-being (Baş & Firat, 2017; Kasapoğlu & Didin, 2022). In Türkiye, where collective values are widely accepted, social networks serve a vital function in offering emotional and practical aid, consequently bolstering individuals' psychological resilience. Evidence indicates that stronger friendships and social connections are associated with better mental health results, implying that nurturing positive relationships is crucial for boosting psychological well-being (Göçen, 2019; Şimşek, 2024). Community and familial ties play a vital role in the lives of individuals within Turkish society.

Taking into account the significance of life satisfaction on psychological well-being is another crucial consideration. Research indicates that increased life satisfaction is associated with enhanced psychological well-being, implying that people who perceive their lives as fulfilling and significant are more likely to enjoy improved mental health (Anuar, 2022; Weiss et al., 2016). In Türkiye, cultural factors, including religious beliefs and traditional values, can impact life satisfaction and, as a result, psychological well-being. Emphasising family and community in Turkish culture may lead to greater life satisfaction, which in turn boosts psychological well-being (Akkaya-Kalayci et al., 2020; Gökalp et al., 2021). Comprehending these cultural subtleties is vital for creating culturally sensitive programmes aimed at enhancing mental health results.

The connection between optimism and mental health is influenced not only by personal characteristics but also by the wider social and environmental surroundings. Psychological well-being is heavily dependent on factors such as economic stability, access to healthcare, and educational opportunities (Ho, 2015; Yayla & İlgin, 2021). In Türkiye, economic fluctuations and social disparities have the potential to significantly affect people's mental wellbeing, underscoring the necessity for wide-ranging policies to tackle these problems. Studies have found that people experiencing financial difficulties frequently indicate lower levels of emotional wellbeing, highlighting the significance of addressing economic factors in mental health treatments (Ergin et al., 2022; Powell et al., 2023).

In summary, the relationship between optimism and mental health in Türkiye is a complex matter shaped by individual, social, and cultural elements. Comprehending this connection is essential for creating impactful mental health interventions that address the distinct requirements of the Turkish population. Research on optimism and mental wellbeing should continue to investigate its complexities, taking into account the effects of economic and social factors, cultural influences, and the lasting repercussions of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals in Türkiye can enhance their mental health and overall quality of life by cultivating optimism and improving psychological well-being. The main purpose of this article is to compile and present studies in which optimism is analysed in the context of psychological well-being.

2. OPTIMISM AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

2.1. Optimism

Although it is known that there are different approaches to the concept of optimism, two different approaches have been mentioned in the literature (Carver & Scheier, 2002; Forgeard & Seligman, 2012). These categories are dispositional optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985) and learned optimism (Seligman, 2019). When the dispositional optimism approach is taken into consideration, a personality trait that can be more or less understood from its name is identified (Carver et al., 2010). According to Carver and his colleagues, directing positive expectations toward most of the results or events that will occur in life without being specialized is an indicator of optimism, while directing negative expectations is an indicator of pessimism (Carver & Scheier, 2002; Scheier & Carver, 1985). The concept of optimism is related to expectations, and expectations are related to motivation and behavior. Therefore, researchers mention expectancy-value theories for motivation, which have an important place in understanding optimism (and pessimism). In terms of these theories, how a person will act in the context of their behavior and self is shaped in line with the goals or opposite goals expressed as pleasant or unpleasant situations. It is stated that undesirable goals lead to avoidance, desirable situations take their place as valuable goals in the context of motivation, and people construct their behaviors in the context of these goals. However, it is important to understand expectations. The manner in which behaviors and efforts are made is shaped by a belief in the reliability and accessibility of important motivation goals (Carver & Scheier, 2002, p. 231-232). This is a matter of trust, and behaviors are monitored through trust. Trust in optimism involves large-scale trust in the things involved in life (Scheier & Carver, 1992). Optimists believe that the path to the desired situation requires some effort (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010, p. 688). In line with the aforementioned, it is expected that optimists, who have a positive state of holistic expectation, will act in an endeavoring position in most of their encounters, regardless of the circumstances (Scheier & Carver, 1985). On the contrary, optimists think that even if they see things going quite difficult or wrong, they will eventually continue with a pleasant outcome, and these thoughts lead them to positive feelings (Carver & Scheier, 2017, p. 402). Instead, in the eyes of pessimists, the possibility of encountering unpleasant processes is generally high. This belief also leads them to negatively charged feelings. It is well known that optimism contributes to many important issues related to psychological and physical well-being (Carver & Scheier, 2002; Carver et al., 2010). People with a more positive view of the future have better resilience opportunities. For example, when stress is mentioned, personality variables are seen as important aspects that differentiate people in terms of evaluations and coping preferences for these demanding situations (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Nes, 2016). Dispositional optimism is also categorized as a personality variable. When optimists find themselves in stressful conditions, they generally use different means to cope than other people (Carver & Scheier, 2002; Carver et al., 2010; Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Nes, 2016). Many studies have demonstrated that people who describe the future with optimistic expectations use active, approachable (Suls & Fletcher, 1985) and problem-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) styles more appropriately than others (e.g. Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Nes & Segerstrom, 2006). Moreover, avoidance-focused coping is seen as a relatively uninspiring response for optimists and is used more by pessimists. However, emotion-focused coping is used more by optimists in situations where fighting is a futile endeavor. On the other hand, believing that the stressful event is controllable or uncontrollable also changes the ways of coping (Scheier et al., 1986). While optimists react to events that they can control in a way to concentrate on the problem or try to perceive it in a pleasant way, they are more inclined to accept situations against those that they believe are not possible to control. In summary, optimists follow appropriate coping responses to make themselves successful. Considering various studies, it is reasonable to think that optimists are also a good source of social relationships (Carver & Scheier, 2017). For example, optimism and various variables, such as social support (Trunzo & Pinto, 2003), social acceptance (Carver et al., 1994), and less loneliness (Nurmi et al., 1996), have significant relationships. All this information and differences about optimists provide researchers' central ideas about why they are in a stronger position in terms of psychological well-being than other people.

The above-mentioned dispositional optimism is the basis of many optimism studies in the literature, including the studies compiled in this article. In other words, dispositional optimism can be said to have the highest literature volume. However, the concept of learned optimism is related to many variables in relation to various health-related issues, just as dispositional optimism. Therefore, although this article mainly presents studies that focus on dispositional optimism, it would also be useful to mention learnt optimism as well. Although they are not completely unrelated concepts, dispositional optimism and explanatory optimism appear as separate constructs that do not show strong relationships with each other. For example, in a study conducted by Tomakowsky et al.

(2001) with HIV-infected individuals, the relationships between these two concepts of optimism were found to have low strength (with a correlation of $r = .25$). In the optimism approach derived by Seligman and colleagues (Peterson & Seligman, 1984, Seligman, 2019), people's explanations for the situations that have occurred are at the forefront. Learned optimism was explained by Seligman (2019, p. 37) based on the concept of learned helplessness, and the concept should be understood first. Learned helplessness is defined as withdrawal and surrender from actions that can be taken in line with the perception that "the shaping of the results is independent of the efforts you make". Pessimistic explanations provide the necessary nourishment for despair to gain momentum. On the contrary, in line with the adoption of an optimistic form of explanation, a door is opened to eliminate despair. Optimistic explanations have a three-component structure (Seligman, 2019, p. 78). The first component is permanence-stability (Seligman, 2019, p. 79-80). This dimension describes people's perception of the source of challenging situations as fixed or changeable, in other words, their perception of whether they occur continuously or at certain times in terms of temporal context. When it comes to a good situation, optimists attribute it to continuity and view it as being more static over time (Seligman, 2019, p. 81). If things or situations go well, optimists see them as unchangeable and commit to their endeavors with more zeal (Seligman, 2019, p. 82). However, for pessimists, these positive results will come and go. The second explanatory component is prevalence (Seligman, 2019, p. 82-85). Questions such as whether the situation experienced is a product of a certain class of events or whether the effect background is sufficiently inclusive to include all events are related to prevalence. In line with these questions, it can be determined what explanation style is in terms of prevalence. If there are things that go wrong, pessimists include most of these negative situations in the context of the explanations offered. In other words, it is as if everything goes wrong from the pessimists' point of view and influences many other situations. However, from the optimist's point of view, a situation that goes wrong is not everything but only a part of life, that is, the situation itself. When things go well, for optimists they can be generalized to most aspects of life. For pessimists, the situation is unique, and its scope and impact are very limited. In line with optimists and pessimists' explanations for distressing situations, despair permeates either most aspects of life or a narrower range of it. The third explanation component is personalization (Seligman, 2019, p. 87-90). Questions about whether there is a personal stake in the source of experiences or whether issues exist outside the person are related to personalization. With the answers given to these questions, the form of attribution related to personalization performed by the individual emerges. To summarize, according to Seligman (2019, p. 19-20), in the world of pessimists, a- negative, difficult situations are perceived as if they will never end, b- such situations are thought to have a knock-on effect on a wide range of things, and c- the responsibility for the occurrence of negative situations is personal. In the world of optimists, on the contrary, negative situations are not persistent, are more specifically limited to the situation itself, and are caused by other factors rather than the individual. After all, an important point to be emphasized for the learned optimism approach is the view that optimism can be changed in a robust way (Seligman, 2019, p. 129). However, researchers do not consider dispositional optimism as easily changeable and view it as a personality variable (Carver et al., 2010, p. 886).

2.2. Psychological Well-Being

In the psychology literature, it is not possible to see a clear consensus on how well-being is evaluated and handled by researchers. However, there are two different ways of categorizing well-being. These are subjective well-being (Diener, 1984) and psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), the former based on hedonic and eudaimonic philosophical grounds, respectively (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Based on their self-evaluations, people who state that they experience more pleasant and less unpleasant emotions and find their lives more satisfying and derive satisfaction from them are considered to have high subjective well-being (Diener, 1984; Diener, 2000; Diener 2009). In other words, the perception from "one's own" perspective that one is in a desirable position in terms of positive-negative emotions and life satisfaction (which is where the word "subjective" comes from) is a decision criterion in the context of subjective well-being evaluations. The basic logic of psychological well-being is that people can reach the best possible level possible for various issues in their world, struggle to achieve it, and achieve functionality in different aspects of life (Ryff, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2008). According to this approach, well-being cannot be restricted to happiness (Ryff, 1989). In this approach, the evaluation of psychological well-being involves collecting information on 6 different aspects. These are self-acceptance, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, environmental dominance, personal development, and autonomy/autonomy. In conclusion, to give an idea of the ways in which well-being can be evaluated, only two basic classifications, which include a large volume of literature, are mentioned here. However, philosophical literature on the operationalization of well-being and its underpinnings can be a lot more diverse. This article

presents various studies that include many indicators that researchers can consider within the scope of well-being. Thus, it will be possible to obtain holistic information about the relationship between optimism and most of the variables that can be considered within the scope of well-being.

2.3. Studies Related to Optimism and Well-Being

Meta-analyses are considered very informative because they can provide a holistic picture of the general structures that optimism may be related to. Therefore, it would be appropriate to start with a meta-analysis study that includes variables that may be important in the psychological well-being literature. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Alarcon, Bowling, and Khazon (2013), optimism and the constructs of positive emotion, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, which were classified as personality variables in this study, were found to be positively related, while negative emotion was found to be negatively related. Also, life satisfaction, happiness, and general psychological well-being, which are categorized in the context of psychological well-being, were found to be positively related to optimism, while anxiety and depression were found to be negatively related. It is useful to keep in mind that some variables are considered personality variables in various studies but not others. This is because the same variable can be evaluated in different ways by different researchers. For example, emotions may be considered long-term or trait emotions, or they may not be observed in this manner and may be evaluated in different ways. Karademas (2007) examined the relationships between optimism and other variables (such as neuroticism) with the positive and negative aspects of well-being. While the positive aspect of well-being reflects life satisfaction, positive mood, and vitality (or energy), the negative aspect reflects negative stress, unpleasant symptoms, and overstimulation. In the context of correlative relationships, optimism was found to be related to each of the well-being indicators, and in the context of path analysis, optimism predicted more positive and less negative well-being. In another study conducted by Daukantaitė and Zukauskienė (2012) with Swedish and Lithuanian women, it was determined that optimism predicted higher general life satisfaction directly in both groups and indirectly (with more positive emotions and lower negative emotions) only in Swedish women. Again, Uğurlu (2011) examined the relationship between optimism and pessimism with mental (mood in various aspects) and general health (including susceptibility to illness and how personal health is evaluated). It was determined that optimism was associated with and predicted higher mental and general health, whereas pessimism was associated with and predicted lower mental and general health. On the other hand, perceived social support and control have an important mediating function in the relationship between optimism and some indicators of subjective and psychological well-being. In another study (Ferguson & Goodwin, 2010), optimism and psychological well-being, subjective well-being, social support, and perception of control (the last two are mediating variables) were examined. The indicator of subjective well-being was considered positive emotion, and the indicator of psychological well-being was considered purpose in life. The results of this study, in which many models were constructed, demonstrated that optimism indirectly predicts meaning in life and social support through a higher perception of control. On the other hand, it was determined that optimism indirectly predicted higher positive emotions through the perception of greater social support. Similarly, in another study (Trunzo & Pinto, 2003) conducted with people experiencing a challenging illness such as breast cancer, optimism was found to predict less mood disturbance at baseline and 6 months later through emotional and social support.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Psychological Well-Being, Subjective Well-Being, Dispositional Optimism, and Learned Optimism

Aspect	Psychological Well-being	Subjective Well-being	Dispositional Optimism	Learned Optimism
Definition	Refers to the state of being psychologically healthy, with a positive outlook and resilience in the face of adversity.	Refers to the subjective experience of feeling good or bad about oneself and one's circumstances.	Individuals who consistently score high on optimism measures (e.g., optimism scores > 5).	Individuals who have learned to associate optimism with beneficial outcomes (e.g., "optimism is a key factor in my success").
Focus	On the internal state of being, including mental health and resilience.	Focuses on individual experiences and perceptions of happiness or unhappiness.	Examines personality traits and behavioral patterns.	Investigates cognitive processes and attitudes related to optimism (e.g., "optimism is a key factor in my decision-making").

Aspect	Psychological Well-being	Subjective Well-being	Dispositional Optimism	Learned Optimism
Measurement	Comprehensive assessment of psychological well-being, including mental health symptoms, resilience, and coping strategies.	Self-reported measures of happiness, life satisfaction, and positive emotions.	Personality traits (e.g., extraversion, conscientiousness) and behavioral patterns (e.g., goal-setting).	Cognitive-behavioral assessments of optimism, including self-efficacy and cognitive reappraisal.
Individual Differences	Can vary widely across individuals, influenced by life experiences, personality, and contextual factors.	Dependent on individual experiences, perceptions, and attitudes.	Involves a range of variables (e.g., age, socioeconomic status, education).	Reflects an individual's cognitive style (e.g., optimistic or pessimistic) and learned behaviors (e.g., adopting a positive attitude towards challenges).

As can be summed up the Table 1; psychological well-being focuses on the internal state of being, including mental health and resilience, whereas, subjective well-being is concerned with individual experiences and perceptions of happiness or unhappiness. While, dispositional optimism refers to personality traits and behavioral patterns that promote a positive outlook, learned optimism involves cognitive processes and attitudes related to optimism (e.g., self-efficacy, reappraisal).

2.4. Framework and Rationale of the Present Study

Many studies in the field of positive psychology have attracted the attention of researchers in recent years. The present study will examine the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being and related studies in a deeper way. There are very few studies on the direct relationship between these two concepts in Türkiye (Cinalioğlu & Gazioglu, 2022; Kardaş et al., 2019; Meral et al., 2021; Odacı et al., 2021). For this reason, this study aims to both conduct a review study on these two concepts and to raise awareness in Türkiye on this issue.

To improve people's well-being levels, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the concepts and the characteristics of the relationships (causal, reciprocal relationships, etc.). In this study, studies that include optimism and well-being variables and examine the relationships between these concepts are presented. In the literature, it is seen that optimism can bring functional outcomes in terms of satisfaction (or satisfaction) with the general or specific areas of life, happiness (sometimes subjective well-being is addressed in the same way or classified under it in the literature), positive-negative emotion, social well-being, negative stress, various symptoms, anxiety, depression, overstimulation, quality of life and vitality, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, which are important variables that may have a place in well-being. Although some of the studies in which the relationships between optimism and these concepts are revealed are cross-sectional, longitudinal or prospective studies, meta-analyses, and systematic review studies also support similar findings. The study also pointed out that similar results may emerge among adolescents and adults.

2.5. Optimism in Life Stages

It is observed that optimism may have important outcomes in the context of well-being for adolescents. In a study conducted by Ben-Zur (2003), subjective well-being (positive-negative emotions and life satisfaction), internal resources (optimism and personal mastery) and adolescent-parent relationship were analyzed. In the first study conducted with both adolescents and university students, optimism was found to be associated with and predicted more positive and less negative emotions (valid for both groups). In a second study conducted with adolescents and their parents, it was determined that optimism was positively associated with more life satisfaction and positive emotions and negatively associated with less negative emotions and predicted them. Rincón Uribe, Neira Espejo, and Pedrosa (2021) examined the effects of optimism on mental health in adolescents (13-17 years old) by conducting a systematic review of related studies. For most of the studies, optimism was found to be associated with positive mental health in adolescents, shaped it positively, and functioned as a shield against mental disorders, risky behaviors (such as substance use), and harmful effects of stress.

Optimism has some connections among well-being and resilience in adult sample. Findings of a study has shown that optimism is a stronger predictor of hedonic well-being than hope and that optimistic older individuals experience more pleasure and less pain in their lives (Rand et al., 2020). A study conducted by Kleiman et al. (2015) found that optimism as a predictor variable was associated with milder depression in the future, even when

previous depression was controlled, and that adults with higher levels of optimism report higher levels of life satisfaction. In another study conducted by Giltay et al. (2006) with older individuals over a period of 15 years with 5-year intervals, it was determined that people with more optimism reported much lower rates of depressive symptoms and were in a more robust state regarding the risk of depressive symptoms. Last, findings of another study demonstrated that optimism indirectly predicts meaning in life and social support through a higher perception of control and also predicted higher positive emotions through the perception of greater social support (Ferguson & Goodwin, 2010).

2.6. Optimism and Subjective Well-Being

Optimism is a construct that shows important relationships in terms of social well-being, in addition to psychological and subjective well-being. Gallagher and Loper (2009) examined the relationships of optimism and hope with psychological (eudaimonic) well-being, subjective (hedonic) well-being, and social well-being. The sub-dimensions of psychological well-being are autonomy, environmental dominance, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, self-acceptance, positive-negative emotions, and life satisfaction (however, the Subjective Happiness Scale was used, not the Life Satisfaction Scale) were examined within the scope of subjective well-being. Social well-being includes social cohesion, integration, contribution, acceptance, and achievement. Considering the results in the context of optimism, it was determined that this concept predicted the positive-positive side of almost all variables in the context of psychological, subjective, and social well-being (i.e. less negative emotions). There was no relationship with optimism only in terms of autonomy-autonomy and personal growth, which are two different subdimensions of psychological well-being. In addition, optimism and hope were found to be separate constructs. The existence of relationships between optimism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem is supported by other studies, and these relationships are important in the context of well-being. In a study by Yu and Lou (2018), examining the relationships between optimism, self-efficacy, and subjective well-being (measured with the Revised Oxford Happiness Scale) among university students, it was determined that optimism was associated with more self-efficacy and subjective well-being (in the context of correlation) and that self-efficacy had a partially mediating role in the relationship between optimism and more subjective well-being (by regression analysis). In another study conducted by Duy and Yıldız (2017) with university and high school students, the mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between optimism and subjective well-being (measured by life satisfaction, positive-negative emotions) was examined. According to the results, the relationship between optimism and higher subjective well-being emerged partially through the variable of higher self-esteem. Other studies can be found in the literature that demonstrate that the self-esteem variable, which is important for well-being, is predicted by optimism (e.g. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) and stated that self-esteem plays a mediating role in the relationship of optimism with some subjective well-being indicators, such as life satisfaction (Leung et al., 2005).

2.7. Optimism, Stress and Anxiety

Optimism may have certain effects on psychological distress symptoms that may occur later in a normal sample (university students). In a study conducted by Chang and Bridewell (1998), the effects of irrational beliefs, optimism, and pessimism on anxiety and depression symptoms 6 weeks later were examined. It was determined that people who reported more irrational beliefs were more pessimistic and reported depressive symptoms, whereas those who were more pessimistic reported more depression and anxiety symptoms in the future. Another prospective study conducted by Kleiman et al. (2015) with university students found that optimism as a predictor variable was associated with milder depression in the future, even when previous depression was controlled, and that optimism played a regulatory role in the relationship between stressful life events and more depression and functioned as a directional shield that eliminated this relationship. Besides, similar results are valid for the older adults' sample. In a prospective study conducted by Giltay et al. (2006) with older individuals over a period of 15 years with 5-year intervals, it was determined that people with more optimism reported much lower rates of depressive symptoms and were in a more robust state regarding the risk of depressive symptoms. The results remain valid even when potentially important variables, such as self-reported health and physical activity, are involved.

In addition, optimism can also affect anxiety, stress, and health in the future for people in challenging positions, such as caregiving. On the other hand, these various situations may have different effects on optimism than the normal population. In a study conducted by Robinson-Whelen et al. (1997) with caregivers of individuals with dementia (and also with non-caregivers for comparison), it was found that the caregiver group was in a more

negative position than the non-caregiver group, with lower optimism and higher pessimism in the future. On the other hand, only for the non-caregiver group were negative life events a significant predictor of lower optimism and higher pessimism in the future. However, the difference in question could not be mentioned in the subsequent procedures performed based on a comparison between caregivers and non-caregivers. In addition, pessimism (but not optimism) was found to predict more perceived stress, anxiety, and poorer self-reported poorer health at a later time (one year later), suggesting that pessimism may have more important implications for outcome variables.

Optimism is also valuable for the well-being of individuals in situations involving intense stress that can have traumatizing effects. In the study conducted by Sulkers et al. (2013), optimism and positive and negative well-being were analyzed in adolescents with cancer (measurements were also taken from the healthy group for comparison). Optimism was measured at 3 months after diagnosis, and positive and negative well-being were measured at 3 and 6 months after diagnosis. Life satisfaction and absence of anxiety were measured for the positive aspect of well-being, and the presence of anxiety, emotional-physical functioning, and physical symptoms were measured for the negative aspect. Considering the analyses (cross-sectional) of the data obtained at the 3rd month after the diagnosis, it was determined that the overall score of optimism was associated with all other well-being measures; that is, optimism was positively associated with life satisfaction, better emotional-physical functioning, and the absence of anxiety and negatively associated with the presence of anxiety and physical symptoms. On the other hand, according to the results in which previous optimism was analyzed with later well-being data, general optimism was found to be associated only with the absence of anxiety (positive), the presence of anxiety (negative), and physical symptoms (negative). In a different study by Carver et al. (2005), the adjustment of patients with first-stage breast cancer over a large period of time was analyzed, and optimism was found to be a significant predictor of the adjustment variables of less distress, depression, and greater quality of life (even when controlling for adjustment over time). In fact, optimism also predicted fewer social impairments, but this was insignificant after controls. In addition, cancer-related optimism was examined more specifically in this study, but it was not found to have as strong effects as general optimism. On the other hand, similar associations of optimism with depression (but not anxiety) appear valid for head and neck cancer patients in cross-sectional studies (Horney et al., 2011). Gallagher et al. (2019) examined optimism and other expectancy-based concepts in a meta-analysis study, considering that optimism may foster resilience related to posttraumatic stress symptoms. Considering the results of optimism, it was determined that this concept was associated with less PTSD in cross-sectional and prospective studies (low-moderate level relationships based on effect size). In a longitudinal study conducted by Van der Velden et al. (2007), focusing on disaster (explosion) victims and non-disaster victims, optimism and health problems were examined. In the victim group, the level of optimists reporting depression and obsessive-compulsive symptoms later on was found to be lower than that of pessimists even after some controls (e.g., initial health problems) were provided, whereas in the non-victim group, the level of optimism reporting all health problems (anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, somatic, sleep, social functioning problems) later on was found to be lower than that of pessimists. In addition, optimism in the victim group was found to be lower than that in the other group, and it was stated that the traumatic event might have played a role in this difference.

2.8. Optimism, Resilience and Coping Mechanisms

As can be inferred from the abovementioned studies, optimism can function as resilience depending on the situation. Resilience is the ability to show unexpected adaptability in the face of significant challenges (Tusaie, Puskar, & Sereika, 2007, p. 54). People can be characterized by resilience in specific areas or in a general context. One such trait is psychosocial resilience. In a study conducted with 14-19 years old rural adolescents (Tusaie et al., 2007), optimism was found to predict a better level of psychosocial resilience and to reduce the negative predictive power from bad life events to psychosocial resilience (with a moderating role). On the other hand, resilience is associated with optimism and is important in terms of optimism-subjective well-being relationship. In the study conducted by He et al. (2013), the relationship between optimism and subjective wellbeing and the role of psychological resilience in this relationship were examined. The participants were asked questions that assessed their coping skills for resilience, while life satisfaction and positive-negative emotions were measured for subjective well-being. According to the results, optimism was significantly associated with higher subjective well-being both directly and through the prediction of greater resilience. Optimism can protect against experiencing distress, such as symptoms and illnesses after stress or trauma, and functional outcomes in terms of posttraumatic growth. In a meta-analysis study by Prati and Pietrantoni (2009), optimism, social support, and coping variables were investigated in the context of posttraumatic growth. It was determined that optimism, perceived social support, coping by seeking social support, coping through spirituality, and coping through

acceptance—especially coping through positive reappraisal and coping through belief—were positively related to posttraumatic growth (relevant studies measuring growth after experiencing the stressful situation were taken into consideration).

In addition, maternal optimism can also provide the ability to overcome difficulties in stressful situations with less impact. In a study conducted by Taylor et al. (2010) with single mothers, maternal optimism was shown to be a negative predictor for internalizing symptoms in the future (longitudinally). In addition, it was determined that optimism was more strongly associated with internalizing symptoms according to the increase in economic pressure, but this relationship disappeared when there was low pressure. In another study conducted by Taylor et al. (2012), mothers' optimism showed a negative relationship with economic distress and internalized symptoms (such as depression and anxiety), and the regulatory role of optimism in the relationship between economic distress and more internalizing symptoms (high optimism reduced the relationship by acting as a shield) was found.

2.9. Optimism and Meaning in Life

In well-being literature, meaning in life has a significant place. optimism leads to important relationships in the context of meaning in life. In a study conducted by Taubman-Ben-Ari and Weintroub (2008) with pediatric hospital employees (doctors and nurses) who experienced chronically stressful events, such as the death of a patient, more optimism was associated with a more meaningful view of life in both occupational groups. In another study conducted by Ju et al. (2013) with elderly participants, they found that optimism predicted more subjective well-being (measured by the Happiness Scale) both directly and indirectly through greater meaning in life. In addition to the fact that the concept of optimism is related to meaning in life and well-being indicators, it is also possible that it can play a mediating role in meaning in life-good-being relationships. Ho, Cheung, and Cheung (2010) examined optimism with its meaning in life and well-being indicators. In this study, the positive aspect of well-being, which was considered in terms of positive and negative aspects, reflects satisfaction with certain areas of life (family, friends, health, school life, self), while the negative aspect reflects psychosocial problems as depression, anxiety, alienation, social disharmony (Ho, Cheung, & Cheung, 2010, p. 659). According to the results, each of the variables of optimism and meaning in life showed a relationship with life satisfaction (positive) and psychosocial problems (negative), and optimism was found to mediate the relationship of meaning in life variable with each of the concepts of life satisfaction and psychosocial problems. In summary, optimism showed a relationship with both positive and negative well-being and mediated the relationships of meaning in life with the components of well-being. In another study conducted by Krok and Telka (2019), optimism, meaning in life, subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive and negative emotions), and psychological well-being were examined. In the context of correlation analysis, each variable is significantly related to the other. Although negative emotions showed a negative relationship with other variables, the relationship between all other variables was found to be positive. In the context of SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), meaning in life was positively related to optimism, subjective well-being, and psychological well-being, and optimism was positively related to subjective and psychological well-being. In the relationship between meaning in life and better subjective and psychological well-being, higher levels of optimism partially mediated this relationship.

2.10. Optimism and Health Related Concepts

Some studies on optimism also take quality of life into consideration. Although quality of life is addressed by researchers in various ways, this concept is evaluated by collecting information on a specific aspect of life or, more comprehensively, on different aspects of life through objective or subjective measurements (Wrosch & Scheier, 2003, p. 63). In fact, quality of life is a concept that may have an important place for psychological and physical well-being or for more specific types of well-being. Sometimes, it is used directly to measure wellbeing. Therefore, the studies presented here may be valuable under the scope of general well-being. In most of the studies, the concept of quality of life is included in the scope of research together with the variables in the context of psychological-subjective well-being presented above. Therefore, these studies also provide a broader view of optimism by supporting some abovementioned studies. However, in general, the samples examined for quality of life consisted of people experiencing various diseases. In another study conducted by Finck et al. (2018) with patients with breast cancer, the relationships between optimism-pessimism and quality of life (functioning and symptoms) and social support (whether they asked for it or received it) were examined. While pessimism had no relationship with quality of life, optimism was associated with higher levels of overall quality of life and physical, role, emotional, and social functioning in terms of specific aspects of quality of life. Regarding symptoms, it was associated with lower levels of burnout and diarrhea. In another study conducted by Friedman et al. (2006) in

which adaptation to the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer was investigated, optimism, social support (satisfaction with people who can be reached), health-related quality of life (physical, emotional, functional, social-familial well-being), cancer-specific distress, and general mood deterioration were examined. Those who were optimistic were found to have higher levels of emotional, functional, and social well-being and lower levels of cancer-specific distress and general mood disturbances. On the other hand, when the results regarding the explained variance in the context of optimism were analyzed, emotional, functional, and social well-being were positively explained by optimism, while disease-specific distress and general mood deterioration were negatively explained by optimism.

In another study conducted by Winterling et al. (2008) with patients with colon, breast, ovarian, and malignant lymphoma, it was found that general optimism was associated with greater general health (subscale of quality of life) and lower anxiety and depression, which are considered within the scope of negative psychological stress. In a study by Mazanec et al. (2010), examining health-related quality of life in newly diagnosed adult cancer patients in the context of optimism, optimism was found to be associated with higher social, emotional, functional well-being, and spirituality on the one hand, and lower depression and anxiety on the other. However, optimism did not reach a significant level of significance (with the inclusion of variables such as depression in the analysis) for the aforementioned types of well-being and overall quality of life. A long-term longitudinal study that includes different diagnosis times and/or cancer types could show the predictive value of optimism for quality of life. On the other hand, in a study conducted by Kraai et al. (2018), with patients with heart failure, a positive relationship was found between optimism (not pessimism) and general quality of life.

Similar results were also found in systematic review and meta-analysis studies. In a systematic review study conducted by Marton et al. (2022), optimism was associated with and predicted a better quality of life in patients with cancer. Fasano et al. (2020) meta-analyzed the effects of optimism, coping, and resilience as outcome variables in relation to anxiety, negative stress (distress), depression, and health-related quality of life. The sample included women with breast cancer. In most of the studies, optimism and coping (79% and 95%, respectively) were found to be significant predictors of outcome variables (Fasano et al., 2020, p. 497).

In a longitudinal context, optimism can be an advantage for quality of life measurements obtained at later times. In a study conducted by Schou et al. (2005), prior optimism was associated with better general health and emotional, social, role, and cognitive functioning in women diagnosed with breast cancer and predicted better emotional-social functioning after surgery (one year after surgery). In another study conducted with gynecological and breast cancer women (Zenger et al., 2011), pessimism was positively associated with later anxiety and depression and negatively associated with physical and mental quality of life (controlling for baseline measures of the relevant variables), and pessimism was negatively associated with physical quality of life in terms of differentiation over time. In a study conducted by Zenger et al. (2010) with individuals with urogenital cancer, it was determined that optimism was negatively associated with subsequent anxiety and depression and positively associated with mental and physical quality of life (mental and physical) when anxiety, depression, and quality of life (mental and physical) data measured at the previous time were controlled. In addition, optimism showed a positive relationship in the context of physical quality of life in terms of changes over time. There is also a dimensional decomposition of optimism and pessimism in the research, but the findings presented here belong to total optimism because it is more consistent and gives better results.

2.11. Studies in Türkiye

The relationship between optimism and psychological well-being is reinforced by studies focusing on specific populations in Türkiye. For instance, Cinalioğlu and Gazioğlu's research on emerging adults in Türkiye illustrates that social support and optimism significantly contribute to psychological well-being, indicating that positive social interactions can amplify the benefits of an optimistic outlook (Cinalioğlu & Gazioğlu, 2022). Similarly, the findings of Odacı et al. reveal that optimism, as a component of psychological capital, significantly enhances the well-being of school counselors, further emphasizing the protective role of optimism in various professional contexts (Odacı et al., 2021).

The interplay between optimism and psychological well-being is also evident in studies examining broader psychological constructs. For example, Kardaş et al. identify gratitude and hope, alongside optimism, as predictors of psychological well-being, suggesting that these positive psychological traits collectively contribute to enhanced mental health outcomes (Kardaş et al., 2019). This is consistent with the findings of Meral et al., who report that

optimism significantly predicts psychological well-being among parents of children with intellectual disabilities, highlighting the importance of a positive outlook in challenging circumstances (Meral et al., 2021).

3. METHOD

The study examined the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being, utilizing a narrative (traditional) review approach to investigate the complex dynamics between these two constructs. Narrative literature reviews provide a broad overview of a research topic without a clear methodological approach. Information is collected and interpreted in an unsystematic manner with subjective summaries of findings. (Green, Johnson, & Adams, 2006)

3.1. Search Strategy

A narrative review methodology was employed to explore the existing literature on the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being. Relevant studies were identified through comprehensive searches in major academic databases, including PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar, and ERIC. The search was conducted in English and Turkish, given the cross-cultural interest in the topic. Search terms included "optimism", "psychological well-being", "well-being", "life satisfaction", "mental health", "emotional resilience", and "positive psychology". The search was not restricted by publication date, but only peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and book chapters published in English or Turkish were included.

3.2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Studies that explicitly examined the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being, or related constructs (e.g., life satisfaction, emotional well-being, mental health).
- Research involving human participants across various age groups (children, adolescents, adults, and elderly), including both clinical and non-clinical populations.
- Both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, as well as experimental studies examining the impact of optimism on psychological well-being.
- Studies published in peer-reviewed journals, dissertations, or academic books.

Exclusion criteria included:

- Studies not focused on the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being, such as those focused on other personality traits or unrelated variables.
- Non-empirical articles, such as theoretical pieces, editorials, and opinion articles.
- Studies published in languages other than English or Turkish.

4. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to increase the accumulation of knowledge in the Turkish literature on these concepts by presenting research on optimism and psychological well-being. In the literature, optimism has important functional outcomes in terms of life satisfaction, happiness, positive-negative emotions, social well-being, negative stress, various symptoms, anxiety, depression, overstimulation, quality of life, psychosocial resilience, post-traumatic growth, meaning in life and vitality, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, which are other important variables that may have a place in wellbeing. In the literature, it is believed that some of these relationships may arise from the relationship between optimism and important variables in terms of coping and social relationships (Carver et al., 2010; Nes, 2016). For example, people who describe the future with optimistic expectations use active, approachable (Suls & Fletcher, 1985) and problem-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) styles more appropriately than others. It is also known that various variables such as social support (Trunzo & Pinto, 2003), social acceptance (Carver et al., 1994), and less loneliness (Nurmi et al., 1996) are significantly associated with optimism. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Alarcon, Bowling, and Khazon (2013), optimism and the constructs of positive emotion, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, which were classified as personality variables in the study, were found to be positively related, while negative emotion was negatively related. According to the study conducted by He et al. (2013), optimism showed a significant relationship with higher subjective well-being both

directly and through the prediction of greater resilience. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Prati and Pietrantonio (2009), optimism, perceived social support, coping by seeking social support, coping through spirituality, and coping through acceptance were positively related to posttraumatic growth. Ho, Cheung, and Cheung (2010) examined optimism together with meaning in life and well-being indicators. As a result, each of the variables of optimism and meaning in life showed a relationship with life satisfaction (positive) and psychosocial problems (negative), and optimism mediated the relationship of meaning in life variable with each of the concepts of life satisfaction and psychosocial problems. In a study by Mazanec et al. (2010) in which health-related quality of life in newly diagnosed adult cancer patients was examined in the context of optimism, optimism was found to be associated with higher social, emotional, functional well-being, and spirituality on the one hand, and lower depression and anxiety on the other. In a study conducted by Schou et al. (2005), prior optimism was associated with better general health and emotional, social, role, and cognitive functioning in women diagnosed with breast cancer and predicted better emotional-social functioning after surgery (one year after surgery). The reviews, meta-analyses, cross-sectional, longitudinal, and prospective studies mentioned in this review have shown that optimism, psychological well-being, and other related concepts are directly or indirectly related to each other.

In general, although there are some exceptions, optimists are in a more advantageous psychological well-being position than pessimists. It is useful to know that well-being can be interpreted by researchers from various perspectives and to interpret these studies accordingly. At this point, the fact that optimistic people consider the future from a positive perspective and see negative events as temporary, controllable, or caused by external factors motivates them to solve problems, eliminate the effects of problems in the right ways, receive social support, or perceive more social support. In pessimistic people, the same process may lead to mental ruminations, avoidance behaviors, and many other unhelpful or harmful approaches. In the final analysis, we can say that optimists often win in terms of psychological well-being.

As observed in many studies mentioned in this article, it has been determined that optimism has a positive effect on psychological well-being. In this regard, experimental intervention studies can be conducted in which optimism levels can be increased, and changes can be observed in terms of long-term positive-negative emotions, satisfaction with life, and functionality in many aspects of life. Similarly, by conducting optimism interventions, it is possible to examine whether there is a decrease in variables such as depression, stress, and anxiety, which can sometimes be considered adaptation variables and sometimes as the negative side of well-being. In addition, in many different groups such as families, workplaces, schools, nursing homes, orphanages, etc., the relationships of optimism levels with concepts closely related to psychological well-being such as quality of life, meaning of life, motivation, functionality, peace, belonging, sense of community, psychological resilience, perseverance, fortitude, and patience can be examined. Again, in all these studies, the mediating or regulatory role of coping strategies, stress appraisals, and various variables related to social relations in the relationship between optimism and psychological well-being or other related concepts can be examined. It is known that replication studies have gained value in the literature, especially in the last decade, that there is a great need for these studies and that they are encouraged for many reasons (e.g., various findings may not be valid for new research). If the above-mentioned studies are conducted, replication studies will be conducted for some concepts, new information will be provided to the literature for concepts that have not been studied. Moreover, in this context, there is a great need for prospective, longitudinal, and experimental studies. Considering that cross-sectional studies are quite low in Türkiye, the studies to be conducted will be valuable as the first steps toward closing this big gap. In summary, optimism-related studies are believed to play a major role in improving mental health in terms of preventing mental disorders or problems and reducing symptoms.

Researchers may examine the role of individual differences in personality traits, such as neuroticism and extraversion, in shaping the relationship between optimism and well-being requires further examination. Additionally, the impact of contextual factors, such as socioeconomic status and environmental stressors, on the relationship between optimism and well-being also requires investigation. On the neurobiological perspective, further research is needed to understand how different brain regions and networks contribute to the perception of optimism or pessimism. Moreover, the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and other neuroimaging techniques could provide insights into the neural mechanisms underlying optimistic thinking.

Social and psychological factors can be examined in future studies. The impact of social support on the relationship between optimism and well-being also requires further investigation. The perception of optimism or pessimism can vary across cultures, highlighting the importance of considering cultural differences when exploring this topic. Stress management techniques, such as mindfulness and exercise, may influence the relationship between

optimism and well-being. When viewed from a multidisciplinary perspective, the relationship between optimism and well-being may have implications for various fields, including medicine, education, and public health. Furthermore, combining insights from different theoretical frameworks, such as social psychology, cognitive-behavioral theory, and evolutionary psychology, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of this topic.

Türkiye's sociocultural landscape—including its blend of Eastern and Western influences, strong emphasis on family ties, and recent challenges such as political unrest and natural disasters—offers fertile ground for investigating contextual factors that shape optimism and well-being. Future research suggestions will be addresses in three aspects as methodology, data collection and study groups. For methodology, mixed-methods approaches combining large-scale surveys with ethnographic fieldwork to understand how macro-level factors (e.g., economic conditions, political climate) interact with micro-level factors (e.g., personal beliefs, family dynamics) to influence these two concepts. Furthermore, supplementing traditional self-report measures with ecological momentary assessment (EMA) techniques to capture real-time fluctuations in optimism and emotional states in response to daily stressors for data collection level. For study group, examining understudied subpopulations, such as ethnic minorities (e.g., Kurds, Arabs), religious minorities (e.g., Alevis), whose experiences of optimism and well-being may differ significantly from those of the majority population.

Optimism is a complex and multifaceted construct that has both positive and negative effects on psychological well-being. While research suggests that optimism can promote mental health, social connections, and overall well-being, it also carries the potential risks associated with overemphasis or unrealistic expectations. A comprehensive understanding of the relationship between optimism and well-being requires consideration of various factors, including personality traits, life experiences, and individual differences. Consequently, optimism is emerging as a crucial construct in the field of psychological well-being. Evidence demonstrates that promoting optimism can lead to enhanced mental health outcomes in diverse populations, among adolescents and older adults. Forthcoming studies should further investigate the mechanisms connecting optimism to well-being and the efficacy of interventions designed to promote an optimistic outlook. By privileging optimism in mental health interventions, we can also promote both resilience and well-being in people and communities.

The intersection of optimism and psychological well-being in Türkiye represents an exciting frontier for positive psychological research. By adopting innovative methodologies, culturally relevant tools, and inclusive sampling strategies, future studies can deepen our understanding of this relationship while addressing critical gaps in the literature. These efforts will not only advance theoretical knowledge but also inform practical applications aimed at fostering resilience and enhancing quality of life for individuals across Türkiye's diverse population. Last but not least, these studies will contribute to the positive psychology field and give insight about this field in Türkiye.

DECLARATION OF THE AUTHORS

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