



SELF-COMPASSION AND AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

ÖZ-DUYARLIK VE OTOMATİK DÜŞÜNCELER

Ahmet AKIN*

ABSTRACT: The aim of this research is to examine the relationships between self-compassion and automatic thoughts. Participants were 299 university students. In this study, the Self-compassion Scale and the Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire were used. The relationships between self-compassion and automatic thoughts were examined using correlation analysis and the hypothesis model was tested through structural equation modeling. In correlation analysis, self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness factors of self-compassion were found negatively related to automatic thoughts. On the other hand, self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification factors of self-compassion were found positively correlated to automatic thoughts. The model demonstrated excellent fit ($\chi^2=0.05$, $p=.03832$, GFI=1.00, AGFI=.96, CFI=1.00, NFI=1.00, IFI=1.00, RFI=.97, SRMR=.014, and RMSEA=.038) and also accounted for 39% of the automatic thoughts variances. According to path analysis results, automatic thoughts were predicted negatively by self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. On the other hand, self-judgment and over-identification predicted automatic thoughts in a positive way. However, the path from isolation to automatic thoughts wasn't significant. Results were discussed in the light of the related literature.

Keywords: Self-compassion, automatic thoughts, path analysis

ÖZET: Bu araştırmanın amacı öz-duyarlık ile otomatik düşünceler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemini 299 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılara Öz-duyarlık Ölçeği ve Otomatik Düşünceler Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Öz-duyarlık ile otomatik düşünceler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek için yapılan korelasyon sonucunda öz-duyarlığın; öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçlilik alt boyutlarının otomatik düşünceler ile negatif, öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme boyutlarının ise pozitif ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Otomatik düşüncelerin öz-duyarlık tarafından açıklanma düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla kurulan yapısal eşitlik modelinden elde edilen uyum indeksleri modelin iyi uyum verdiğini göstermiştir ($\chi^2=0.05$, $p=.03832$, GFI=1.00, AGFI=.96, CFI=1.00, NFI=1.00, IFI=1.00, RFI=.97, SRMR=.014 ve RMSEA=.038). Öz-duyarlığın otomatik düşünceleri açıklama oranı $R^2=.39$ olarak bulunmuştur. Path analizi sonuçları, öz-duyarlığın öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçlilik boyutlarının otomatik düşünceleri negatif yönde, öz-yargılama ve aşırı özdeşleşme boyutlarının ise otomatik düşünceleri pozitif yönde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Bulgular literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Öz-duyarlık, otomatik düşünceler, path analizi

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-compassion involves being discerning and gentle towards oneself in the face of hardship or perceived inadequacy. It also entails acknowledging that suffering, failure, and inadequacies are part of the human condition and that all people—oneself included—are worthy of compassion (Neff, 2003b; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007). Neff (2003a, b) has proposed that self-compassion includes three main components: Self-kindness versus self-judgment, a sense of common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification. While these three components of self-compassion are conceptually distinct and are experienced differently at the phenomenological level, they interact so as to mutually enhance and engender one another (Neff, 2003a).

Self-kindness refers to being kind and understanding toward oneself in instances of pain or failure rather than being harshly self-critical. Self-compassion entails not being self-critical when one's expectations are not met and not being harmful to an individual's ego in order to make achievements. Instead, self-compassion suggests that the individual should encourage his/her ego gently and patiently to change behaviors (Neff, 2009). Common humanity, the second dimension of self-compassion, is seeing one's happy or painful experiences as not personal, but as all human beings'. The sense of common humanity principal to self-compassion involves recognizing that all humans are imperfect and that they fail and make mistakes (Neff, 2009). Having this kind of

* Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sakarya University, Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, e-mail: aakin@sakarya.edu.tr

awareness, one perceives these experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than feeling isolated and alienated from the society and harshly criticizing oneself for failure and suffering experiences (Neff, 2003a). This awareness also emphasizes one's relatedness to all other humans and to another individual (Kirkpatrick, 2005).

Mindfulness, the third component of self-compassion, is a pre-conceptual awareness that allows individual to accept life's most stressful and painful emotions without being carried away by them (Gunaratana, 1993; Martin, 1997; Neff, 2003a; Nisker, 1998; Rosenberg, 1999). Mindfulness is a state of balanced awareness that one's feelings and thoughts are observed without avoiding or trying to change them, without exaggeration and prejudice. When individuals accept and tolerate their distress and pain, when they are gentle and kind toward themselves, they avoid suppressing their emotions and thoughts. Thus, when they are aware that distress and pain are something all humans experience, they are not trapped by over-identification. Therefore, self-compassion functions as an adaptive strategy for emotion-organizing through decreasing negative emotions but creating more positive emotions of kindness and relatedness (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejjitrat, 2005).

Studies have demonstrated that self-compassion is negatively associated with self-criticism, depression, anxiety, rumination, thought suppression (Neff, 2003a; Deniz & Sümer, 2010), interpersonal cognitive distortions (Akin, 2010a), loneliness (Akin, 2010b), performance-approach/avoidance goals (Akin, 2008a), submissive behavior (Akin, 2009), and positively associated with social relationship, emotional intelligence, self-determination (Neff, 2003a), learning-approach goals (Akin, 2008a), psychological well-being (Akin, 2008b), self-efficacy, control beliefs for learning (Iskender, 2009), academic success (Conway, 2007), and social identity (Williams, 2005). In addition, it has been found out that although self-compassion is significantly related to self-esteem, it is not associated with narcissism (Neff, 2003a).

Automatic thoughts. Automatic thoughts are images or cognitions presented by subjects as a result of the cognitive schema or core belief that is activated in a particular moment (Beck, 1967). These thoughts come to mind without conscious effort or control and have a strong impact on mood (Piasecki & Hollon, 1987). For example, in response to an upcoming test, one possible automatic thought is, "I know I'm going to fail. I always fail." Also automatic thoughts reflect the content of the more central and tacit structures of the cognitive system. These images and thoughts reflect the meaning subject's are assigning to a given situation and are deeply associated with the emotional and behavioral response to that event (Nobre & Pinto-Gouveia, 2008).

Research showed that automatic thoughts have an impact on psychological and physical well-being. These studies demonstrated that automatic thoughts were positively correlated with anxiety (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005; Ganellen, 1988), depression (Aydın, 1990; Aytar, 1987; Beck, 1967; Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005), loneliness (Hoglund & Collison, 1989), marital conflict (Öztütüncü, 1996) and negatively with optimism (Caryk & Walker, 1986). Also no differences were found between males and females in respect to automatic thoughts (Hollon, Kendall, & Lumry, 1986).

1.1. The Present Study

Although the relationships between self-compassion and some psychological variables have received extensive scholarly attention, documenting its association with cognitive variables such as automatic thoughts has received less attention. Thus the current study examines the relationships between self-compassion and automatic thoughts. Preliminary evidence suggests that self-compassion is related to cognitive based social personality traits such as extraversion, social connectedness (Neff & McGehee, 2010), self-determination, and feeling interpersonally connected to others (Neff, 2003a, b). Also higher levels of self-compassion have been associated with greater life satisfaction, emotional intelligence, as well as less self-criticism, depression, anxiety, rumination, thought suppression, perfectionism, and disordered eating behaviors (Deniz & Sümer, 2010; Neff, 2003a; Neff, Hsieh, & Dejjitrat, 2005; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007; Neff & McGehee, 2010). In contrary automatic thoughts were found positively correlated with negative psychological indexes such as anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Therefore in this study self-compassion was utilized as indicator of psychological health and automatic thoughts as indicator of psychological maladjustment. Based on

the relationships of self-compassion (Akin, 2008a, b; Akin, 2009; Akin & Abacı, 2009; Deniz & Sümer, 2010; Neff, 2003a, b; Neff, Hseih, & Dejithirat, 2005; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007; Neff & McGehee, 2010; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007) and automatic thoughts (Aydın, 1990; Aytar, 1987; Beck, 1967; Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005; Ganellen, 1988; Hoglund & Collison, 1989) with psychological variables it was hypothesized that self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness would be associated negatively with automatic thoughts. It was also hypothesized that self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification would be related positively to automatic thoughts.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

Participants were 299 university students (164 (55%) were female and 135 (45%) were male) enrolled in various undergraduate programs at Sakarya University Faculty of Education, Turkey. These programs were social science education ($n=88$), primary school education ($n=45$), computer and instructional technology education ($n=57$), mathematics education ($n=42$), and pre-school education ($n=67$). Of the participants, 70 (23%) were first-year students, 86 (29%) were second-year students, 96 (32%) were third-year students, and 47 (16%) were fourth-year student. Their ages ranged from 17 to 27 years and the mean age of the participants was 21.6 years.

2.2. Measures

Self-compassion Scale. Self-compassion was measured by using Self-compassion Scale (Neff, 2003b). Turkish adaptation of this scale had been done by Akin, Akin, and Abacı (2007). Self-compassion Scale is a 26-item self-report measurement and consists of six sub-scales; self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=*strongly disagree* to 5=*strongly agree*). Language validity findings indicated that correlations between Turkish and English forms were .94, .94, .87, .89, .92, and .94 for six subscales, respectively. Results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the model was well fit. The goodness of fit index values of the model were RMSEA=.056, NFI=.95, CFI=.97, IFI=.97, RFI=.94, GFI=.91, and SRMR=.059. The internal consistency coefficients were .77, .72, .72, .80, .74, and .74 and the test-retest reliability coefficients were .69, .59, .66, .60, .69, and .56, for six subscales, respectively.

Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire (ATQ). The ATQ (Hollon & Kendall, 1980) measures the frequency of occurrence of automatic negative thoughts associated with depression. It contains 30 Likert-type items (e.g. I'm a failure), each ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (All the time), that yield total scores from 30 to 150 where higher scores indicate more frequent negative thoughts. The ATQ has excellent internal consistency with an alpha coefficient of .97 and has good concurrent validity for depression, correlating with two measures of depression, the Beck Depression Inventory and the MMPI Depression Scale (Hollon & Kendall 1980). This scale has adapted for the Turkish population by Aydın and Aydın (1990) and Şahin and Şahin (1992). The Turkish ATQ correlated well with the BDI ($r = .75$) and it discriminated successfully between the symptomatic and asymptomatic groups. The internal consistency coefficients of Turkish form ranged between .89 and .95 (Aydın & Aydın, 1990; Şahin & Şahin, 1992) and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found .77 (Aydın & Aydın, 1990).

2.2. Procedure

Permission for participation by the students was informed about purposes of the study was obtained from chief of departments and students voluntarily participated in this research. Self-report questionnaires in counterbalanced order were administered in a quiet classroom setting, during spring term 2010. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity were assured. Pearson correlation coefficient was applied to assess statistical significance for the relations of dimensions of self-compassion and automatic thoughts and structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized to test the proposed model

and hypotheses developed in this research. Analyses were carried out with LISREL version 8.54 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1996) and SPSS version 11.5.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Descriptive Data and Inter-correlations

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, inter-correlations, and internal consistency coefficients of the variables used.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Inter-correlations of the Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Self-kindness	1.00						
2. Self-judgment	-.33**	1.00					
3. Common humanity	.56**	-.21**	1.00				
4. Isolation	-.29**	.75**	-.12*	1.00			
5. Mindfulness	.70**	-.36**	.54**	-.30**	1.00		
6. Over-identification	-.31**	.71**	-.11	.71**	-.33**	1.00	
7. Automatic Thoughts	-.27**	.47**	-.13*	.41**	-.23**	.41**	1.00
Mean	14,79	12,11	11,44	9,94	12,08	10,44	54,20
Standard deviation	3,66	3,91	3,28	3,29	3,22	3,41	20,35
Alpha (for current study)	.75	.77	.76	.74	.77	.73	.96
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$							

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there are significant correlations between dimensions of self-compassion and automatic thoughts. Self-kindness ($r = -.27$, $p < .01$), common humanity ($r = -.13$, $p < .05$), and mindfulness ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$) related negatively to automatic thoughts. In contrary, self-judgment ($r = .47$, $p < .01$), isolation ($r = .41$, $p < .01$), and over-identification ($r = .41$, $p < .01$) were found positively associated with automatic thoughts. There were also significant correlations between dimensions of self-compassion.

3.2. Structural Equation Modeling

To test the hypothesis model (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness would be associated negatively and self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification would be related positively with automatic thoughts) structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. Using SEM, all the parameters of models can be tested simultaneously in one step. The specifications on the model were for direct paths from self-compassion to automatic thoughts. The results of testing whether self-compassion has a direct effect on automatic thoughts are presented in Figure 1.

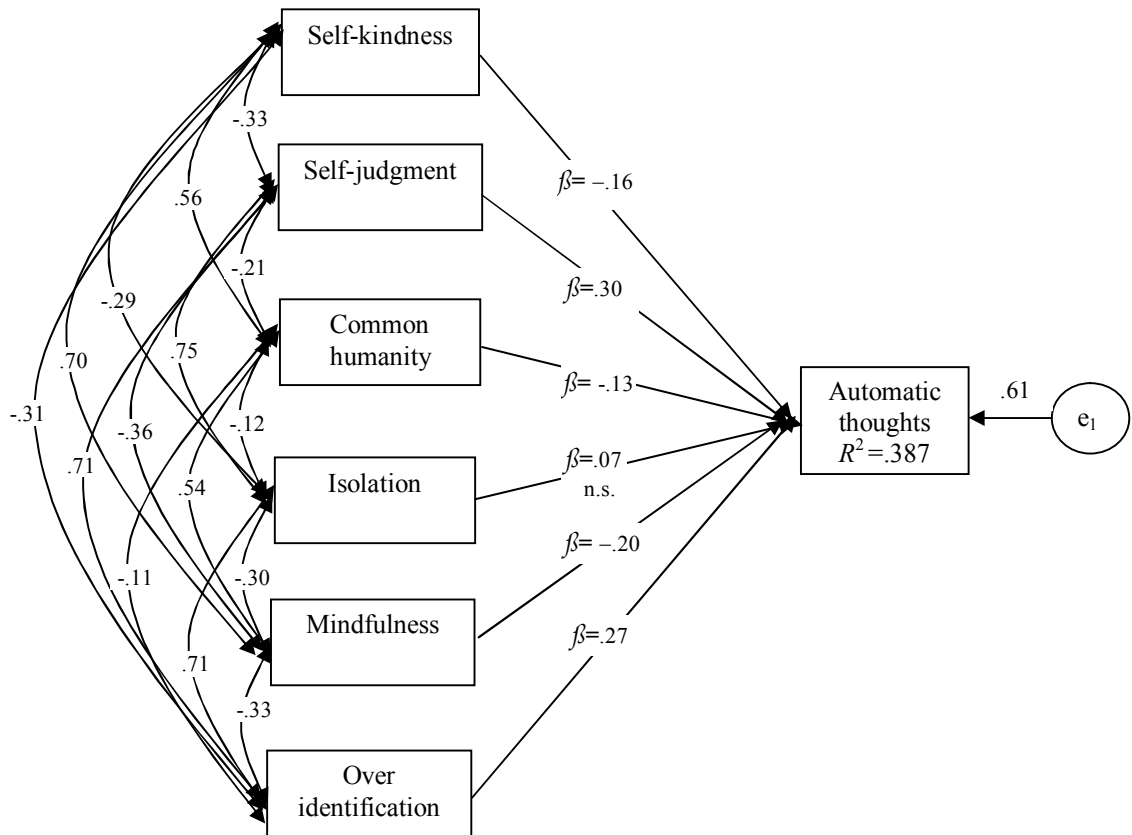


Figure 1

Path analysis between self-compassion and automatic thoughts

Figure 1 showed that the model demonstrated excellent fit ($\chi^2 = 0.05$, $p = .03832$, GFI = 1.00, AGFI = .96, CFI = 1.00, NFI = 1.00, IFI = 1.00, RFI = .97, SRMR = .014, and RMSEA = .038) and also accounted for 39% of the automatic thoughts variances. The standardized coefficients in Figure 1 clearly showed that automatic thoughts were predicted negatively by self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness ($\beta = -.16$, $\beta = -.13$, and $\beta = -.20$, respectively). On the other hand, self-judgment ($\beta = .30$) and over-identification ($\beta = .27$) predicted automatic thoughts in a positive way. However, the path from isolation to automatic thoughts wasn't significant.

4. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationships between self-compassion and automatic thoughts. Results indicated that there are significant relationships between these variables. Also the goodness of fit indexes of the path model indicated that the model was acceptable (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The model illustrated that self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, positive dimensions of self-compassion, predicted automatic thoughts in a negative way. Positive dimensions of self-compassion represent that, in the event of negative life-experiences, individual's approach toward him/herself is warm, gentle, and kind. Certainly, a key feature of these three dimensions is that individuals do not harshly judge and criticize themselves when they notice something about themselves they don't like and self-criticism is known to be an important predictor of anxiety and depression (Neff, 2009). Self-compassion is still a strong negative predictor of anxiety and depression even after controlling for self-criticism (Neff, 2003a), suggesting that self-compassion provides unique buffering effects (Neff, 2009). Moreover, since self-compassionate individuals recognize when they are suffering, but when doing so they provide themselves feelings of warmth, kindness, and interconnectedness with the rest of humanity (Neff, 2009), they can experience more positive and less

negative emotions. Self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness dimensions has also been associated with feelings of autonomy and competence (Neff, 2003a).

Because self-compassionate people have been shown to possess many of the psychological strengths such as happiness, optimism, positive affect (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), self-efficacy (Iskender, 2009), and psychological well-being (Akin, 2008b), self-kindness, common-humanity, and mindfulness dimensions of self-compassion may be viewed as signs of psychological adjustment. Contrarily, the automatic thoughts were found correlated positively with maladaptive psychological variables, such as depression (Aydın, 1990; Aytar, 1987; Beck, 1967; Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005), anxiety (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005; Ganellen, 1988), and marital conflict (Öztütüncü, 1996). Thus it can be said that the automatic thoughts may be viewed as signs of psychological maladjustment. When thought in this context, the negative relationships between positive dimensions of self-compassion and automatic thoughts are understandable.

The structural model also showed that automatic thoughts are predicted positively by self-judgment and over-identification. These dimensions of self-compassion are maladaptive in nature and means that individual attributes him/herself for making errors and unsuccessful life experiences, intensively identify him/herself with negative feelings when faced failure, being swept up in and carried away by the story-line of one's own pain (Neff, 2003b). Self-judgment and over-identification involve individual's self-critical, negative self-assessment, and being seized by emotions when they experience a stressful and painful event and they were found correlated positively with anxiety, depression, self-criticism, neuroticism, rumination, thought suppression, and neurotic perfectionism (Neff, 2003a, b; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2005; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), interpersonal cognitive distortions (Akin, 2010a), and loneliness (Akin, 2010b). Specially, self-judgment was found the strongest predictor of automatic thoughts. Many theorists have viewed self-devaluation, self-condemnation, and self-critical/attacking feelings and cognitions as important components of psychopathology. Indeed, for many centuries, depression has been linked to feelings of worthlessness and self-devaluation (Radden, 2000). Similarly, the negative self-focused automatic thoughts have been seen as evaluative, condemning, and blaming and closely linked to depression (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Therefore the positive relationships between maladaptive components of self-compassion and automatic thoughts aren't surprising. Thus, it can be said that an increment in automatic thoughts will increase self-judgment and over-identification and decrease self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness and that there is a bi-directional causal relationship between self-compassion and automatic thoughts.

There are several limitations of the present study. The first, because this research intended to build a model rather than test a model which is already exists, findings from the research are of explanatory characteristics. Therefore, if it is not tested on another sample, it is wise to avoid taking the findings as definite. The second, participants were university students and replication of this study for targeting other student populations should be made in order to generate a more solid relationship among constructs examined in this study, because generalization of the results is somewhat limited. The third, even though structural equation modeling suggests results related to causality, it is difficult to give full explanation related to causality among the variables examined in the research, because correlational data were used. And finally the data reported here for self-compassion and automatic thoughts are limited to self-reported.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study makes several contributions. First, it demonstrates that self-compassion associated with automatic thoughts. Second, to our knowledge, this study was the first to examine the relationships between these variables. This research suggests that the encouragement of self-compassion could be highly beneficial for reducing automatic thoughts. Additionally, encouraging the development of self-compassion should be useful for individuals by helping them to counter destructive self-critical tendencies, recognize their interconnection with others, and deal with their emotions with greater clarity and equanimity (Neff, 2003a). Nonetheless it is important to note that research on self-compassion is still in its nascent phases and more research will need to be done before

any policy implications can be drawn. Also there are enough positive indicators from self-compassion studies to suggest that more research on self-compassion would be a worthwhile (Neff, Hsieh, & DeJitterat, 2005).

REFERENCES

- Akin, A. (2010a). Self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, 39, 1–9.
- Akin, A. (2010b). Self-compassion and loneliness. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences (IOJES)*, 2(3), 702–718.
- Akin, A. (2009). Self-compassion and submissive behavior. *Education and Science*, 34(152), 138–147.
- Akin, A. (2008a). Self-compassion and achievement goals: A structural equation modeling approach. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 31, 1–15.
- Akin, A. (2008b). Scales of Psychological well-being: A study of validity and reliability. *Educational Science: Theory & Practice*, 8(3), 721–750.
- Akin, A., & Abacı, R. (2009, May). *Self-compassion and self-deception: A structural equation modeling*. Paper presented at the 1st International Congress of Educational Research, May, 1-3, Çanakkale, Turkey.
- Akin, Ü., Akin, A., & Abacı, R. (2007). Self-compassion Scale: The study of validity and reliability. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, 33, 1–10.
- Aydın, B. (1990). Depression, cognitive distortions, and academic success in university students. *Marmara University Journal of Faculty of Education*, 2, 27–36.
- Aydın, G., & Aydın, O. (1990). The validity and reliability of the Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire. *Turkish Journal of Psychology*, 7(4), 51–57.
- Aytar, G. (1987). *An investigation of cognitive distortions in depression*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Istanbul, Turkey.
- Beck, A. T. (1967). *Depression: Causes and treatment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Beck, A. T., Rush, A. J., Shaw, B. F., & Emery, G. (1979). *Cognitive therapy of depression*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Calvete, E., & Connor-Smith, J. K. (2005). Automatic thoughts and psychological symptoms: A cross cultural comparison of American and Spanish students. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 29(2), 201–217.
- Caryk, C. J., & Walker, L. J. (1986). Optimism and irrational beliefs. *Psychological Reports*, 59, 457–458.
- Conway, D. G. (2007). *The role of internal resources in academic achievement: Exploring the meaning of self-compassion in the adaptive functioning of low-income college students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, PA, USA.
- Deniz, M. E., & Sümer, A. S. (2010). The evaluation of depression, anxiety, and stress in university students with different self-compassion levels. *Education and Science*, 35(158), 115–127.
- Ganellen, R. J. (1988). Specificity of attributions and overgeneralization in depression and anxiety. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 97, 83–86.
- Gunaratana, V. H. (1993). *Sati. In mindfulness in plain English*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.
- Hoglund, C. L., & Collison, B. B. (1989). Loneliness and irrational beliefs among college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 30, 53–57.
- Hollon, S. D., & Kendall, P. C. (1980). Cognitive self-statements in depression: Development of an Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 4, 383–395.
- Hollon, S. D., Kendall, P. C., & Lumry, A. (1986). Specificity of depressotypic cognitions in clinical depression. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 95, 52–59.
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structural analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6, 1–55.
- Iskender, M. (2009). The relationship between self-compassion, self-efficacy, and control belief about learning in Turkish university students. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 37(5), 711–720.
- Jöreskog, K. G., & Sorbom, D. (1996). *LISREL 8 reference guide*. Lincolnwood, IL: Scientific Software International.
- Kirkpatrick, K. L. (2005). *Enhancing self-compassion using a Gestalt two-chair intervention*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- Martin, J. R. (1997). Mindfulness: A proposed common factor. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 7, 291–312.
- Neff, K. D. (2009). Self-Compassion. In M. R. Leary & R. H. Hoyle (Eds.). *Handbook of individual differences in social behavior* (pp. 561–573). Guilford Press.
- Neff, K. D. (2003a). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2(2), 85–102.
- Neff, K. D. (2003b). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2(3), 223–250.

- Neff, K. D., Hsieh, Y., & DeJitterat, K. (2005). Self-compassion, achievement goals, and coping with academic failure. *Self and Identity*, 4, 263–287.
- Neff, K. D., Kirkpatrick, K. L., & Rude, S. S. (2005). Accepting the human condition: Self-compassion and its link to adaptive psychological functioning. *Manuscript submitted for publication*, 1–43.
- Neff, K. D., Kirkpatrick, K. L., & Rude, S. S. (2007). Self-compassion and adaptive psychological functioning. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 41, 139–154.
- Neff, K. D. & McGeehee, P. (2010). Self-compassion and psychological resilience among adolescents and young adults. *Self and Identity*, 9, 225–240.
- Neff, K. D., Rude, S. S., & Kirkpatrick, K. L. (2007). An examination of self-compassion in relation to positive psychological functioning and personality traits. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 41, 908–916.
- Nisker, W. (1998). Mindfulness: The opposable thumb of consciousness (Chapter 3). In *Buddha's nature: A practical guide to discovering your place in the cosmos* (pp. 26–30). New York: Bantam Books.
- Nobre, J. P., & Pinto-Gouveia, J. (2008). Differences in automatic thoughts presented during sexual activity between sexually functional and dysfunctional men and women. *Cognitive Therapy Research*, 32, 37–49.
- Öztütüncü, F. (1996). *An investigation of the relationships between irrational/negative automatic thoughts, parenting styles, and family relationships in adolescents*. Unpublished master thesis, University of Marmara, Turkey.
- Piasecki J., & Hollon, S. D. 1987. Cognitive therapy for depression: Unexpected schemata and scripts. In Jacobson N. S., (Eds.), *Psychotherapies in clinical practice* (pp. 121–152). New York: Guilford Press.
- Radden, J. (2000). *The nature of melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rosenberg, L. (1999). Breathing with the body (Chapter 1). In *Breath by breath: The liberating practice of insight meditation* (pp. 10–39). Boston: Shambala.
- Şahin, N. H., & Şahin, N. (1992). Reliability and validity of the Turkish version of the Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 48, 334–340.
- Williams, J. G. (2005). *Forewarning: A tool to disrupt stereotype threat effects*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, TX, USA.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Son zamanlarda birçok araştırmacı, bireyin kendine yönelik pozitif tutumlar geliştirmesi için cesaretlendiren benlik saygısı programlarını eleştirmiş ve bu tür programların bireyin benliğine aşırı düzeyde vurgu yaptığı ve kendisini sevmesini yoğun biçimde dayattığı için narsistik tutumlara veya sağlıksız bir benlik algısı gelişimine yol açtığını iddia etmiştir. Bu tartışmalar Budist felsefesini temel alan ve bireyin kendine yönelik işlevsel tutumlar geliştirmesinde alternatif bir bakış açısı sağlayan *öz-duyarlık* yapısının öne sürülmesine yardımcı olmuştur. Öz-duyarlık, bireyin acı ve sıkıntı çekmesine neden olan duygularına açık olması, kendine özenli ve sevecen tutumlarla yaklaşması, yetersizlik ve başarısızlıklarına karşı anlayışlı ve yargısız olması ve yaşadığı olumsuz deneyimlerin insan yaşamının bir parçası olduğunu kabul etmesi olarak tanımlanabilir (Neff, 2003a).

Öz-duyarlık üç temel unsurdan oluşmaktadır: (a) Öz-sevecenlik; (b) Paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve (c) Bilinçlilik. Öz-sevecenlik, bireyin ön yargısız olarak kendini anlamaya çalışması ve benliğini sert biçimde yargılama ve eleştirmesi yerine ona yönelik nazik ve sevecen bir tavır takınmasıdır. Paylaşımların bilincinde olma, bireyin yaşamın mutlu veya sıkıntılı deneyimlerinin sadece kendi benliğine özgü olmadığına ve diğer tüm insanların benzer deneyimler yaşadıklarına ilişkin farkındalığını ifade eder (Neff, 2003a). Öz-duyarlığın üçüncü unsuru olan bilinçlilik ise bireyin yaşamının sıkıntılı ve üzücü duygularını kabul etmesini sağlayan ancak bu duygular tarafından sürüklenmesine izin vermeyen bir farkındalıktır (Gunaratana, 1993; Martin, 1997; Neff, 2003b; Nisker, 1998). Bu üç boyut kavramsal anlamda birbirlerinden farklı olmalarına ve fenomenolojik düzeyde farklı yaşanmalarına rağmen birbirleriyle karşılıklı etkileşimde bulunmakta, birbirlerinin meydana gelmesine ve gelişmelerine yardımcı olmaktadır. Araştırmalar öz-duyarlığın, öz-eleştiri, depresyon, anksiyete, derin düşünme ve düşünce baskısı (Neff, 2003a), kişilerarası ilişkilerde bilişsel çarpıtmalar (Akın, 2010a), yalnızlık (Akın, 2010b), boyun eğici davranış (Akın, 2009) ile negatif sosyal ilişki, duygusal zekâ, öz-saygı, öz-iradeli olma (Neff, 2003a) ve kendini aldatma (Akın & Abacı, 2009) ile pozitif ilişkili olduğunu kanıtlamıştır. Öz-duyarlık alanında yapılan araştırmalar oldukça yeni olduğu için, bu kavramın çeşitli değişkenlerle ilişkisini inceleyen araştırmalara ihtiyaç duyulduğu ortadadır.

Otomatik düşünceler bilişsel şemaların sonucu olarak birey tarafından sergilenen imaj veya bilişler veya belli bir durumda harekete geçen inançlardır (Beck, 1967). Bu düşünceler bilinçli bir çaba veya kontrol gerektirmeksizin zihne gelirler ve bireyin duygu durumu üzerinde güçlü bir etkisi vardır (Piasecki & Hollon, 1987). Örneğin birey yakın bir zaman içinde gireceği bir sınava yönelik olası bir otomatik düşünce “başarısız olacağımı biliyorum. Her zaman başarısız birisiyim” olabilir. Otomatik düşünceler aynı zamanda bilişsel sistemin daha temel ve sözel olmayan yapılarının içeriğini de yansıtabilir. Bu imaj ve düşünceler bireyin belli bir durum için geliştirdiği anlamları yansıtır ve bu olaya verilen duygusal ve davranışsal tepkilerle çok yakından ilişkilidir (Nobre & Pinto-Gouveia, 2008).

Araştırmalar otomatik düşüncelerin psikolojik ve fiziksel iyi olma üzerinde son derece etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu çalışmalarda otomatik düşüncelerin anksiyete (Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005; Ganellen, 1988), depresyon (Aydın, 1990; Aytar, 1987; Beck, 1967; Calvete & Connor-Smith, 2005), yalnızlık (Hoglund & Collison, 1989) ve evlilik çatışmaları (Öztütüncü, 1996) ile pozitif, iyimserlik ile negatif (Caryk & Walker, 1986) ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür.

Bu araştırmanın amacı öz-duyarlılık ile otomatik düşünceler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Araştırmada öz-duyarlılığın; öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçlilik alt boyutlarının otomatik düşüncelerle negatif, öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme alt boyutlarının ise pozitif ilişkili olacağı varsayılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi'nin çeşitli bölümlerinde öğrenim gören 299 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. 164'ü kız, 135'i erkek öğrenciden oluşan örneklemin yaş ortalaması 21.6'dır.

Araştırmada ölçme aracı olarak Öz-duyarlılık Ölçeği ile Otomatik Düşünceler Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Neff (2003b) tarafından geliştirilen Öz-duyarlılık Ölçeği 6 alt boyuttan oluşmaktadır: öz-sevecenlik, öz-yargılama, paylaşımların bilincinde olma, izolasyon, bilinçlilik ve aşırı özdeşleşme. 26 maddeden oluşan ve 5'li Likert tipi bir ölçme aracı olan Öz-duyarlılık Ölçeği'nin Türkçe uyarlama çalışması ile geçerlik ve güvenilirlik analizleri Akın ve diğerleri (2007) tarafından gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ölçeğin iç tutarlık güvenilirlik katsayıları .72 ile .80, üç hafta arayla yapılan test-tekrar test güvenilirlik katsayıları ise .56 ile .69 arasında değişmektedir. Hollon ve Kendall (1980) tarafından geliştirilen Otomatik Düşünceler Ölçeği depresyonla ilişkili olan 30 maddeden oluşmakta ve 5'li Likert tipi bir derecelendirme içermektedir. Otomatik Düşünceler Ölçeği'nin Türkçe uyarlama çalışması ile geçerlik ve güvenilirlik analizleri Aydın ve Aydın (1990) ile Şahin ve Şahin (1992) tarafından gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ölçeğin Türkçe formunun iç tutarlık güvenilirlik katsayıları .89 ile .95 arasında sıralanmaktadır. Ölçeğin test-tekrar test güvenilirlik katsayısı ise .77 olarak bulunmuştur.

Araştırmada öz-duyarlılık ile otomatik düşünceler arasındaki ilişkiler korelasyon ve yapısal eşitlik modeliyle incelenmiştir. Elde edilen veriler SPSS 11.5 ve LISREL 8.54 programları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öz-duyarlılık ile otomatik düşünceler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek için yapılan korelasyon sonucunda, öz-duyarlılığın öz-sevecenlik ($r=-.27, p<.01$), paylaşımların bilincinde olma ($r=-.13, p<.05$) ve bilinçlilik ($r=-.23, p<.01$) alt boyutlarının otomatik düşüncelerle negatif ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Öz-duyarlılığın diğer alt boyutları olan öz-yargılama ($r=.47, p<.01$), izolasyon ($r=.41, p<.01$) ve aşırı özdeşleşme ($r=.41, p<.01$) ise otomatik düşüncelerle pozitif ilişkili bulunmuştur.

Otomatik düşüncelerin öz-duyarlılık tarafından açıklanma düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla kurulan yapısal eşitlik modelinden elde edilen uyum indeksleri modelin iyi uyum verdiğini göstermektedir ($\chi^2=0.05, p=.03832, GFI=1.00, AGFI=.96, CFI=1.00, NFI=1.00, IFI=1.00, RFI=.97, SRMR=.014$ ve $RMSEA=.038$). Path analizi sonuçları, öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçliliğin otomatik düşünceleri negatif yönde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Öz-yargılama ve aşırı özdeşleşme ise otomatik düşünceleri açıklamada pozitif katkıda bulunmuştur. Öz-duyarlılık alt boyutlarının otomatik düşünceleri açıklama oranı $R^2=.39$ olarak saptanmıştır.

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular bir bütün olarak ele alındığında öz-duyarlılık ile otomatik düşünceler arasında doğrudan bir ilişki olduğu söylenebilir. Bu nedenle eğitsel ortamların bireylerin öz-duyarlılık düzeylerinin gelişmesine yardımcı olacak şekilde düzenlenmesi son derece önemlidir. Ancak araştırmanın yürütüldüğü çalışma grubunun üniversite öğrencileriyle sınırlı olması elde edilen bulguların genellenebilirliğini bir derece kısıtlamaktadır. Ayrıca öz-duyarlılık ile otomatik düşünceler

arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık edebilecek çeşitli duygusal ve sosyal değişkenler içeren çalışmaların bu iki değişken arasındaki ilişkinin daha derinlemesine anlaşılmasını kolaylaştıracağı düşünülmektedir.