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A STUDY INTO LIFE SATISFACTION LEVELS OF THE TEACHERS WORKING AT PRIMARY EDUCATION IN TERMS OF SOME VARIABLES

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine life satisfaction of teachers working at primary education in terms of such variables as their gender, whether they do social activities together out of school, status of education, they type of school they work, whether they are a member of a union, the type of location they work, the region they work. The working of the study consisted of 2116 teachers working at primary schools within the Ministry of Education in Turkey. Life Satisfaction Scale was used to collect data in the study. Depending on the findings of the study, it was found that life satisfaction of teachers differed significantly in terms of such variables as their gender, whether they are a member of a union, the type of location they live, the region and whether they do social activities together out of school. No significant difference was found at life satisfaction of teachers in terms of the variable of status of education.

Keywords: Teacher, Life Satisfaction, Type of Location, Region, Social Activity

İLKÖĞRETİMDE GÖREV YAPAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN YAŞAM DOYUMLARININ BAZI DEĞİŞKENLER AÇISINDAN İNCELENMESİ

ÖZET

Bu araştırmada, Türkiye’de ilköğretim okullarında çalışan öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumlarını, cinsiyetleri, öğretmenlerin okul dışında beraber sosyal etkinlik yapıp yapmama, öğrenim durumu, öğretmenlerin çalıştıkları okul türü, herhangi bir sendikaya üye olup olmama durumu, çalıştıkları yerleşim türü, öğretmenlerin çalıştıkları bölge değişkenleri açısından incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, Türkiye’nin Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı’na bağlı ilköğretim okullarında görev yapan 2116 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada verilerin toplanması için Yaşam Doyum Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre, öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumları, cinsiyet, sendikaya üye olup olmama, çalıştıkları okul türü, yaşadıkları yerleşim türü, bölge, okul dışında sosyal etkinlik yapıp yapmama değişkenlerine göre anlamlı bir farklılaşma göstermektedir. Öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumları, öğrenim durumları değişkenine göre anlamlı bir farklılaşma göstermemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğretmen, Yaşam Doyumu, Sendika, Yerleşim Türü, Bölge, Sosyal Etkinlik



1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

In the process where we live in, human being has been invented again and his perceptions and points of views have become more important. Man has been placed into the centre particularly at the science of administration and its theories. His ideas and recommendations related to business have become significant. The organizations putting man into the centre and granting authorities to him have caught the quality at work they conduct [1]. Therefore, such psychological features as the features, perceptions and happiness of those working at organizations have also become significant.

Working life is the field of life having a central position in the life of most individuals. Individuals spend the most important part of their lives with the role of "employee" within their working life. In this context, working life comprising an indispensable part of life has a remarkable impact on the general life of individual. Moreover, it is likely to see this impact on in the general life satisfaction of individual. It is the existence of a strong correlation between working life and life satisfaction [2]. Within this perspective it will be beneficial to study into life satisfaction of employees out of work.

The point of view of people to life, their expectations dealing with life and life satisfaction that is a psychological feature to which the levels of meeting these expectations leads are expected to affect the organizational life employees. As for life satisfaction, it is what a person wants and his perception of the case obtained through the comparison of what he possesses. Life satisfaction is a case coming out with the expectations of an individual regarding life and the level of meeting them. It refers to being well over such features as happiness and morale etc. [3 and 4].

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

Veenhoven [5] defined life satisfaction as the level of improving the whole quality of life positively. If life satisfaction is a positive improvement of an individual at every part of life, it can be considered that it will affect the work life having an inseparable part of an individual's life and his dependence on the organization.

Life satisfaction is an evaluation of an individual's self formed criteria related to what life is and the quality of his life in the fields such as family, school and friend as a whole [6]. Life satisfaction is expressed as a major component of a comprehensible happiness [7].

Life satisfaction, in common sense, can be defined as an emotional response of an individual against life described as, leisure time and time out of work [8]. Life satisfaction of individuals can be affected by many factors. Some of them are happiness felt in life satisfaction, meaning loaded onto life, harmony in reaching goals, positive individual identity, feeling oneself good physically, economical security and social relation [9].

Life satisfaction being a psychological feature and likely to have an impact on every aspect of daily life is of importance in terms of the occupation of teaching because teaching is a profession carried out in a relationship and interaction with human communities to a large extent [10]. On the other hand, another aspect of teaching making it different from other professions is that it has a power to influence individuals around in the process of the interacting. Such a case highlights the psychological features of teachers. Personal features of teachers are a power affecting cognitive, perceptive and social development of students [11]. As it is clear from the



expressions, it is likely to say that both personal features of teachers and the case of psychological feeling as a part of it are of importance as well. Live satisfaction, one of these psychological feeling cases, could affect school performance of teachers.

The purpose of this study was to examine life satisfaction of teachers in terms of different variables and present a general perspective concerning variables likely to have an impact on their life satisfaction. The topics below were searched out within the content of the study. Life satisfaction levels of teachers were analyzed according to the difference based on (a) genders of teachers, (b) whether they perform a social activity together out of the school, (c) their education levels, (d) the type of school they work, (e) whether they are a member of a union, (f) the types of locations they work, and (h) the regions they work.

3. METHOD (METOT)

The study is a scanning model. The working group consisted of 2116 teachers working at primary schools of the Ministry of Education in Turkey. The working group was selected as a categorized sampling method among teachers working in Turkey. 1018 of these teachers were women and 1148 were men. And 121 of them were working at private schools and 2045 was working at public schools.

Life Satisfaction Scale was used to determine life satisfaction of teachers to collect data. Turkish adaptation of Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Diner, Emmons, Larsen, Griffin [7] was done by Köker [12]. Life satisfaction scale was consisted of five items and each item was evaluated according to seven choices. As a result of reliability studies of the scale; test repetition test reliability was calculated as $r=.85$ and item - test correlations were calculated as the one between $.71$ and $.80$. Depending on the sub - purposes of the study, these statistical techniques were used in the analysis of the data.

Life satisfaction levels of teacher; the significance control of the difference between group means was carried out through "t-test" depending on the variables of gender of teachers, the case of whether they are a member of a union, their case of whether they perform a social activity together out of the school, the type of school they work. In addition, life satisfaction levels of teacher; the significance control of the difference between group means was carried out through "Variance Analysis" depending on the variables of the levels of life satisfaction of teachers, their education levels, the regions they work. For the items where a significant difference was found, Tukey multiple comparative test was applied in order to test between which groups this significance existed.

The level of significance in the analysis of the data at educational researches is mostly taken as 0.05 [13]. The significance level of the current study was taken as 0.05 as well.

4. FINDINGS (BULGULAR)

In this part, findings and comments reached through the statistical analyses concerning the sub-problems of the study were given. The results of the study were given in the rank in the sub-problems.



Table 1. Findings concerning t test comparison between life satisfaction scoring means of teachers

Tablo 1. Öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu puan ortalamaları arasındaki t testi karşılaştırmasına ilişkin bulgular

	Gender	N	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Life Satisfaction	Woman	1018	22,44	7,64	5,36	0,000
	Man	1148	20,70	7,45		

Table 1 shows that life satisfaction of means of female teachers were 22.44 while that of male teachers were 20.70. t value between scoring means of males and females was calculated as 5.36. Depending on the variable of gender; scoring means of life satisfaction of women were found significant compared to those of men.

Table 2. Findings concerning t test comparison between life satisfaction scoring means of teachers depending on the variable of whether they are a member of a union

Tablo 2. Herhangi bir sendikaya üye olup olmama değişkenlerine öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu puanları arasındaki t testi karşılaştırmasına ilişkin bulgular

	Whether they are a member of a union	N	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Life Satisfaction	Those being a member	1057	21,01	7,83	-3,02	0,002
	Those not being a member	1109	22,00	7,33		

Table 2 indicates that depending on scoring means of life satisfaction of teachers; a significant difference was found between scoring means of union members and those of the ones who were not a member of a union.

Table 3. Findings concerning t test comparison between life satisfaction scoring means of teachers working at public and private schools

Tablo 3. Kamu ve özel okulda çalışan öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu puanları arasındaki t testi karşılaştırmasına ilişkin bulgular

	The type of school teachers work	N	\bar{X}	sd	t	p
Life Satisfaction	Private	121	24,46	7,05	4,44	0,000
	Public	2045	21,34	7,58		

As Table 3 shows, depending on the life satisfaction scoring means of teachers; a significant difference was found between scoring means of teachers working in a public school and a private one. This difference is in favour of the teachers working at private schools.



Table 4. Statistical data of life satisfaction levels of teachers depending on the types of locations they live, variance analysis results and tukey test results

Tablo 4. Öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu düzeylerinin yaşadıkları yerleşim türlerine göre istatistiksel verileri, varyans analizi sonuçları ve tukey testi sonuçları

	The type of location teachers work	N	\bar{X}	sd	F	p	Difference between groups (Tukey)
Life Satisfaction	1. Town	1123	21,35	7,55	4,231	,015	1-3 2-3
	2. City Centre	729	21,27	7,84			
	3. Greater City	314	22,66	7,03			

As given in Table 4, life satisfaction scoring means of teachers concerning the types of location they live; town centres were calculated as 21.25, city centres were 21.27 and that of greater cities was 22.66. The value of 4.231F concerning scoring means shows that life satisfaction of teachers varied significantly depending on the type of location they live. In a dual comparison carried out to determine from which type of location this difference resulted, it was found that the scoring means those live in towns and city centres were significant compared to the ones living in greater cities.

Table 5. Statistical data of life satisfaction levels of teachers concerning the variable of the status of education

Tablo 5. Öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu düzeylerinin öğrenim durumu değişkenine göre istatistiksel verileri

	The Status of Education	N	\bar{X}	Sd	F	p
Life Satisfaction	1. College	647	21,29	8,17	2,329	,098
	2. Graduate	1443	21,53	7,34		
	3. Postgraduate	76	23,27	6,99		

Table 5 indicates that there was no significant difference between the scoring means of life satisfaction levels of teachers concerning the variable of the status of education.



Table 6. Statistical data of life satisfaction levels of teachers concerning the variable of the location they work

Tablo 6. Öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu düzeylerinin öğretmenlerin çalıştığı bölgeye göre istatistiksel verileri

	The location teachers work	N	\bar{X}	Sd	F	p	Difference between groups (Tukey)
Life Satisfaction	Mid South	282	22,52	7,62	2,626	,007	1-3 3-7
	Mid North	269	20,67	7,91			
	South East	332	20,45	7,26			
	Aegean	230	21,86	7,74			
	Marmara	238	21,53	7,47			
	Mediterranean	293	21,86	7,02			
	Black Sea	324	22,27	7,64			
	North East	125	20,61	7,78			
	Mid East	73	21,30	8,57			

2.628 F value obtained as a result of Variance analysis concerning life satisfaction levels of teachers depending on the location they work showed that no difference was found significantly between the groups. As a result of dual comparisons carried out to determine the source of the difference, the scoring means of the life satisfaction of teachers working in Mid South and Black Sea Regions were found significantly higher than those living the Southeast Region of Turkey.

Table 7. Findings concerning t test comparison between life satisfaction scoring means of teachers depending on the variable of whether they do social activities together out of school

Tablo 7. Okul dışında beraber sosyal etkinlik yapıp yapmama değişkenlerine göre öğretmenlerin yaşam doyumu düzeylerinin puanları arasındaki t testi karşılaştırmasına ilişkin bulgular

	Whether they do social activities together out of school"	n	\bar{X}	sd	t	P
Life Satisfaction	Those who do	1098	22,42	7,42	5,66	0,000
	Those who don't	1068	20,59	7,65		

The scoring means of life satisfaction of teachers depending on the ones doing social activities was 22.42 and those of the ones who do not do were 20.59. A significant difference was found between the scoring means of the ones doing a social activity and those not doing.

5. DISCUSSION (TARTIŞMA)

Life satisfaction of teachers differs significantly depending on their genders. Life satisfaction of female teachers is higher significantly compared to that of male teachers. The reason for the difference between the scores of male and female teachers could result from the process they were grown up. Features concerning girls are expressed through interpersonal relations mostly in our culture. Basic tasks expected from girls are; being emotional, being in cooperation, taking care and interest. As for boys, what is stressed about them is that they behave freely, represent their family and become competitive [14]. These could also lead women to be in higher expectation from life. Even though the opportunities offered to women were closer to the opportunities offered to men, life satisfaction of female teachers



could be higher than that of male teachers due to the difference in expectation. Women mostly prefer the profession of teaching. The reason of such a preference is the chance of part time working and long vacation [15]. These opportunities offered by the profession of teaching for the expectation of women could trigger life satisfaction.

No significant difference was found concerning the life satisfaction of teachers depending on the variable of gender as a result of a study conducted over teachers [16]. Also, in another study by Avşaroğlu et al. [17], life satisfaction showed no difference concerning the variable of gender. These results contradict the finding of the research concerning the variable of gender. The finding of a study by Deniz and Yılmaz [18] that life satisfaction differs depending on gender supports the conclusion of the research.

As a result of statistical analysis, life satisfaction of teachers being a member of a union is significantly higher than that of the ones not being a member of a union. The unions where teachers are members aim at constituting a school to make teachers survive a more qualitative life and a better life [19]. Laborers were given rights to become a member to a union in order to protect their economical, social rights and advantages in their labor relations (The Constitution, 1982). Depending on this assumption, teachers with low life satisfaction could consider that the reason why they cannot meet their expectations is the institutions they work.

According to the finding of the research the life satisfaction of the teachers working at private schools is significantly higher than that of teachers working at public schools. At the end of the study, a positive relation was found between labour satisfaction and life satisfaction [2, 17, 20, and 21]. In a study by Sönmezer and Eryaman [22], labour satisfaction of teachers working at private schools was found significantly higher compared to the ones working at public schools. The features revealing this difference was determined such factors as wage, social status, being known, promotion, using the skills, relations of manager - human being and creativity. Within the content of these findings, life satisfaction of the teachers working at private schools could be expected to become higher than those working at public schools. When we consider the impacts on life satisfaction, it is likely to say that wages at private schools, social status, being known, promotion, using skills, manager - human being relations and creativity can trigger life satisfaction of teachers.

At the end of the study, the level of life satisfaction of teachers living at towns and cities were significantly lower than those living at greater cities.

When we considered the finding of the question of the study in general, a significant difference was found at scoring means of teachers living at greater cities compared to the scoring means of life satisfactions of teachers living at other types of locations. This difference is in favour of teachers living at greater cities. Living at greater cities can offer a number of different opportunities to individuals. Individuals can meet most of their expectations concerning life satisfaction from the opportunities greater cities offer them. Therefore, the life satisfaction of teachers living at greater cities could be significantly higher than those living at other types of locations. In a study by Kılınc [23], it was that the environment people live has an impact on life satisfaction. It is likely to say that such a result can support the conclusion of the study.

As a result of the study life satisfaction of teachers concerning the status of education was significantly different. Even



though life satisfaction of teachers increases as education level increases, such a difference is not significant statistically. It is expected that life satisfaction should increase as the level of education of teachers increase; because in a study by Deniz and Yılmaz [18] life satisfaction of first grade students was found significantly lower than that of fourth grade students. Such a result can contradict with the finding of the study.

Depending on the finding of the study, the life satisfaction of the teachers working in Mid South and Black Sea regions of Turkey was found significantly higher than those working at Southeast region of the country. This finding of the study is parallel with another finding of the study that life satisfaction of teachers differs depending on the location. Socio economical features of the region teachers live and opportunities environment offers to individuals can affect life satisfaction. As for economical data of Turkey [24], gross domestic product levels both per person and per region in the regions of Mid South and Black Sea were found higher than those of Southeast region. That's why, the difference between life satisfactions depending on geographical regions where teachers live and their life satisfaction could result from economical features of the regions. In a study by Kılınç [23], it was found that the location people live has an impact on life satisfaction. Also, according to another study by Powdthavee [25], the life satisfaction of people living in regions with higher level of income is increased. It is likely to say that these two findings support the result of the study.

The last finding of the study is that life satisfaction of teachers doing social activities together out of the school is significantly higher than those not doing. The most dominant features differing man from other creatures is that he is a social being. Being together with other people, being able to work together with them, sharing feelings and ideas are basic features belonging to man. The fact that teachers do cultural and sportive activities together out of the school can increase life satisfaction by meeting social expectations. Diener and Diener [26] found that close relationships have an important impact on expressing life satisfaction. As teachers could constitute close relations with their activities they do, such a finding supports the result of the study.

A direct relation was found between positive attitudes of laborers towards their occupation and doing activities out of work [27]. A significant difference was found between labour satisfaction and life satisfaction [2 and 17]. Depending on the results of these two studies, it is likely to expect that life satisfaction of teachers doing social activities out of the school is higher. Froh et al. [28] found a positive relation between human relations and life satisfaction. Powdthavee [25] also found in a study that there is a positive relation between neighbourhood and life satisfaction. It is also likely to say that these two studies support the result of the study.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (SONUÇLAR VE ÖNERİLER)

Concerning the conclusion of the study, life satisfaction of teachers varies depending on the variables of gender, whether they become a member of a union, the type of school they work, the type of location they work, region, whether they do social activities out of the school. Life satisfaction of teachers also differs depending on the status of education of teachers.

The following can be recommended depending on the findings obtained in the study:



- When we consider the life satisfaction of teachers working at private schools is higher than those working at public schools, the working conditions of teachers working at public schools can be improved.
- As we consider the difference depending on the places and regions teachers live, the working conditions of teachers working underdeveloped places can be improved.
- As for the fact that life satisfaction teachers doing social activities outside the school is higher than those not doing, social activities of teachers outside the school should be encouraged and some opportunities dealing with it should be supplied.
- The reason why teachers do not become a member of a union can be examined in terms of different variables.
- The reasons why life satisfaction of male teachers is higher than that of female teachers can be examined.
- The source group the study was carried out over teachers working at primary schools. Such a study could be conducted over teachers working other types of schools.
- Life satisfaction of teachers can be examined in the context of other variables.

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