

## The Effect of Psychological Well-Being on Self-Confidence in Exercise Participants

### Egzersiz Katılımcılarında Psikolojik İyi Oluşun Öz Güven Üzerindeki Etkisi

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aimed to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-confidence in exercise participants and investigate the effect on it. Personal Information Form, Psychological Well-Being Scale, and Self-Confidence Scale were data collection tools. Participants were reached by convenience sampling method, one of the sampling methods not based on probability. The research population consisted of individuals aged 18-45 who regularly exercise (30 minutes at least three days a week for one year). The study sample consisted of 306 participants, 145 men (47.39%), and 161 women (52.61%), who exercise regularly. Pearson Correlation and Regression analysis were used through the SPSS package program to analyze the obtained data. When the research results were examined, it was seen that psychological well-being had a positive and significant effect on internal and external self-confidence ( $p<0.05$ ). As a result, psychological well-being is an important predictor of internal self-confidence (62.0%) and external self-confidence (41.0%) in exercise participants.

**Keywords:** exercise, psychological well-being, self-confidence.

**ÖZ:** Bu çalışmanın amacı egzersiz yapan katılımcılarda psikolojik iyi oluş ve öz güven arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek ve bunun üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktır. Veri toplama araçları olarak Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Psikolojik İyi Oluş Ölçeği ve Öz Güven Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Katılımcılara seçkisiz olmayan örnekleme yöntemlerinden biri olan kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile ulaşılmıştır. Araştırma evrenini 18-45 yaş arası düzenli egzersiz yapan (bir yıl boyunca haftada en az üç gün 30 dakika) bireyler oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın örneklemi, düzenli egzersiz yapan 145 erkek (%47,39) ve 161 kadın (%52,61) olmak üzere toplam 306 katılımcıdan oluşmaktadır. Elde edilen verileri analiz etmek için SPSS paket programı aracılığıyla Pearson Korelasyon ve Regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları incelendiğinde, psikolojik iyi oluşun içsel ve dışsal öz güven üzerinde pozitif ve anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olduğu görülmüştür ( $p<0,05$ ). Sonuç olarak psikolojik iyi oluş, egzersiz katılımcılarında içsel öz güvenin (%62,0) ve dışsal öz güvenin (%41,0) önemli bir yordayıcısıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** egzersiz, psikolojik iyi oluş, öz güven

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Because exercise has many curative and preventive effects on mental and physical health, there has been a growing interest in raising awareness of mental and physical health through exercise. Exercise is any bodily activity that develops or maintains physical fitness and general health and wellness (Kylasov & Gavrov, 2011). Exercise is essential to improve overall health, maintain fitness, and help prevent the development of obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. According to Vuori (1995), the positive effect of exercise not only improves mental and physical health, but also improves psychological well-being.

It has been observed that researchers in exercise psychology studies generally focus on negative emotions such as unhappiness, depression, and lack of motivation. According to Seligman, dealing with psychopathology is useful, but not sufficient to deal with all emotions (Seligman, 2003). However, it was suggested by Martin Seligman, the pioneer of the positive psychology movement, that the field of psychology should be viewed not only from the framework of negative emotions or approaches but also from a different perspective, which also deals with positive emotions (Yıldız, 2021). It has been stated that positive psychology is an approach that focuses on the strengths of individuals apart from their weaknesses, and their solutions rather than their problems (Demir & Türk, 2020). This approach is aimed not only at reducing or eliminating the discomfort of individuals but also at increasing the development, well-being, and quality of life of individuals. This emphasis of positive psychology on the development and strengths of individuals has brought the concept of well-being with it. The concept of well-being is a subjective concept where positive emotions exist and are described as getting rid of negative emotions (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Antaramian et al., 2010). When the studies in the literature are examined, it is seen that well-being has definitions such as enjoying life, well-being, and well-being (Penedo & Dahn, 2005).

Well-being is handled in two ways: the hedonic approach and the eudaimonic approach. The hedonic approach is subjective well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). In this approach, a theory based on obtaining satisfaction, providing happiness through pleasure, and avoiding pain, includes the emotional elements of the balance between positive and negative emotions (Budak, 2017; Karaarslan, 2021; Keyes & Ryff, 2002). The

eudaimonic approach is defined as psychological well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). This approach defines a complete and reassuring life, the developmental processes of individuals and their functioning holistically by realizing themselves (Disatoba et al., 2016; Linley, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2001). When other sources are examined, it also includes the quality of social relations in the lives of individuals, where psychological well-being emphasizes meaning and purpose, is strongly related to the orientation to the meanings it attributes to happiness and the search for meaning in life (Ryan et al., 2008). Research has highlighted the link between psychological well-being with more components such as subjective well-being and happiness, optimistic thinking, positive mood, fulfilling life, autonomy, creative relationships with others, as well as self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-esteem, and meaning in life (Diener et al., 1999; Disabato et al., 2016; Seligman, 2008; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Self-confidence is the belief that individuals can successfully perform a certain activity. It is also about individuals' ability to direct and complete their actions successfully (Feltz, 1988; Gottlieb et al., 2022; Karademir, 2015). Self-confidence is also shaped by an individual's character, experiences, expectations, and social and cultural conditioning. An individual's previous experiences and basic confidence can inform his future confidence, such that self-confidence can be built on himself in a positively or negatively (Costello, 2005; Gottlieb et al., 2022). When the concept of self-confidence is examined in-depth, it appears internal and external. While internal self-confidence is a situation related to the self-confidence of individuals, external self-confidence is a situation related to the self-confidence specific to the external environment and social life (Akin, 2007). In the concept of inner self-confidence, beliefs such as self-love, self-knowledge, setting clear goals for and being contented and at peace with oneself by including positive thoughts and feelings towards these beliefs are mentioned. The concept of external self-confidence includes behaviors such as interaction and communication with the environment, self-expression, self-confidence, and controlling emotions (Lindenfield, 2004).

Individuals engage in activities such as sports, art, etc., in their spare time to reduce the negative effects of the external environment, regain the declining mental energy in business and social life, and feel happy, good, and healthy. They can participate in many activities (Tekin, Amman, Tekin, 2009). Physical activity has an important place in these activities. When the literature is examined in general, it is seen that physical activities

positively contribute to individuals (Başar, 2018). In studies where psychological well-being and self-confidence were investigated together, it was stated that the self-confidence levels of individuals with high psychological well-being levels would also be high, and the effect of exercise was positive in reaching this conclusion (Avşar, 2019; İlhan et al., 2021; Khair et al., 2021; Polat, 2020; Yalçın & Ayhan, 2020; Yıldırım, 2013). Considering this information, it was aimed to investigate the effect of psychological well-being on self-confidence in exercise participants in this study.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research Model

In this study, descriptive research design, one of the quantitative research models, was used to determine the participants' demographic characteristics, psychological well-being, and self-confidence levels. The relational research model was used to examine the relationship between the participants' psychological well-being and self-confidence levels. The relational research method is used to determine the relationships between variables and to predict possible outcomes. The level of relationship between two or more variables is measured using statistical tests (Karasar, 2009). For this study, the necessary ethical permissions were obtained from the Ethics Committee of Istanbul Gedik University (Number: E-56365223-050.01.04-2022.137548.59-329, Dated: 29.03.2022).

### 2.2. Participant (Subject) Characteristics

The population of the study is made up of individuals between the ages of 18 and 45 who exercise regularly. In the study, regular exercise was 30 minutes or more three days a week for at least one year. The study's sampling was made using the random sampling method, which is one of the random sampling methods. Minimum sample size calculation with the Gpower program; The effect size was determined as 0.1, the margin of error was 5%, the power was 95%, and it was determined as 185 people. Accordingly, 306 participants, 145 men (47.39%) and 161 women (52.61%) who exercise regularly, were included in the study voluntarily.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools

This study used the Personal Information Form, Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS), and Self-Confidence Scale as data collection tools.

#### 2.3.1. Personal Information Form

The researcher prepared a personal information form to learn the general information of the people who will participate in the research. Using the personal information form, information such as gender, how many years they have been exercising, how many days and how many hours a week they exercise, and what type of exercise they like to do were obtained.

#### 2.3.2. Psychological Well-Being Scale

The Psychological Well-Being Scale introduced by Diener et al. (2009) to measure multiple facets of psychological well-being, from positive relationships of individuals and feelings of adequacy to having a meaningful and purposeful, was translated into and adapted Turkish by Telef (2013). According to the exploratory factor analysis of the scale, the total explained variance was 42%. It shows that the scale has a general factor as in the original version. The factor load of the scale items was calculated to range from 0.54 to 0.76. In the original version, the explained variance was 53%, and the factor loads ranged between 0.61 and 0.77 (Diener et al., 2009). The fit indexes in the confirmatory factor analysis results indicated that the ratio of the chi-square value to the degree of freedom was below 5 ( $92.90/20= 4.645$ ). Other fit indexes were RMSEA= 0.08, SRMR= 0.04, GFI= 0.96, NFI= 0.94, RFI= 0.92, CFI= 0.95 and IFI=0.95. When these results are considered, the scale may be interpreted to have acceptable fit indexes.

#### 2.3.3. Self-confidence Scale

Self-confidence was measured using the Self-Confidence Scale, an instrument developed by Akin (2007). The Self-Confidence Scale is a validated 33-item questionnaire, with each item having a possible score ranging from 1 to 5, with a minimum score of 33 and a maximum of 165. Self-confidence level is measured as the total scale score divided by 33, the number of questions. A score of less than 2.5 indicates low self-confidence, a score between 2.5 and 3.5 indicate moderate self-confidence and a score higher than 3.5 indicates a high level of self-confidence. Construct and concurrent validities, internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities, and item-total correlations were examined for the scale. Factor analysis for construct validity revealed that inner self-confidence and external self-confidence account for 43.6% of the total variance. The internal consistencies were 0.83 for the entire scale, 0.83 for inner self-confidence, and 0.85 for external self-confidence. Test-retest reliability coefficients were 0.94 for the entire scale, 0.97 for inner self-confidence, and 0.87 for external self-confidence. Findings also

demonstrated that item–total correlations ranged from 0.30 to 0.72 (Akin, 2007).

#### 2.4. Data Analysis

The data collected in the study were analyzed, and the results were interpreted through the SPSS 25.0 statistical package program. Skewness-Kurtosis test was used in the normalization test. Correlation analysis and simple linear regression analysis were performed. The margin of error of the study was taken as 0.05.

When the normal distribution of the research data is examined (Table 1), it is seen that the skewness and

kurtosis values of the scores obtained from the scales are within the limits of  $-1 \pm 1$  and the data show a normal distribution (Büyüköztürk, 2011).

**Table 1.** Distribution of scale scores

	n	M ± SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Psychological Well-Being	306	5.43±1.82	-.865	.099
Internal Self-Confidence	306	4.14±1.61	-.366	.312
External Self-Confidence	306	4.22±1.29	-.944	.078

### 3. RESULTS

**Table 2.** Correlations between all variables

	n	M ± SD	Psychological Well-Being	Internal Self-Confidence	External Self-Confidence
Psychological Well-Being	306	5.43±1.82	1		
Internal Confidence	306	4.14±1.61	,589**	1	
External Confidence	306	4.22±1.29	,143*	,858**	1

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01

When the analysis results in Table 2 are examined, it is seen that there is a statistically significant moderate positive relationship between psychological well-being and internal self-confidence; It was determined that

there was a statistically significant low-level positive relationship between psychological well-being and external self-confidence (p<0.01).

**Table 3.** The effect of psychological well-being on internal self-confidence

	B	t	p	β	VIF	F	p(Model)	R <sup>2</sup>
<b>Stable</b>	5.193	19.193	.00					
<b>Psychological Well-Being</b>	.728	2.861	.01	.583	2.149	24.187	.000	.620

Dependent Variable: Internal Self-Confidence

In Table 3, linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of psychological well-being on internal self-confidence. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the psychological state predicted

the internal self-confidence variable by 62% (adj. R<sup>2</sup>=.620). In addition, it was determined that psychological well-being affects internal self-confidence positively (β=.583, p<0.01).

**Table 4.** The effect of psychological well-being on external self-confidence

	B	t	p	β	VIF	F	p(Model)	R <sup>2</sup>
<b>Stable</b>	4.076	9.058	.00					
<b>Psychological Well-Being</b>	,912	1,967	.00	.397	1.682	18.925	.000	.410

Dependent Variable: External Self-Confidence

In Table 4, linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of psychological well-being on external self-confidence. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the psychological state predicted the external self-confidence variable by 41% (adj. R<sup>2</sup>=.410). In addition, it was determined that

psychological well-being had a positive effect on external self-confidence (β=.397, p<0.01).

### 4. DISCUSSION

The study examined the effect of psychological well-being on self-confidence in people who exercise

regularly. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological well-being, internal and external self-confidence; it has also been determined that psychological well-being positively affects internal and external self-confidence.

Many studies have shown that, in general, those who exercise have higher levels of psychological well-being than those who do not. For example, adults who exercise tend to have higher self-confidence, less distress, and be free from depression than those who are less active (Yeung & Hemsley, 1997). The general interpretation of such results is that individuals who start exercising feel better or with high psychological well-being are more likely to exercise (Delextrat et al., 2016; Elmas et al., 2021; Osman, 2017).

As a result of their study, Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter (2003) examined the behaviors, habits, and environmental factors that affect psychological well-being. They determined that instant assessments significantly change happiness both on the days of the week and in periods during the day. They found that certain activities, especially social activities, were associated with changes in people's well-being levels. In the literature examined, it was concluded that the 8-week zumba activity increased the psychological well-being of physical activity in women (Delextrat et al., 2016). Elmas et al. (2021), physical activity increases the psychological well-being of university students; Başar and Sarı (2018) stated that regular exercise affects psychological well-being positively; Hicks et al. (2003) found that regular physical activity provides significant gains in both physical and psychological well-being of the individual. Considering the integrated structure of the concept of psychological well-being, it was thought that it would be effective to consider and evaluate it with the concept of self-confidence.

Examples of the psychological mechanisms by which exercise can affect mental health and psychological well-being, such as avoiding stress and worries, and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence, can be counted among the positive effects of physical activity (Liao et al., 2017; Lubans et al., 2016; Mikkelsen et al., 2017). Self-confidence is based on self-respect and the courage to realize the truth about who one is, what one likes and believes (Peterson, 2017). In other words, it is about knowing one's strengths and weaknesses. Slutzky and Simpkins (2009) stated that doing sports regularly or participating in physical activities relates to personality structure, self-confidence and developing positive behaviors. Sebire et al. (2008) emphasized that exercise increases physical self-worth and confidence,

supports psychological well-being, and helps reduce physical anxiety. In a study by Kouli et al. (2010) examining the relationship between the emotional state and self-confidence levels of Greek athletes, it was determined that there was a positive relationship between mood and self-confidence level.

As a result, the study emphasizes that exercise participants' psychological well-being levels significantly affect their inner and outer self-confidence. Factors affecting psychological well-being have received great attention in the last decade. These findings can be integrated into various assistance programs to increase psychological well-being through a better understanding of the factors affecting psychological well-being and the development of a comprehensive program of psychological flexibility, self-confidence, and self-understanding. In addition, inclusion of individuals in exercise programs that they are interested in will positively affect their self-confidence levels, thus leading to higher psychological well-being levels. Therefore, it is recommended that individuals participate in such activities to improve their psychological health, well-being, and quality of life.

The present study has several limitations. First, our sample needed to be more extensive and diverse. The sample obtained can be expanded by providing the participation of more exercisers. Second, cross-sectional, correlational design limits the number of conclusions that can be drawn about the direction and nature of relationships. Thus, the effect of psychological well-being on self-confidence can be seen more effectively with a longitudinal study. In addition, other methods such as observation and interview can be used to increase the effectiveness of the research.

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## 6. ETHICS STATEMENT

For this study, the necessary ethical permissions were obtained from the Ethics Committee of Istanbul Gedik University (Number: E-56365223-050.01.04-2022.137548.59-329, Dated: 29.03.2022).

## 7. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

BS was the study organizer and participated in the research design, data collection, and data analysis. SK,

ES, and FH participated in the literature research, editing, and writing stages. The authors read and approved the final version of the article and accepted the authors' presentation order. The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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