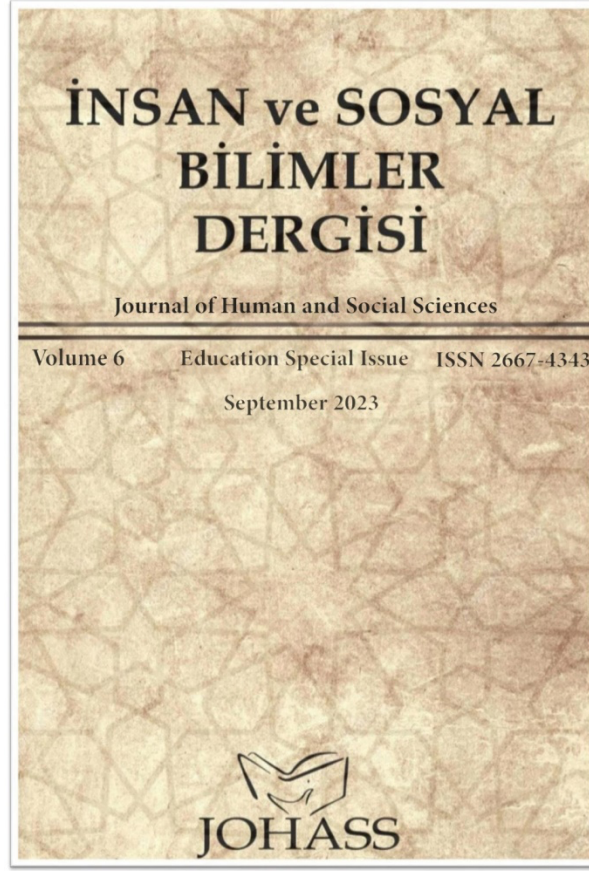


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The Direct and Indirect Effects of Positive Future Expectations on Psychological Well-Being of College Students: Quiet Ego as A Mediator

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the associations between positive future expectations, quiet ego, and psychological well-being among college students. It was hypothesized that there would be direct and indirect effects of positive future expectations on psychological well-being through quiet ego. The data was gathered from a sample consisting of 250 college students. Participants completed several instruments, namely, the Positive Future Expectation Scale, the Quiet Ego Scale, the Flourishing Scale, and the demographic information form. The analyses revealed that there is a significant direct effect of positive future expectations on psychological wellbeing. It was also found that there is a significant indirect effect of positive future expectations on psychological wellbeing via quiet ego. The obtained findings were discussed within the context of existing research. This study contributes to the expanding body of literature on psychological well-being by demonstrating that the quiet ego serves as a factor in explaining how positive future expectations are connected to psychological well-being.

Keywords: Positive future expectations, quiet ego, psychological well-being, college students, mediation analysis

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Introduction

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in the field of psychology towards positive psychology, which emphasizes the development of positive qualities in individuals rather than solely addressing negative features that impact their mental health. This shift has prompted a rise in positive psychology research (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Simultaneously, terms such as well-being (Diener, 1984; Ryff, 1989, 1995), happiness (Ryff, 1989; Waterman, 1993), life satisfaction (Neugarten et al., 1961), hope, optimism (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), and flow (Herzog & Strevey, 2008), as well as concepts such as quiet ego (Bauer & Wayment, 2008), humility (Kesebir, 2014; Tangney, 2000), and gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), which refers to go beyond self-centeredness, have acquired popularity in the field of psychology. However, such psychological constructs have already been known for many years in some Eastern cultures which have spiritual and collectivistic elements and people within these cultures have been encouraged to improve these qualities to achieve flow. Turkey also has a social structure that encompasses spiritual (Karairmak, 2004) and collectivist aspects (Hofstede, 2001; Kagitcibasi, 2005). Its cultural atmosphere invites its members to quiet their egos and transcend their self-centeredness to achieve both individual and social well-being. In parallel with this invitation, there is a growing body of research in the current literature addressing the relationship between quiet ego and well-being and indicating that the quiet ego is one of the key determinants of psychological well-being (Liu et al., 2022; Niemic et al., 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2018; Wayment et al., 2015). Nevertheless, a limited amount of research has provided comprehensive insight into the underlying mechanism of this relationship. The present study aimed to obtain a deeper comprehension of the relationship between quiet ego and psychological well-being and considered the concept of positive future expectations as a predictor.

Positive future expectation refers to an optimistic attitude about upcoming events and circumstances (Imamoglu, 2001; Imamoglu & Guler-Edwards, 2007). Given that one of the quiet ego's primary concerns is long-term personal growth (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Liu et al., 2022), it is hypothesized that this aspect of quiet ego would link it to positive future expectations. Furthermore, positive future expectation is related to self-development, which plays a crucial role in the formation of identity throughout the stage of emerging adulthood, as noted by Marcia (1983) and it is influenced by the sociocultural environment that is determined by external stresses (Stoddard & Pierce, 2015). These connections point out the

necessity of exploring the relationships between positive future expectations, quiet ego, and psychological well-being during the period of emerging adulthood. Besides that, a recent study, the Global Youth Wellbeing Index, undertaken by the International Youth Foundation (2017), has also presented interesting findings highlighting the necessity of investigating these linkages. According to the results of this study, young people in Turkey reported the highest levels of stress among all the countries included in the index, but they were still optimistic about the future. This finding may be related to the fact that Turkey's collectivist and spiritual cultural structure, which supports the quiet ego, is also reflected in the younger generations. As a matter of the fact, various studies in the existing literature have shown that quiet ego is associated with higher levels of subjective well-being and reduced stress levels (Wayment & Bauer, 2018; Wayment et al., 2015, 2016). Many individuals in the period of emerging adulthood are enrolled as students, and their experience of being a student is often characterized by a notable tendency toward future (Huang et al., 2021). During the college years, students are engaged in reflection regarding their commitments and objectives, which will eventually serve as the foundation for their forthcoming adulthood (Arnett, 2014). However, both the recent pandemic and the economic difficulties it brings with it, and the post-graduation plans of college students might have negatively affected young people's positive emotions about future and their ability to maintain their lives effectively (Çevik & Öneren, 2019; Çiçek & Almalı, 2020). In such a challenging process, it is vital for college students to maintain their psychological well-being and develop positive expectations for the future, and quiet ego may contribute to supporting these two psychological structures. From this point of view, this study focused on the period of emerging adulthood and aimed to examine the role of quiet ego in the relationship between positive future expectations and psychological well-being of college students.

Psychological Well-being

Within the existing body of literature, it is widely acknowledged that the construct of psychological well-being has predominantly been constructed upon two fundamental philosophical frameworks, namely hedonism and eudaimonia (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Hedonism, as a philosophical concept, refers to the act of making decisions based on the pursuit of pleasure, with the objective of constructing a life characterized by happiness and contentment (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Eudaimonia, a concept attributed to the well-known philosopher Aristotle, pertains to achieving of the highest point of goods and perfection

through the realization of one's unique and inherent potential (Ryff, 1989, 1995). In the present study, our primary focus was directed towards the latter construct, namely eudemonic well-being. Within the eudemonic perspective, psychological well-being is equivalent to positive psychological functioning (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Bradburn (1969), one of the first scientists to examine the concept of psychological well-being, adopted a eudaimonic perspective and conceptualized the concept as the prevalence of situations in which individuals experience satisfaction greater than the circumstances in which they experience disappointment. Huppert (2009) defined psychological well-being as the state in which life is on a positive trajectory. It involves both experiencing positive emotions and effectively navigating life's challenges. Sustainable well-being does not necessitate individuals to be in a constant state of happiness; encountering difficult emotions like disappointment, failure, or grief is a natural aspect of life, and the ability to effectively cope with these negative or painful emotions is crucial for enduring well-being. With the PERMA model, Seligman (2011) proposed that flourishing is achieved through the interplay of five essential components of well-being: Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Ryff (1989) has put forward a more comprehensive psychological well-being model consisting of six components: Self-acceptance, positive relations with others, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and autonomy (Ryff, 1989, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008). *Autonomy* involves the ability to assess oneself based on personal standards rather than seeking external approval. *Environmental mastery* entails the capacity to select and establish environments that cater to individual needs. *Personal growth* encompasses an openness to novel experiences and the perception of oneself as evolving and expanding over time. *Positive relations with others* revolve around fostering warm and trusting interactions, displaying empathy, affection, and intimacy. *Purpose in life* encompasses the cultivation of goals, intentions, and a sense of direction, contributing to a profound sense of life's meaning. *Self-acceptance* involves the ability to appraise oneself and one's past life in a positive light, while acknowledging both positive and negative attributes within oneself (Ryff, 1989; 1995). According to Ryff (1989), each facet represents distinct challenges that individuals encounter in their pursuit of positive functioning. The present study addressed psychological well-being based on Ryff's perspective.

In the existing literature, there are several factors in relevant to psychological well-being. For instance, recent research showed that psychological well-being is associated with self-esteem, self-efficacy, quality of family relationships, social support (DeNeve & Cooper,

1998; Iraz et al., 2021), egotism, self-interest (Bauer & Wayment, 2008), gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), quiet ego (Liu et al., 2022; Niemic et al., 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2018; Wayment et al., 2015), mindfulness (Baer et al., 2008; Brown et al., 2007; Hamarta et al., 2013; Howell et al., 2008), active participation in leisure activities (Sacker & Cable, 2006), emotional intelligence (Deniz et al., 2017), cognitive flexibility (Fu & Chow, 2016) etc. The current study focused on two variables that have the potential to be related to psychological well-being among college students: Positive future expectations and quiet ego.

Positive Future Expectations

In the extant literature future expectations are conceptualized as the perceptions that individuals create about themselves based on their experiences in their past lives (Rotter, 1975). The individuals' perspectives on the future, that is, whether they have positive or negative expectations about the future, have significant importance in their life journey, as the image that they form of themselves in the future serves as a model that drives their behavior and focuses their efforts on a specific goal (Nurmi, 1991, 1993). An individual who possesses an optimistic perspective characterized by hope and optimism has a tendency to take on a more positive and consistent endeavor in achieving his or her goals (Scheier & Carver, 1985; Snyder et al., 1991). Recent research findings have shown that individuals with positive future expectations exhibit heightened levels of hope, optimism, and overall happiness. Moreover, holding positive future expectations tends to favorably impact one's overall well-being and ability to adapt to his or her chosen career path (Doğan, 2006; Eryılmaz 2011; Karakoç et al., 2013; Şimsek, 2012; Taş & Özmen, 2019; Toker & Kalıpçı, 2021). Furthermore, in a study conducted by Ehtiyar et al. (2017), it was found a positive significant relationship between college students' attitudes towards the future, positive future expectations and psychological well-being, and that positive future expectations affect psychological well-being more than attitudes towards the future. In another study on young people's perceptions of the future, the results revealed that future expectation is linked to three basic processes: Motivation, planning and evaluation. Also, it was found that young people's goals and interests are often linked to late adolescence and early adulthood developmental tasks (Seginer, 2003). It seems that young people who have a positive outlook despite difficult conditions have the ability to create their own life plans and determine the path to success thanks to their success (Walsh, 1996). The present study aimed to examine the

direct and indirect effects of positive future expectations on the psychological well-being of college students.

Quiet Ego

Quiet ego is described as “a self-identity that is not excessively self-focused but also not the excessively other-focused-an identity that incorporates others without losing the self” in extent literature (Bauer & Wayment, 2008, p. 8). It refers to the problematic aspects of excessive self-interest (e.g., egotism and narcissism) and noisy ego (Wayment et al., 2015). Thus, the quiet ego provides a backdrop for hearing the voices of others (Bauer & Wayment, 2008) and treating them with compassion (Wayment et al., 2015). It also contributes to the growth of the self and others (Wayment & Bauer, 2018) by balancing the needs and aspirations of the self and the others and creating internal and social harmony (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2018; Wayment et al., 2015). Besides that, it activates the sense of being a part of a more significant meaning and picture (Kesebir, 2014).

According to Wayment et al. (2015), the concept of the quiet ego consists of four components, namely detached awareness, inclusive identity, perspective-taking, and growth, which are founded on two main orientations, balance and growth. *Detached awareness* is about an individual’s appreciating the value of the moment in a non-judgmental awareness (Wayment et al., 2015), approaching things from a mental distance (Liu et al., 2021; 2022), accepting themselves with their positive and negative aspects with a non-defensive attitude (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Wayment et al., 2015). It is mainly related to growth orientation (Wayment & Bauer, 2018). *Inclusive identity* refers to including others in personal space in a non-defensive manner (Liu et al., 2022) and is related to being open to cooperating with them. It is mainly relevant to balance orientation (Wayment & Bauer, 2018). *Perspective-taking* is associated with the ability to understand and espouse the perspectives of others (Davis, 1983; Liu et al., 2021). It is relevant to balance orientation (Liu et al., 2022; Wayment & Bauer, 2018). *Growth* refers to the experiential and reflective motivation for personal growth (Bauer et al., 2015) and it is related to growth orientation (Wayment & Bauer, 2018).

Research has shown that the quiet ego is positively associated with various variables such as values, including well-being (especially eudaimonic well-being) (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Niemiec et al., 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2018; Wayment et al., 2015), meaning of life (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Wayment & Bauer 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Steger et al., 2006), compassionate goals, self-control (Wayment et al.,

2015, 2016), mindfulness (Heppner & Kernis, 2007), universalism, benevolence, and self-direction (Wayment & Bauer, 2008). Additionally, it provides a backdrop for building a sense of self-concept suited to subjective well-being (Gilbert, 2009). The present study aimed to examine the direct and indirect effects of positive future expectations on the psychological well-being of college students through quiet ego.

Method

Model

This study was methodologically designed as correlational research. According to Creswell (2011, p. 340), correlational research can be categorized into two primary types, namely explanatory research design and prediction research design. The prediction research design is used “to identify variables that will predict an outcome or criterion” (Creswell, 2011, p. 341). The present study employed the prediction research design. The outcome variable in this study was psychological well-being, whereas the predictor variables were positive future expectations and quiet ego.

Sample and Population

The study sample comprised 250 undergraduate students (176 females, 74 males) in Istanbul. The participants’ ages ranged from 18 to 25, with a mean age of 20.55 ($SD = 2.37$). The sample consisted of 7.2% prep class students, 40.0% first-year students, 26.0% second-year students, 16.4% third-year students, and 10.4% fourth-year students. The predominant family structure observed within the sample was that of nuclear families (89.6%). The family structure of 10.4% of the participants was extended family. The socioeconomic status of 29.2% of the sample was low, 57.2% was middle, and 13.6% was high.

Data Collection Tools

Participants completed four instruments: The Positive Future Expectation Scale, The Quiet Ego Scale (QES), The Flourishing Scale, and personal information form.

Quiet Ego Scale (QES). The QES is a scale developed by Wayment et al. (2015) to measure the psychological characteristics of the quiet ego, including detached awareness (e.g., “I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I’m doing.”), inclusive identity

(e.g., “I feel a connection with strangers.”), perspective-taking (e.g., “Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.”), and growth (e.g., “For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.”). It consists of fourteen items on a 5-point Likert-type scale ($1 = \textit{strongly disagree}$; $5 = \textit{strongly agree}$). It has five reverse items. Higher scores indicate a greater degree of quiet ego characteristics. The original scale development study found Cronbach’s alpha value as .75 (Wayment et al., 2015). The study on Turkish adaption was carried out by Akça (2014) and Cronbach’s alpha value was found as .70. In the current study, McDonald’s Omega (ω) was calculated as .73.

Positive Future Expectations Scale. The Positive Future Expectations Scale consisting of 5 items (e.g., “I am very optimistic about my personal future.”) rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ($1 = \textit{strongly disagree}$; $5 = \textit{strongly agree}$), was developed by Imamoglu (2001) to measure the extent to which individuals have positive expectations about their personal future. Higher scores on the scale indicate positive expectations for the future. One of the items was reversed. The alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was reported as .85 (Imamoglu, 2001; Imamoglu & Guler-Edwards, 2007) in the original study. In the present study, McDonald’s Omega (ω) was found as .93.

Flourishing Scale. The Flourishing Scale developed by Diener et al. (2009) consists of eight items (e.g., “I lead a purposeful and meaningful life.”, “I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others.”) rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ($1 = \textit{strongly disagree}$; $7 = \textit{strongly agree}$). The scale assesses the degree of socio-psychological well-being of individuals. Higher scale scores imply greater socio-psychological well-being. In the original study, Cronbach’s alpha value was found as .87. In the Turkish adaptation study, Cronbach’s alpha value was calculated as .80, and test-retest reliability was .86 (Telef, 2013). In the current study, McDonald’s Omega (ω) was calculated as .88.

The Personal Information Form. Participants’ demographic information, including age, sex, family structure, grade, and socioeconomic status, was asked through the personal information form.

Collection of Data and Analysis

The data was collected after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were informed about the aim of the study through the Informed Consent Form, and they got involved in the study voluntarily after signing this form—the survey package composed of a personal information form and three scales. Participants completed the package of instruments during classes, and this procedure took approximately 15 minutes. At the end of the data collection process, the participants were thanked for their participation.

In the data analysis part, initially, the standard z values ranging from -3 to $+3$ were employed to identify extreme values in the univariate dataset. Additionally, the kurtosis and skewness coefficient values of $+1$ and -1 , respectively, were utilized in this determination. Following the assessment of univariate and multivariate normality, a total of 12 replies were excluded from the dataset. Subsequently, the remaining data from 250 students were utilized for further analysis. Next, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was run to investigate the relationships among study variables with SPSS for Windows 25.0. Then, the mediation analysis was performed via the PROCESS module (Model 4), developed by Hayes (2013). Mediation analysis is a statistical technique that examines the relationship between X and Y , specifically focusing on how X influences Y (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017). It provides valuable insights and inferences on the mechanism via which X affects Y . Mediation hypotheses serve to explain the relationship between an antecedent variable (X) and an outcome variable (Y) by examining the influence of one or more intervening variables or mediators (M) (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

In the mediation analysis, the bootstrap approach (with $n = 5000$ resamples and 95% confidence intervals) was used. The lack of a “0” value between the lower (BootLLCI) and upper (BootULCI) bootstrap values was accepted as evidence of the mediator variable’s statistical significance, as stated by Hayes (2018). All values were reported as the unstandardized regression coefficients (with the symbol B), as Hayes (2013) recommended.

Compliance with Ethical Standard

The research followed the institutional and/or national research committee's ethical standards and the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later revisions or equivalent ethical standards. The data was gathered after approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Istanbul 29 Mayıs University (Date: 09/04/2023 No: 2023/09-2).

Findings

Preliminary Bivariate Analyses

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations among study variables are given in Table 1. As can be seen in Table 1, quiet ego ($r = .31, p < .01$) and psychological well-being ($r = .65, p < .01$) were positively correlated with positive future expectations. In addition, quiet ego ($r = .47, p < .01$) was positively related to psychological well-being. These values have provided evidence that quiet ego has a positive correlation with both positive future expectations and psychological well-being.

Table 1

The Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among the Study Variables for Study

	1.	2.	3.
1. Positive future expectations	-		
2. Quiet ego	.31**	-	
3. Psychological well-being	.65**	.47**	-
Mean	3.47	3.40	5.02
Standard deviation	1.06	.45	.12
Skewness	-.60	-.28	-.68
Kurtosis	-.30	.15	.38

** $p < .01$

Mediation Analysis

In this study, the associations among three variables, positive future expectation, quiet ego, and psychological well-being, were investigated. It was hypothesized that quiet ego (M) would have a mediatory role on the relationship between positive future expectation (X) and psychological well-being (Y). The positive future expectation was entered into the model as the predictor, quiet ego as the mediator, and psychological well-being as the dependent variable.

According to the results of mediation analysis, positive future expectation was positively associated with quiet ego ($B = .13, SE = .03, t = 5.19, p < .01, 95\% CI [.08, .18]$). Quiet ego was positively related to psychological well-being ($B = .73, SE = .12, t = 6.19, p < .01, 95\% CI [.50, .97]$). Positive future expectation was positively associated with psychological well-being both in the absence ($B = .69, SE = .05, t = 13.42, p < .01, 95\% CI [.59, .79]$) and presence of the mediator variable ($B = .59, SE = .05, t = 11.74, p < .01, 95\% CI$

[.49, .69]). That is, upon the inclusion of the quiet ego, which serves as the mediator variable, into the model, a notable decrease was observed in the effect of positive future expectation on psychological well-being. The mediatory effect of quiet ego in explaining the association between positive future expectation and psychological well-being was statistically significant, $B = .10$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI [.05, .16] since there is no “0” between lower (BootLLCI) and upper (BootULCI) bootstrap values. Therefore, it may be concluded that the concept of quiet ego serves as a partial mediator in the association between positive future expectations and psychological well-being. The full model explained 50% ($R^2 = .50$) of the variance in psychological well-being. The results of mediation and bootstrapping analyses are presented in Table 2 and Table 3, and the standardized path coefficients are demonstrated in Figure 1.

Table 2

The Results of Mediation Analysis

	Outcome Variables					
		M (Quiet ego)		Y (Psychological well-being)		
Antecedent variables		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	
X (Positive future expectations)	<i>a</i>	.13**	.03	<i>c'</i>	.59**	.05
M (Quiet ego)	-	-	-	<i>b</i>	.73**	.12
Constant	l_M	2.93**	.09	l_Y	.49**	.39
		$R^2 = .10$		$R^2 = .50$		
		$F(1; 248) = 26.90; p < .01$		$F(2; 247) = 122.81; p < .01$		

** $p < .01$

Table 3

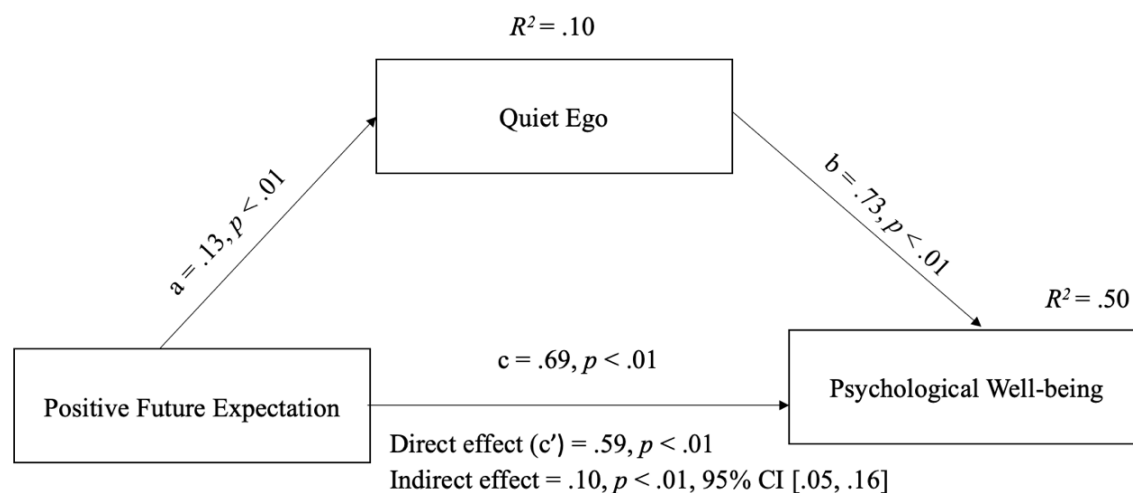
The Results of Bootstrapping Analysis

Effects	Coeff. B	Standard Dev.	t	<i>p</i>	Bootstrapping Lower Limit	Bootstrapping Upper Limit
Total Effect	.69	.05	13.42	.000	.59	.79
Direct Effect	.59	.05	11.74	.000	.49	.69
Indirect Effect (X → M → Y)	.10	.05			.05	.16

Note. X = Positive future expectations, Y = Psychological well-being, M = Quiet ego

Figure 1

The Direct and Indirect Effects of Positive Future Expectation on Psychological Well-Being Through Quiet Ego



Discussion and Results

This study focused on the associations between positive future expectations, quiet ego, and psychological well-being among college students in Turkey. It was hypothesized that there would be direct and indirect effects of positive future expectations on psychological well-being through quiet ego. The study contributed to the expansion of the psychological well-being literature by focusing on two variables, positive future expectations and quiet ego, whose relationship with psychological well-being has been relatively little studied.

According to the results, positive future expectation has a direct effect on psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with the existing body of scholarly works. For instance, the findings of a study conducted by Çalışkan and Dilmaç (2021) have indicated that positive future expectation is one of the predictors of psychological well-being. Positive future expectation implies a disposition toward the future characterized by feeling optimistic and a lack of excessive anxiety (Imamoglu & Guler-Edwards, 2007). In the study conducted by Ehtiyar et al. (2017), it was found that there was a positive significant relationship between college students' attitudes towards the future, positive future expectations and psychological well-being, and that positive future expectations affected psychological well-being more than attitudes towards the future. Doğan (2006), in his research on college students, has found that as students' thoughts about the future become more positive, their well-being levels increase.

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) stated that positive feelings reduce stress, depression, and hopelessness, and positively affect well-being. In parallel with these findings, the results of this study indicated that as students' thoughts about the future become more positive, their psychological well-being also increases.

The mediation analysis confirmed that quiet ego mediates the relationship between positive future expectations and psychological well-being. While previous studies have shown the link between quiet ego and psychological well-being (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Wayment & Bauer, 2017; Liu et al., 2022; Niemic et al., 2008), there is no evidence in the literature regarding the relationship between the quiet ego and positive future expectations. In fact, quiet ego is a concept that has a relationship with time due to detached awareness, which is one of its components. Detached awareness is a state of consciousness characterized by being fully present and receptive. Being in detached awareness allows individuals to observe their actions in a non-judgmental attitude in the here-and-now, and achieve long-term personal growth and well-being, as suggested by Bauer and Wayment (2008) and Niemic et al. (2008). The present is not detached from the past or the future, that is, the present is heavily influenced by individuals' past experiences and aspirations for the future (Verdugo & Sanchez-Sandoval, 2022). In particular, the mental picture that individuals will form about themselves in the future serves as a framework that guides their actions and motivates them to take certain actions. (Nurmi, 1991, 1993). The emphasis of quiet ego on long-term growth improves psychological well-being by allowing individuals to place their activities into a larger and long-term context, fostering their sense of purpose and personal growth over time (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Liu et al., 2022; Niemic et al. 2008). This long-term orientation that comes with detached awareness shifts the focus of self-evaluation from the present circumstance to a long-term situation. It protects the individuals from negative emotions and internal conflicts by keeping them from processing information about themselves in an overly defensive and pessimistic manner (Bauer & Wayment, 2008; Liu et al., 2022). In addition, the research indicating the relationship between the quiet ego and self-concept clarity, which refers to the degree to which one's ideas about oneself are clearly and securely defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable (Campbell et al., 1996) also supports the quiet ego's association with positive future expectations. Similar to positive future prospects, quiet ego plays a role in shaping a prospective self-concept.

Although the study has notable strengths, it is important to acknowledge the presence of some limitations as well. First, this study was conducted with college students aged 18-25.

For this reason, it is not possible to generalize about other samples. Conducting research with participants of varied ages and levels of education would provide significant insight into the relationships between study factors, thereby contributing to the progress of future research. Second, due to the nature of this study being structured as correlational research, it is unable to provide light on the causal linkages that exist between the variables. In future study, the use of experimental methodologies will help to understand how causality works. Third, as this study was designed cross-sectionally, future studies need to be conducted longitudinally to explore the effect of the quiet ego and positive future expectation on psychological well-being in the long term. This kind of effort may contribute to understanding the long-term effects of the quiet ego on these factors. Fourth, in the present study, it was solely focused on the mediatory role of quiet ego in the relationship between positive future expectations and psychological well-being. Future research may examine other psychological factors to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between positive future expectations and psychological well-being. For example, psychological structures such as self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and stress management can be addressed. Finally, psychological well-being and future expectations can be affected by cultural differences. For this reason, future research that examines cross-cultural differences in terms of research variables will contribute to the body of knowledge. Notwithstanding the limitations, the findings of the current study have several implications for both research and practical applications.

Recommendations

The findings of the current study have some implications that point to the importance of psychological counseling services to be carried out in college environments. College years are a special period in an individual's life. A significant proportion of the student population consists of individuals in their early years of adulthood and experiencing their first period of independence away from their familial environment. Throughout these years, they encounter challenges and circumstances that negatively impact their mental health and overall well-being. Thus, college counseling services are essential to support students in resolving challenges they may face and enhancing their overall well-being (Brunt, 2010). According to results of this study, it is important for counselors and other professionals working in college contexts to develop and conduct campus-based intervention programs to enhance college students' quiet ego, positive future expectations, and psychological well-being. Enhancing

these psychological constructs in individual and group settings might be beneficial, particularly for senior students experiencing career planning concerns, while providing counseling services at the university level.

Compliance with Ethical Standard

The research followed the institutional and/or national research committee's ethical standards and the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later revisions or equivalent ethical standards. The data was gathered after approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Istanbul 29 Mayıs University (Date: 09/04/2023 No: 2023/09-2).

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