

The Mediating Role of Contributon in the Relationship Between Compassion and Happiness and the Opinions of Adult Individuals: The Mixed Model

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Abstract

This study aims to examine feelings of compassion, contribution and happiness in adults. Using a mixed model and sequential explanatory design, 1018 adults from Turkey participated quantitatively and 17 adults participated qualitatively through convenience sampling. In the quantitative part, the 3-Dimensional Contribution Scale, Oxford Happiness Scale and Compassion Scale were used; in the qualitative part, a personal information form and a semi-structured interview form consisting of 7 open-ended questions were used. Quantitative data were analyzed with SPSS 21 and AMOS Graphics, while qualitative data were subjected to content analysis. Quantitative results showed that compassion positively predicted contribution and contribution positively predicted happiness. Contribution had a partial mediating role in the relationship between compassion and happiness. Content analysis of qualitative data revealed three themes: compassion, contribution and positive impact, and sub-themes under these themes. Participants stated that they were able to show compassion to others with positive feelings, thoughts and attitudes. They also believed that their experiences of helping others contributed to them and that they were able to be useful to society and their families. It was concluded that volunteering time and making positive contributions created positive emotions in them. The findings were discussed in the light of the literature and recommendations were presented.

Keywords: Compassion, Contribute, Happy, Positive Psychology, Mediating

Merhamet ile Mutluluk Arasındaki İlişkide Katkının Aracı Rolü ve Yetişkin Bireylerin Görüşleri: Karma Model

Öz

Bu çalışma yetişkinlerdeki merhamet, katkı ve mutluluk duygularını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Karma yöntemle yürütülen bu arařtırmada, açıklayıcı sıralı desen kullanılmıştır. Arařtırmanın nicel aşamasına Türkiye'den kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilen 1018 yetişkin, nitel aşamasına ise 17 yetişkin katılmıştır. Nicel kısımda Üç Boyutlu Katkı Ölçeği, Oxford Mutluluk Ölçeği ve Merhamet Ölçeği; nitel kısımda ise kişisel bilgi formu ve yedi açık uçlu sorudan oluşan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Nicel veriler SPSS 21 ve AMOS23 programı ile analiz edilirken, nitel veriler içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Nicel sonuçlar merhametin katkısı, katkının ise mutluluğu pozitif yönde yordadığını göstermiştir. Katkının, merhamet ve mutluluk arasındaki ilişkide kısmi bir aracı rolü bulunmuştur. Nitel verilerin içerik analizi sonucunda merhamet, katkı ve olumlu etki olmak üzere üç tema ve bu temaların altında alt temalar belirlenmiştir. Katılımcılar, olumlu duygu, düşünce ve tutumlarla başkalarına merhamet gösterebildiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, başkalarına yardım etme deneyimlerinin kendilerine katkı sağladığına ve bu sayede topluma ve ailelerine faydalı olabildiklerine inanmaktadırlar. Gönüllü olarak birine zaman ayırmanın ve olumlu katkılarda bulunmanın kendilerinde pozitif duygular yarattığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular literatür ışığında tartışılmış ve öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Merhamet, Katkı, Mutluluk, Pozitif Psikoloji, Aracılık

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Introduction

Humans, who are social beings, have always been together with other individuals from the past to the present. Individuals who belong to a group and a community can try different ways to sustain their lives and feel good depending on their relationships and interactions. Compassion is one of these ways. Compassion is individuals' being aware of the problems faced by themselves and other people, strengthening their ties with themselves and other individuals, and thus being able to feel more free (Gilbert, 2009a; Wang, 2005). Compassion, which creates a change in individuals themselves, makes them realise that other people's lives are also valuable. This is because it is understood that compassion enables helping others, being caring and understanding towards oneself and other people, not blaming oneself, taking responsibility, understanding and accepting emotions, and establishing relationships with other people without any self-interest (Gilbert, 2009a; Osho, 2007; Pommier, 2010). Fredrickson (2001) It has been demonstrated that compassion-based practices activate brain regions that enhance positive emotions and that mindfulness-based actions reduce negativity in the emotional system. Furthermore, the researcher found that compassion-based activities activated brain regions that increase empathy and benevolent behaviours.

Depending on the relationship established, individuals contribute to each other in almost every aspect of daily life, consciously or unconsciously. For example, expressing an opinion in a discussion, recognising the success of others, or helping with something (Fuligni, 2019). Such issues help individuals to meet their needs such as autonomy, building relationships and competence (Martela and Ryan, 2016; Ryan and Deci, 2017). Individuals can also make a contribution to other individuals, either individually or as a group (Engel, 2011). This can be directed at a small group of three or four people or at larger groups such as a company or an ethno-religious organisation (Hogg, 2013). In short, contribution can be exemplified as family, society, the individual himself/herself and non-governmental organisations (Eisenberg, Spinrad and Knafo-Noam, 2015; Fuligni, 2019; Lerner, 2004, 2005). Compassion not only supports an individual's inner peace but also contributes to the strengthening of social bonds. In this context, individuals' contributions to their surroundings can be considered a functional extension of compassion expressed outwardly.

Contribution can create an environment for positive effects in many areas. For example, by contributing, individuals can maintain their ties with their families and increase happiness within the family (Weisner, 2001). Individuals also take into account the needs, ideas, attitudes and behaviours of others as well as the family. Having reached a certain degree of awareness of the social environment, individuals take action to help other people, provide support and create new opportunities (Eisenberg, Spinrad and Knafo-Noam, 2015). With such initiatives, individuals' ways of finding social and emotional support are expanded. In addition, individuals' ability to recognise the complexity of relationships and their tendency to help others in need increases (Fuligni, 2019). Individuals who interact with external factors, such as family or community, gain autonomy, competence and relational skills (Martela and Ryan, 2016; Ryan and Deci, 2017). In this way, the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, both in the family and in the community, support their own positive development (Lerner, 2003). Individuals who realise self-regulation with their contribution to themselves have positive social, psychological and health outcomes (Eisenberger, 2013; Gestsdóttir and Lerner, 2007; Schacter and Margolin, 2018). Self-contribution increases individuals' hope for the future and their satisfaction with life (Schmid, Phelps and Lerner, 2011; Truskauskaitė-Kunevičienė, 2015). Keyes (2003) mentions three components within the scope of positive spiritual development. The first of these components is functionalised emotional well-being consisting of elements such as happiness, satisfaction with life and positive affect; the second is social well-being and self-acceptance measured by warm, trusting relationships, empathy and closeness; and the third is psychological well-being associated with purpose in life, mastery, autonomy and positive relationships with others. An individual's contributions both to themselves and to others may enhance psychological resilience and subjective well-being. Therefore, contributory behaviors can be considered significant predictors of individual happiness.

Happiness is one of the concepts that is important for both social relations and the individual's own life (Bailey and Fernando, 2012). The Eudaimonic Well-Being theory posits that happiness is achieved when individuals exhibit virtuous behaviours and live in accordance with their values (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Happiness is present in every stage of individuals' lives. Every choice and action in the areas of life is for increasing happiness (Diener, Sapyta and Suh, 1998). Happiness is shaped depending on internal and external processes. In other words, hobbies, sportive activities and relationships with other individuals

affect happiness as much as moral and social elements (Warr, 2011). A life spent in a useful way, an environment in which life can be lived, the attitude towards life conditions and the satisfaction received in life have an effect on happiness (Veenhoven, 2009). In addition, participating in activities voluntarily (Seligman, 2002), extroversion, establishing effective and regular relationships with people, having strong family ties and having problem solving ways (Diener and Seligman, 2002) affect happiness. In a study, it was reported that 50% of happiness is caused by genetic factors and birth, 40% is caused by conscious activities and 10% is affected by factors such as financial situation, marriage and physical appearance (Lyubomirsky, 2008).

Research consistently highlights how concepts like contribution, compassion, and happiness play a crucial role in individual well-being and social interaction. Examining the existing literature reveals that these elements foster self-regulation (Zimmerman, Phelps, and Lerner, 2007), cultivate essential psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Gilbert, 2009a; Martela and Ryan, 2016; Ryan and Deci, 2017), and promote the development of healthy and constructive relationships with others (Diener and Seligman, 2002; Veenhoven, 2009). Eventually, with these concepts, individuals create an opportunity for themselves to develop positively (Engel, 2011; Gestsdóttir and Lerner, 2007; Martela and Ryan, 2016; Pommier, 2010; Ryan and Deci, 2017; Schmid, Phelps and Lerner, 2011; Truskauskaitė-Kunevičienė, 2015; Veenhoven, 2009; Weinstein and Ryan, 2010). The fact that the literature does not directly address how individuals' levels of contribution, compassion and happiness shape each other has led to the need for an in-depth study to show how individuals' compassion affects their levels of contribution and happiness. In addition, it was considered necessary to determine the mediating role of contribution in increasing the happiness of compassion, which supports the positive feelings and thoughts of individuals. Therefore, the present study aims to show the mediating role of compassion in increasing happiness and how the compassion of adult individuals shapes their levels of contribution and happiness.

Method

Research Model and Design

This study was conducted with a mixed model to examine the levels of compassion, contribution and happiness of adult individuals in terms of various variables. Mixed models are studies in which both quantitative and qualitative data are used together, based on the idea that they eliminate some deficiencies and prejudices caused by the use of only one method (quantitative or qualitative) (Creswell, 2014). The research design was determined as explanatory sequential design. In the explanatory sequential design approach, the research process begins with the collection of quantitative data, followed by the subsequent collection of qualitative data. Although there are differences in both quantitative and qualitative data collection periods in this design, their contributions to the research are the same (Creswell, 2003).

Study Group

The quantitative study group comprised 1,018 adult individuals, selected using the convenient sampling method. The study group of the qualitative part of the research consisted of 17 adults selected by convenient sampling method. Convenient sampling method is known as a method that is preferred since it prevents loss of time and saves labour force as well as being economical (Büyüköztürk et al., 2012). Table 1 shows the age, gender, education level and monthly income of the people included in the study.

Table 1.*Demographic Information*

Age	n	%
20-29	504	49.51
30-39	305	29.96
40-49	143	14.05
50-59	56	5.50
≥60	10	0.98
Gender	n	%
Female	541	53.1
Male	477	46.9
Educational status	n	%
Elementary education	6	0.6
Secondary education	8	0.8
High School	57	5.6
Associate degree	59	5.8
Undergraduate	683	67.1
Post graduate	182	17.9
Doctorate	23	2.3
Monthly income level	n	%
Less than minimum wage	215	21.1
Minimum wage	76	7.5
More than minimum wage	727	71.4
Total	1018	100

Table 1 shows information about the distribution of the participants in terms of age, gender, education level and monthly income level. The age of the participants varies between 20 and 65. Approximately half of the participants (49.51%) are between the ages of 20-29, with a mean age of 31.91 and a standard deviation of 9.23. It can be seen that 53.1 % of the participants are female and 46.9 % of them are male. Most of the participants (67.1%) are undergraduates. According to Table 1, 21.1 % of the participants have an income less than minimum wage, 7.5 % have an income of minimum wage and 71.4 % have an income more than the minimum wage.

To protect the privacy of those taking part in the study, we gave them codes instead of using their actual names. This part of the research included eight men and nine women, with participant ages ranging from 22 to 65. Moreover, individuals from disparate geographical regions within the country were engaged, with a minimum of two participants from each region.

Data Collection Tools

The Compassion Scale, the Three-Dimensional Contribution Scale, and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire were used to collect data. All instruments had previously been adapted into Turkish with confirmed validity and reliability. A personal information form developed by the researcher was used to gather demographic information. A semi-structured interview form with seven open-ended questions was used in the qualitative phase.

Compassion Scale: The Compassion Scale was created by Pommier (2011), and it was adapted into Turkish by Akdeniz and Deniz (2016). The study looked at how the scale worked with 854 university students. The original version of the scale has 24 items (Pommier, 2011). The scale is a five-point Likert-type scale, and 12 of the items are reverse scored (Akdeniz and Deniz, 2016). The minimum score that can be obtained is 24, while the maximum score is 120.

The factor structure of the scale was rigorously assessed using confirmatory factor analysis. The analysis revealed that the scale's six-dimensional structure demonstrated an acceptable fit (RMSEA= .061, NFI= .91, CFI= .94, IFI= .94). Regarding reliability, the scale showed strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .75. To establish convergent validity, significant correlations were observed between the scale and related constructs: a .48 correlation with compassionate love, a .25 correlation with self-understanding, and a .24 correlation with mindfulness. Collectively, these findings confirm the compassion scale as a valid and reliable measurement tool.

Three Dimensional Contribution Scale: The Three-Dimensional Contribution Scale was created by Truskauskaitė-Kunevičius and Kaniušonytė (2018), and the adaptation process into Turkish was carried out by Aldemir and Balcı-Çelik (2020). Aldemir and Balcı-Çelik (2021) also checked how valid and reliable the scale is for adults. They did this by asking 637 adults to take the scale. The original scale has three sub-

dimensions and a total of 15 items (Truskauskaitė-Kunevičius and Kaniušonytė, 2018). The measurement tool is a five-point Likert type, meaning there are no reversed items. The minimum attainable score is 15, whereas the maximum attainable score is 75.

The way the measurement tool is set out was confirmed by a special kind of analysis called confirmatory factor analysis. This analysis showed that the structure of the scale (which is three-dimensional) was a good fit (RMSEA= .07, AGFI= .86, CFI= .92, IFI= .92). When we analysed how reliable the scale was, we found that Cronbach's alpha was .88. The scale was found to be related to psychological resilience, with a significant relationship noted at a level of .22. These findings show that the Three Dimensional Contribution Scale is a valid and reliable measurement tool in Turkish culture.

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted into Turkish by Doğan and Sapmaz (2012). The adaptation study of the scale was conducted with 491 university students. Original version of the scale consists of 29 items (Hills and Argyle, 2002); however, the Turkish form consists of 28 items due to the low factor loading of one item in the adaptation study. The scale is a six-point Likert-type scale (1= Strongly disagree, 6= Strongly agree) and 11 items are reversely scored (Doğan and Sapmaz, 2012). Minimum possible score is 28 and the maximum possible score is 168.

The factor loadings of the items in the scale were found to be between .32 and .77, and the item total correlations were between .30 and .71. After running the exploratory factor analysis, it was found that the scale consisted of a unidimensional structure and explained 29.84% of the total variance. After doing some analysis, it was decided that the structure of the scale was acceptable (RMSEA= .082, NFI= .92, CFI= .94, IFI= .94). When we looked at how reliable the test was, we found that Cronbach's alpha was .91. We also found that there was a strong relationship between the scale and life satisfaction (at .69), subjective happiness (at .72), positive emotions (at .64), negative emotions (-.60) and life orientation test (optimism) (at .72).

Validity and reliability calculations were carried out for the measurement tools used for this study (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996; Bentler, 1980; Bentler and Bonett, 1980; Browne and Cudeck, 1993; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; Marsh, Hau, Artelt, Baumert and Peschar, 2006; Marsh, Balla and McDonald, 1988). Information about the measurement tools is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Validity and Reliability of The Scales Used In The Study*

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>CS</i>	<i>TDCS</i>	<i>OHQ</i>
χ^2	796.112	399.483	584.576
sd	240	83	125
RMSEA	.048	.061	.060
RMR	.031	.033	.062
SRMR	.041	.043	.039
CFI	.925	.960	.939
TLI	.913	.949	.925
α	.89	.92	.89

Upon examining Table 2, it becomes evident that the goodness-of-fit values for the measurement instruments employed in this study fall within acceptable ranges.

Table 3. *Normality Analysis of The Distribution*

	<i>n</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>SH</i>
CS	1018	63	120	101.27	10.787	-.671	.077	.272	.153
TDCS	1018	15	75	60.84	8.847	-.741	.077	.361	.153
OHQ	1018	47	169	117.01	19.660	-.234	.077	.296	.153

Note: CS= Compassion Scale, TDCS= Three Dimensional Contribution Scale, OHQ= Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

Table 3 shows the lowest and highest values, the mean and how much they are above or below the mean (the 'standard deviations'), the 'skewness' and 'kurtosis' coefficients and the standard errors of the participants' scores from the compassion, three-dimensional contribution and happiness scales. For the data to be considered normally distributed, the skewness coefficient should be between -3 and +3 (or -2 and +2) (Karaalioglu, 2015). The results showed that the scale scores were normally distributed.

To collect information for the qualitative part of the study, the researchers used a semi-structured interview form and a personal information form. The form was based on the researchers' reviews of the literature. The seven-item semi-structured interview form and personal information form are related to the ideas of compassion, contribution and happiness. The semi-structured interview form was created by combining the results from the quantitative phase of the study, important observations, and a thorough review of other relevant literature. To do this, we asked seven questions on the form to look at the ideas of compassion, contribution and happiness. The questions used in this research are related to how individuals' happiness will be shaped by contribution in addition to using the characteristics of being compassionate. While the questions in the research were formed, related studies were utilised (Aldemir and Balcı-Çelik, 2020; Akdeniz and Deniz, 2016; Akın and Akın, 2015; Aktaş and Bozdoğan, 2016; Armstrong-Carter, Olson and Telzer, 2019; Aydemir, 2018; Diener and Seligman, 2002; Eisenberg, Spinrad and Knafo-Noam, 2015; Gestsdóttir and Lerner, 2007; Gilbert, 2005, 2009a, 2009b; Kırıl and Başdağ, 2017; Konca-Uğurlu, 2017; Lerner, 2004; Lyubomirsky 2008; Neff, 2003a, 2003b, 2011a, 2011b; Neff, Kirkpatrick and Rude, 2007; Özgen, 2005; Pommier, 2010, 2011; Seligman, 2002; Sprecher and Fehr, 2005; Veenhoven, 2009). The questions created based on the literature were firstly examined by four different individuals in terms of reading comprehension and interpretation. It was then decided by the researchers to evaluate the questions with a score of seven and above. Next, the prepared interview questions were presented to five different experts, one of whom was working in the department of religious sciences and four of whom were working in the department of guidance and psychological counselling, who had conducted scientific research on positive psychology or related concepts. The experts were asked to evaluate the questions prepared for the interview between 0 (completely unsuitable for the purpose) and 10 (completely suitable for the purpose), to make suggestions on the questions they deemed necessary and to give feedback on the explanations. After the evaluations, it was understood that the question with the lowest score was given 7. It was found that the general average of the scores given based on the evaluations of the experts was 9.3. Depending on the suggestions of the experts, the questions were re-examined and necessary corrections were made. Then, the questions were tested with a pilot application. Question items were then re-examined and the final version of the seven-item interview form was given. The research questions are as follows;

1. When people share their problems/issues/concerns with you, what attitude do you adopt so that you can see things as they are?
2. How do you show that you understand/care/are sincere to someone who has a problem/issue/concern?
3. What do you think about people's being open to making mistakes?
4. How does the experience you have gained in dealing with someone in any subject make a positive contribution to you?
5. How does the experience you gain from someone you help in any matter shape/change/influence your family relationships?
6. How does devoting your time voluntarily to someone who shares his/her problems/issues with you and making positive contributions to that person affect your happiness?

Personal Information Form: The personal information form used for the study was prepared by the researchers to determine the status of individuals according to various variables. In the form for the first part of the study, there are five questions about age, gender, education, income and where they live. In the form for the second part of the study, there are three questions about gender, age and where they live. It also includes the measurement tools planned to be used for the quantitative part of the study and the interview questions prepared for the qualitative part.

Data Collection Process

Necessary permissions were received from the Social Human Ethics Committee of a university in the Black Sea Region for the research. Quantitative data of the study were collected electronically. An extension of the e-form consisting of the Compassion Scale, Three Dimensional Contribution Scale, Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and personal information form was sent to adult individuals who volunteered to participate in the study. The study was conducted with 1216 adult individuals. However, it was found that 176 individuals had a clinical diagnosis before the date of the study, 7 individuals did not fill in any one of the scales and 15 individuals were under the age of 20. These data were considered as missing data (Akbaş and Tavşancıl, 2015; Çokluk and Kayrı, 2011; Demir, 2013; Şahin-Kürşad and

Nartgün, 2015; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2015) and were omitted from the data file of the research. The analyses of this research were conducted on the data of 1018 individuals.

In the first stage of the research, we collected data from 21 people. However, as four individuals chose not to participate voluntarily, the study proceeded with 17 participants. Verbal consent was obtained from each participant to confirm their willingness to take part. Given the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of interviews ($n = 11$) were conducted through online and telephone conversations, while a smaller portion ($n = 6$) took place in person, adhering to social distancing measures.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS 21 and AMOS 23. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), Pearson correlation and structural equation modelling (SEM) were applied to examine the relationships between compassion, contribution and happiness (Karagöz, 2016, 2019; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2015).

The data related to the qualitative part of the research were converted into a written document version through transcription from the audio recording. The responses to each question were then brought together. After that, the content analysis phase was started. Content analysis helps to evaluate the data in detail. With this method, the data are brought together in a way that will create a unity of meaning. In this way, it is ensured that the data are more easily understood by readers (Creswell, 2014). In content analysis; firstly, the data are coded. In this way, categories, i.e. themes, are obtained. The data obtained from the study group are shaped and defined according to the themes through codes, and then the findings are interpreted. Next, compatibility with the data is examined. Finally, the process is completed by reporting (Demir, 2014; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Inductive and deductive methods were used together in this study. Firstly, themes were formed and related questions were structured accordingly, then codes were formed from the answers obtained and sub-themes and themes were formed accordingly.

Predictions regarding the compassion, contribution and happiness of the participants were put forward in order to obtain new meanings by revealing the findings and patterns among the findings of the current research (Patton, 2014). In this context, classifications were made in order to generate meaning based on the data obtained and to create explanations related to the themes, and the findings obtained were interpreted according to the themes and the statements of the participants (Çelik, Başer-Baykal and Kılıç-Memur, 2020). Based on the data obtained, the views of the participants on the concepts of compassion, contribution and happiness were explained. In the analysis of the research data, repetitive expressions were identified and the findings obtained were coded according to the themes identified. In all this analysis process, attempts were made to ensure consistency between the researchers. After the analysis, the analysis was evaluated by two different individuals who held a master's degree in the field of guidance and psychological counselling and the findings were finalised.

Establishing Trustworthiness in the Qualitative Component of the Study

To enhance the validity of the qualitative dimension of this research, several strategies were employed. The interviews were conducted in an environment where participants could feel comfortable, and the timing was arranged according to their availability to ensure they could express themselves clearly. The researcher adopted a flexible and non-directive approach, aiming to create a neutral space and reduce interviewer bias throughout the process (Creswell, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In line with the principle of reflexivity, the researcher remained aware of their own assumptions and potential influences during data collection and analysis. This awareness helped to maintain objectivity while interpreting participants' responses. The study group was purposefully selected in accordance with the conceptual framework, further contributing to internal validity. To ensure reliability, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Detailed field notes were taken, and where possible, participants were asked to confirm their statements to reinforce accuracy. Direct quotations were included in the findings, and participants' identities were protected through the use of pseudonyms. Although formal **inter-coder reliability** was not applied, the consistency of emerging codes and themes was carefully monitored to ensure conceptual coherence.

Results

Results Related to the Quantitative Part of the Study

Table 4. *Pearson Correlation Analysis for The Correlations Between Compassion, Contribution and Happiness*

	COM	CON	HAP
COM	1		
CON	.40**	1	
HAP	.37**	.48**	1

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note: COM= Compassion, CON= Contribution, HAP= Happiness

As can be seen in Table 4, a positive and moderately significant correlation was found between compassion and contribution ($r = .40$, $p < .01$), between contribution and happiness ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) and between compassion and happiness ($r = .37$, $p < .01$).

Table 5. *Goodness of Fit Coefficients for The Mediating Role Model*

Fit indices ¹	Perfect fit criteria	Acceptable fit criteria	Result	Interpretation
χ^2/sd	$0 \leq \chi^2/sd < 2$	$2 \leq \chi^2/sd \leq 5$	3.566*	Acceptable
RMSEA	$.00 \leq RMSEA < .05$	$.05 \leq RMSEA \leq .10$	.050	Acceptable
RMR	$.00 \leq RMR < .05$	$.05 \leq RMR \leq .08$	.065	Acceptable
SRMR	$.00 \leq SRMR < .05$	$.05 \leq SRMR \leq .08$	.066	Acceptable
PNFI	$.95 \leq PNFI \leq 1.00$	$.50 \leq PNFI < .95$	.762	Acceptable
PGFI	$.95 \leq PGFI \leq 1.00$	$.50 \leq PGFI < .95$	.768	Acceptable
NFI	$.90 \leq NFI \leq 1.00$	$.80 \leq NFI < .90$	.813	Acceptable
AGFI	$.90 \leq AGFI \leq 1.00$	$.80 \leq AGFI < .90$	.834	Acceptable

* $\chi^2 = 5256.429$, $sd = 1474$, $p = .000$

Table 5 shows the goodness of fit coefficients for the mediating role model, and when the coefficients are analysed, it can be seen that the results are acceptable ($\chi^2/sd = 3.566$, $RMSEA = .050$, $SRMR = .066$, $AGFI = .834$, $RMR = .065$, $PGFI = .768$, $NFI = .813$, $PNFI = .762$).

Table 6. *Sobel Test Results for The Mediating Role of Contribution*

		t	SH	β	R ²	p
Stage 1	CON $\leftarrow$ COM	C	.063	.435	.19	***
Stage 2	HAP $\leftarrow$ CON	12.880	.075	.553	.30	***
Stage 3	HAP $\leftarrow$ COM	7.714	.092	.307	.09	***
Stage 4	HAP $\leftarrow$ CON $\leftarrow$ COM	2.966	.086	.108	-	.003

*** $p < .001$

Quantitative results showed that compassion positively predicted contribution, and contribution positively predicted happiness. Structural equation modelling indicated that contribution partially mediated the relationship between compassion and happiness. Sobel test results showed that when contribution was added, the path coefficient from compassion to happiness decreased significantly (from $\beta = .307$ to $.108$), confirming the mediating role of contribution.

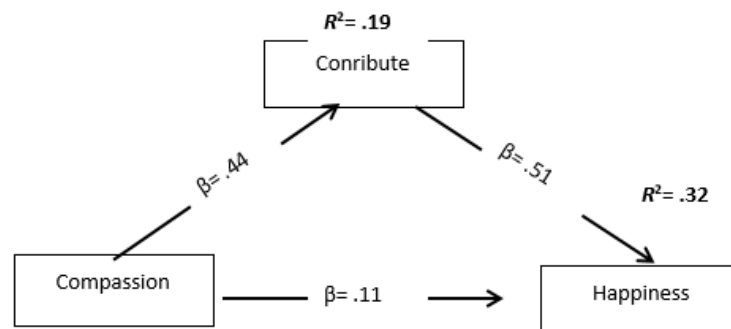


Figure 1. *Structural Model Regarding The Effect Of Compassion On Happiness Through The Partial Mediation Of Contribution*

Findings from the Qualitative Phase of the Study**Table 7.** *Themes, Sub-Themes and Codes*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>	<i>Codes</i>
Compassion	Mindfulness	Examining the problem from all aspects
		Putting prejudices aside
		Keeping a level head
		Looking for evidence
		Different results of the problem in each individual
		Acting with logic instead of emotions
		Empathy
	Kindness	Transferring positive emotions such as love, tolerance and compassion to the other party
		Using body language and verbal expressions
		Providing alternative solutions
		Helping the person to find a solution
	Consciousness of sharing	Every human being can make mistakes
		Every human being can make mistakes; realising, regretting and not repeating the mistakes
		Mistakes develop human beings
		Mistake is a feature of human nature
		Life itself is a mistake

Results Related to the theme of compassion

Three sub-themes related to the theme of compassion were obtained. These themes are consciousness of sharing, kindness and mindfulness. These sub-themes will be discussed in this section

Mindfulness

The participants stated that when they encountered a person with a problem, they could use different approaches in order to see the problem shared with them as it is. Trying to examine the shared problem from all aspects is one of these approaches (n = 10). One participant (P15) said “... when looking at the events, one should not approach from a single dimension”. Some participants explained this situation as follows:

Usually, when someone talks to me, I place myself on both sides. For example, what would I do if I were in the place of the person telling the story, what would I do if I were the other party. I try to take into account both the sociological and psychological conditions of the person and the economic conditions of the person, I try to evaluate all sides of the event when the other person tells about the event (P5).

The participants also stated that they could see the shared problem as it is by putting aside their prejudices (n = 2). One participant (P1) explained as follows: “I would try to listen objectively, without being influenced by the event, in a way that would put aside prejudices and not be influenced by them.” Another participant (P7) said, “I try to leave my prejudices. I direct my mind to listen and understand the event as much as possible.”

The participants also said that they could see the problem shared with them as it is by keeping calm (n = 3). One participant (P11) said, “I try to keep a level head. Otherwise you cannot help. If that pain takes you away, you cannot help. Therefore, I try to be a little cool-headed and support that person.” Another participant (P4) said, “First of all, whatever I have to do, I try to be a little cool-headed and try to do my part.”

When the responses are analysed, it can be understood that the participants would also prefer to search for evidence (n = 3). One participant (P8) said “..... Therefore, I look at the concrete and provable parts of what they tell. Evidence and proof are very important.” Another participant (P9) said, “I try to verify the reality of the event described and try to see it with my own eyes. I try to look for evidence. The person opposite me needs to support their problem with body language or other evidence as well as explaining their problem.”

Based on the responses received, it can be seen that the participants also used the strategies of thinking that the problem has different consequences for each individual, acting with logic instead of emotions and empathising in order to see the problem shared with them as it is ($n = 6$). In this context, one participant (P13) said “I approach any individual who shares their problems with me by thinking that the problem they are experiencing belongs to them. Since that problem is unique to the individual, I make an effort to understand them.” Another participant (P14) said, “Every problem is personal. Therefore, I first try not to associate the problem with myself.” Another participant (P1) answered as follows: “Although I am affected by, I try to act with my logic by weighing the issues underlying the situation in the process.”

As a result of the interviews, it was understood that the participants would approach a problem shared with them by using various methods. In this context, it is seen that some participants would try to examine the problem from all aspects, while others would leave their prejudices aside. The participants also stated that they would keep their approach by remaining calm in the face of the situation, examining the evidence, knowing that the situation would have different meanings depending on the person, acting logically and empathising.

Kindness

The participants stated that they used various ways to show that they were sincere, understanding and caring when they came across a person with a problem. One of these ways is to transfer their positive emotions such as love, tolerance and compassion to the other party ($n = 7$). One participant (P13) said “..... it is necessary to declare that only love can cover the tortures they have done for various reasons, or that respect will prevail and win.” Another participant (P9) said “..... I don’t do such things because I pity that person. I do these things because I love these people, and I want to take care of them.” Another participant (P5) said, “I approach that person optimistically rather than prejudice. I accept the feelings of the other person and try to understand that person by prioritising tolerance and compassion. If this friend reacted in this way, I need to tolerate him/her.”

Along with these responses, a different way was also mentioned. The participants said that they would use their body language and verbal expressions to show that they were sincere, understanding and interested when they encountered a person with a problem ($n = 13$). One participant (P3) said, “I make sentences that make them feel understood. I try to make eye contact.” Another participant (P5) said, “I do not take my eyes off and if the person before me needs a hug, I hug them. I give feedback”. Another participant (P1) said, “First of all, I pay attention to making eye contact. By touching that person, holding their hands or hugging them, I try express that I approach them with understanding.” Another participant (P17) said, “I try to show with my facial expressions. With gestures and facial expressions, people influence the other person.”

Some participants also gave different answers. The participants stated that they can show that they are sincere, understanding and interested when they encounter a person with a problem by raising awareness, offering alternative solutions and helping the person to find a solution ($n = 4$). One participant (P2) said, “If we are talking about a problem, I try to produce alternative solutions to it.” Another participant (P8) said, “I try to show that I am interested by asking questions and suggesting solutions.”

After the interviews, it can be seen that the participants will try to transfer their positive emotions such as love, tolerance and compassion to the other party in order to show that they are sincere, understanding and caring when they come across a person who has a problem. It can also be understood that the participants would prefer to use their body language and verbal expressions. In addition, the participants said that in such a situation, they could help the other person by raising awareness, offering an alternative solution and helping the person to find a solution.

Consciousness of sharing

Participants put forward various views about people being open to making mistakes. One of these views is that every person can make mistakes ($n = 3$). One participant (P9) said, “There are no people without mistakes, everyone makes mistakes. Do I make mistakes, yes. That’s why I can stay as calm as possible when I see another person.” Another participant (P4) said, “I mean, I believe that all kinds of things can happen to a person no matter who they are. Therefore, we all have the right to make mistakes.” Another participant (P16) said, “People make mistakes. There is actually no situation where we can say how can a person make this mistake. Anything can happen to a person at any time.”

It can be seen that regarding people's openness to making mistakes, the participants said that every person can make mistakes, but it is necessary to realise, regret and not repeat this mistake ($n = 10$). One participant (P1) said, "If it is not a situation that is constantly repeated, I hold that person's hand and do not let go. If a person makes a mistake and realises it, this is acceptable."

In addition, people's openness to making mistakes was also considered as a positive outcome. Participants evaluated making mistakes as a situation that improves humans ($n = 2$). One participant (P5) said, "Everyone makes mistakes and everyone should make mistakes. Because not making mistakes means not learning anything for me. Because every mistake is an experience." Another participant (P2) said, "A mistake is something that develops a human being. However, something that is a mistake for us and not a mistake for the other person does not develop humans. If the mistake is perceived in a meaningful way, it develops the individual."

The participants also considered the fact that people are open to making mistakes as a characteristic of human nature and life itself as a mistake ($n = 2$). One participant (P13) said, "It is in human nature to make mistakes. Therefore, human beings are always inclined to make mistakes from birth." Another participant (P8) said, "Mistakes are at the centre of life. When a person faces a problem, the choice is not even 50-50."

The participants evaluated the vulnerability of humans to make mistakes in different ways. In this context, some participants stated that every person can make mistakes. However, the participants stated that it is necessary to realise, regret and not repeat the mistake made. Some participants also stated that making mistakes is a situation that develops people and that people's making mistakes is a feature that comes from their nature.

Table 8. *Themes, Sub-Themes and Codes*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>	<i>Codes</i>
Contribution	Contribution to self	Positive mental health
		Organising one's life
		Connecting to life
		Creating purpose in life
Contribution	Contribution to society	Dealing with negative moods
		Establishing dialogue
		Overcoming your prejudices
		Not judging
Contribution	Contribution to family	Approaching problems in a constructive way
		Awareness
		Creating positive feelings about the family
		Taking a positive action
		Separation/differentiation of family members as individuals

Results Related to the Theme of Contribution

Three sub-themes related to the contribution theme were identified. These sub-themes are contribution to self, contribution to society and contribution to the family, respectively. These sub-themes will be discussed in this section.

Contribution to self

The participants stated that the experience they gained in dealing with someone in any subject would contribute positively to them. Acquiring the characteristics that will create a positive mental health is one of these contributions ($n = 11$). One participant (P9) said: "When I help, I realise that I am actually doing it for myself. I even feel a serious psychological relief from this situation and I get really happy. We contribute to people, but I feel that we contribute more to ourselves." Another participant (P2) said, "Helping someone, whether in the smallest degree or in the largest degree, is actually to heal our own soul. It prepares the environment for us to get rid of the negative thoughts we have in ourselves more easily. Our self-esteem, thoughts and our self-perception change." Another participant's statement is as follows:

When I even made a person smile, I felt very rich in a spiritual sense. I was very happy, I smiled with those people. I thought that I was good for something. I really thought that I could touch the heart of a person's life when I really wanted to. I felt better and more valuable (P6).

It was also stated that the experience gained while dealing with someone on any subject leads to an awareness. Participants say that they can organise their lives with the awareness they have gained in this way ($n = 8$). One participant (P17) said, “Actually, it helps me to look at things from different perspectives. The things we talk about contribute to my view of life, lifestyle and personal organisation while we are trying to help the other party.” Other answers received are as follows:

..... The experience I have gained helps me to restrain myself by reaching awareness. I tell myself that I can be happy with what is enough for me in this life. I can continue my life without overdoing it. I can say that life is not only about having material opportunities. In this way, I feel better spiritually (P11).

..... See, I'm a little bit tougher in this regard, maybe I need to tame this habit of mine. In other words, if there is a point about my character that I need to tame, I do it. Maybe I am experiencing a similar event myself. I have seen a point that could be the result of that. Then I can give up that way (P5).

It was also noted that active engagement with individuals on any topic can lead to various additional benefits. Participants explained these contributions as attachment to life, creating a purpose in life, coping with negative moods, and the adequacy of manners and body language to communicate ($n = 5$). One participant (P1) answered as follows: “I feel more in life; I want to touch people's lives more”. Another participant (P9) said, “..... without speaking, we were able to communicate very well with my patients and I realised that language is not necessary. I realised that body language, gestures and mimics also fulfil many tasks.” Another participant (P3) said, “The feeling of taking care of someone and helping them makes me feel good. If I think that one of my life goals is to serve the whole, supporting someone also reinforces my purpose of existence.”

The participants stated that the experience they gained while dealing with someone in any subject would positively affect their mental health. In addition, the participants said that they can organise their lives with the awareness they will gain. In addition, the participants reported that the experience they gained while caring for someone in any subject would contribute to their attachment to life, creating a purpose in life, coping with negative moods and communicating.

Contribution to Society

The participants stated that their experience in dealing with someone on any subject would positively affect their approach to other people and they would be able to interact by overcoming their prejudices ($n = 14$). Positive approach is one of these effects. One of the responses (P9) said, “I helped a person and saw that person was happy. Based on this feeling, I continued to help other people. This is a really good feeling. I tried to approach other patients I met in a more compassionate and helpful way.” A participant (P15) said, “I also approach other people in a positive way.” Another participant (P10) said, “This response that I received from family makes me to hold on to my job and do it, whether it is for other similar families or for people. Even a smile of those people makes me turn towards other people and do something more.”

In addition, it is seen that the experience gained while dealing with someone in any subject will help to approach those people without judgement in the relationship to be established with other people. The participants stated that in this way, they would interact with the people they met without judgement ($n = 5$). One participant (P4) said, “For example, it helps me to create a philosophy of life that you should approach other people you will encounter in your life as much as possible without prejudice and try to get to know them, try to discover the treasures in them.” Another participant (P5) said, “..... I try this a lot in my relationships thinking that maybe it will be good for me to try it again. When there are situations where I am prejudiced, I try to overcome it and take steps in that way.” Another participant (P11) said, “..... I try to listen to that person in a tolerant way without making judgements, taking my time. I try to get rid of my prejudices.” Another participant (P1) said, “It helps me to listen to people more without focusing directly on the result, without fortune-telling and without seeing the result, and to understand where the result will lead to. I try to overcome my prejudices.”

Here, the participants stated that their relationships with other people will be shaped positively with the experience they have gained. Participants who will try to act independently of their prejudices have stated that they will provide an easier interactive environment.

Contribution to Family

The participants stated that the experience they gained while dealing with someone on any issue would have an impact on their family relationships. Participants expressed their intention to leverage their acquired experiences to cultivate more positive family relationships. To this end, they indicated a commitment to addressing challenges in a constructive manner ($n = 11$). One participant (P1) said, "I take steps to create a more constructive process in my family with other family examples." Another participant (P8) said, "For this, I try to communicate better and try to solve the mistake in a way without responding to the mistake with a mistake." The response of one of the participants is as follows:

In fact, when you see the distortions in family structures of other cultures, you say: I wonder what steps I should take to prevent such a problem in my family. This communication problem persists, and these are the reasons for this communication conflict. I say that I should take the following steps in order to establish a constructive communication within my family, whether it is my spouse or my child (P4).

The participants also stated that they would reach an awareness after the contributions they had made and that this awareness was important in terms of their interactions with their families ($n = 10$). One participant (P11) said, "I explain the incident and expect them to learn from it. I say that there are also such things, pay attention to them. In addition to warning, informing and encouraging the other party to take precautions verbally, I also make positive configurations within my family through practice." The opinions of other participants are as follows:

The events I describe often seem like extreme examples, especially to my children, but I try not to compromise on this issue as much as I can. For this, if necessary, I tried to support the events I described with pictures so that lessons could be learnt. Apart from this, I also resort to practical ways to help my family achieve a healthier structure with the experience I have gained (P9).

..... I can make suggestions to myself such as, I wonder if it would be better if I did it this way, the other person lived like this and I should not do the same. Here, in my own family, I don't have children now, but when I have children, I realised that I should be a good role model for them from a young age. I realised how important it is not to reflect the problems in the family to our children. The region I live in has contributed a lot to me in this direction (P14).

The participants also stated that they would have positive feelings about family processes with the experience they gained and that they would interact with family members with these feelings ($n = 5$). One participant (P6) said, "Actually, I experienced almost most of what you said. I mean, my loyalty to my family increases even more. Even my trust in them has increased." Another participant said, "As my relations with my environment make me more loving and helpful, my relations with my family become stronger. As I feel that helping is good for me, I support my family more willingly. My communication within the family becomes better." Another participant (P2) said, "Family relationships become more positive. The relationships of family members are more open to each other. They can stick together when they have a problem. In this way, you become more tolerant, I have noticed this."

It was found that the participants also included the topics of taking a positive action ($n = 4$) and differentiation of family members as individuals ($n = 2$) on what kind of contribution they would make to their families with the experience they gained. One participant (P17) stated: "..... If my answer to this question is no, I say on that day or at that time, that I need to change this, I need to do the following, I actually say that I do not pay attention to these points, I question myself and I try to act to change this." A different participant (P16) said, "There are parents who come to ask about their children every day, for example, when I see such examples, I wonder if I show enough attention and love to my own child. Then I can buy a small gift for my wife or child on the way home." Another participant (P11) said, "You know, after the experience I gained, I would ensure that my family members and family structure function in a healthy way by practising as well as shaping my family structure verbally. In this way, I would try to help them become individuals who can handle their own affairs." Another participant (P9) said, "My children are currently attending university and they are in a different province. I tried to help them stand on their own feet since their childhood when we were not with them. We also made a lot of effort for them so that they could make the right choices about choosing friends and lifestyle in a different province."

The participants stated that the experience they gained while dealing with someone on any issue would have positive effects on their relationships with their families and that they would try to influence their family members in a positive way. In this context, the participants stated that they would try to deal with problems in a constructive way, reach awareness, have positive emotions and interact with family members with these emotions, and help family members to differentiate as individuals.

Table 9. *Theme, Sub-Themes and Codes*

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>	<i>Codes</i>
Positive affect	-	Happiness
		Peace
		Hope
		Compassion
		Self-compassion
		Purpose in life
		Self-improvement

Results Related to the Theme of Positive Affect

Regarding the theme of positive affect, the participants stated that volunteering to give time to someone in any subject and making positive contributions to that person would have positive effects on them. The participants who stated that they would feel happy to a great extent emphasised the topics of peace, hope, compassion, self-compassion, purpose in life and self-improvement ($n = 17$). One participant (P9) said “It affects in a positive way. As I said, I do so many voluntary activities, all of them are for ourselves, in fact, participating in voluntary activities gives us more happiness. Therefore, it makes me happier to spare time and help someone.” Another participant (P1) said, “I feel very peaceful at such a time. I sleep peacefully. I think that my knowledge is not wasted when I help people.” A different participant (P13) said, “It affects positively. I try to do what I can do to make it better. Hope is a source of life. This way, I never lose hope.” Another participant (P15) said, “I am happy when I help a person. I feel good because these people will do good things for themselves because they are free from evil.” Other responses are as follows:

Since one of the purposes of my existence in life is to serve the whole, it makes me very happy to spare time for someone and to be able to help them. It reinforces my purpose of existence. In addition, establishing positive relationships with other people also positively affects my relationship with myself. As I learn to approach people with compassion, I start to be more compassionate to myself (P3).

Making someone happy makes me happy. Being able to heal a person's wounds allows me to heal my own wounds. In this context, I empathise so much with the people I encounter that in fact, what he experiences is similar in my life. As a result of this improvement, you already feel better, look at life positively and become happier (P4).

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The current findings align with recent studies emphasizing the pivotal role of compassion in subjective well-being. Notably, Akdeniz and Deniz's (2020) Turkish adaptation of Pommier's updated Compassion Scale confirmed its validity and reliability in university students, reinforcing the utility of compassion measures in Turkish contexts (Cura & Cura, 2022). Similarly, the Turkish validation of the Fears of Compassion Scale demonstrated significant negative associations between fear of compassion (self, others) and life satisfaction, anxiety, and depression, indicating that facilitating compassion may directly enhance well-being (Necef & Deniz, 2021). In occupational settings, recent research among Turkish healthcare professionals reveals that compassion significantly affects psychosocial flourishing and mental health, highlighting that giving compassion promotes positive emotions and resilience (Demirel et al., 2024). These findings parallel international meta-analyses and mediation models (e.g., Neff, 2009b; Zessin et al., 2015), supporting the idea that compassion contributes to happiness both directly and indirectly. By integrating both Turkish-centric and international literatures, this study's theoretical foundation is substantially strengthened. It demonstrates that compassion-related processes whether measured by validated scales or explored through fears and facilitation play a vital role in enhancing psychological well-being across diverse populations and contexts.

In the present study, it was concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between contribution and happiness and that contribution predicts happiness significantly. It can be understood that the results obtained are in line with the results in the literature. Lin, Chen and Kuo (2014) found that individuals who were engaged in leisure time activities felt happier. This study also reported that participation in leisure time activities with the support of a spouse increased happiness even more. In addition to spending quality leisure time, individuals' participation in voluntary activities also increases the level of happiness. In this regard, Seligman (2002) stated that the factors determining the happiness level of an individual are attitude towards happiness, living conditions and voluntary activities. Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, Rozario and Tang (2003) reported an increase in the well-being levels of individuals who participated in voluntary activities. Similarly, McMunn, Nazroo, Wahrendorf, Breeze and Zaninotto (2009) reported that individuals who participated in voluntary activities had higher levels of well-being than those who did not. Huppert (2009) reported that pro-social behaviours, early maternal care and engaging in positive activities are effective on well-being. Lyubomirsky (2014) reported that cultural, artistic and sportive activities are effective in being happy and that these activities help individuals to interact more easily with the society they are in. In fact, individuals' positive contributions to themselves and other people help to ensure social change and make life more meaningful (Lerner, 2004, 2005). From this point of view, it can be stated that making positive contributions to oneself, one's family and community plays an important role in increasing the happiness of individuals.

The present study revealed a strong positive relationship between compassion and happiness, demonstrating that compassion significantly predicts happiness. This finding is consistent with prior research that directly examines the link between these two constructs. For instance, Neff (2009b) emphasized that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion report significantly greater life satisfaction, optimism, and happiness. Similarly, Zessin, Dickhäuser, and Garbade (2015) conducted a meta-analysis which confirmed a robust positive correlation between self-compassion and psychological well-being, suggesting that self-compassion plays a direct and consistent role in enhancing happiness. Other studies support this connection by highlighting the mediating or moderating role of compassion in various contexts. For example, Benzo, Kirsch, and Nelson (2017) found that self-compassion contributed to 95% of the variance in perceived happiness when coping with isolation. Likewise, Neff and McGehee (2010) identified self-compassion as a key mediator between family support, attachment, and overall well-being. Additionally, Neely et al. (2009) emphasized the predictive role of self-compassion in emotional resilience and happiness. Taken together, these findings reinforce the theoretical premise that cultivating compassion whether directed toward oneself or others plays a crucial role in enhancing emotional well-being and fostering a sense of happiness. The results of this study further contribute to this body of knowledge by empirically demonstrating the predictive power of compassion on happiness, thereby aligning with and extending existing theoretical and empirical frameworks (Benzo et al., 2017; Gilbert, 2005; Neely et al., 2009; Neff, 2009b; Neff & McGehee, 2010; Zessin et al., 2015).

In this study, it was concluded that contribution played a mediating role in the relationship between compassion and happiness. Compassion is expressed as taking responsibility for the activities to be carried out for the happiness of other individuals and helping them (Hosking, 2007). A compassionate individual has a positive attitude towards other people. In fact, the interaction, harmony and co-operation of individuals with other people are also positively shaped by compassion. With contribution, the tendency to help someone with a problem becomes more meaningful for the individual by being compassionate (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Compassion, which supports the social life and happiness of the individual (Goleman, 2004; Gilbert, 2005; Ladner, 2009; Lyubomirsky, 2008), contributes positively to both the individual and the society in which they live (Eisenberg, 2002; Bierhoff, 2005).

All these findings show that helping others is important for being more compassionate (Goleman, 2004; Gilbert, 2005; Ladner, 2009; Lyubomirsky, 2008). Although it is related to compassion, contribution is an important feature in itself for increasing positive feelings and for the positive development of other people (Lerner, 2004). This means that the things we do can have a big effect on the lives of other people. It also means that being kind is important (Lerner et al., 2005).

Discussion of Qualitative Results

Compassion

Considering the findings, it is understood that the participants can be compassionate towards other people through positive emotions, thoughts, attitudes and behaviours. These positive outputs are not

being prejudiced, considering the problem from different perspectives, being calm, searching for evidence, the problem's being unique to the individual, love, compassion and tolerance, using body and verbal language, raising awareness of the individual, offering alternative solutions to the individual, the potential of every person to make mistakes, and the need to regret the mistakes made. In the literature, the concept of compassion is defined as feeling affection for another human being (Çağrıçı, 2004) and it can be seen that it pushes individuals to take responsibility and help in actions and activities for the well-being of other people (Hosking, 2007). Having a positive attitude and behaviour towards other people and supporting the other person in solving the problem are among the characteristics of compassion (Lyubomirsky, 2008). Bayırlı (2020) reported in a study that the method of suggestion and action would be effective in the acquisition of compassion. In addition, the researcher also found that the participants tried to be the right role model and used respect and love in gaining the trait of compassion. Again, in this study, the researcher showed that they found it important to cooperate with the family, to provide cooperation activities in schools, and to carry out practices such as visiting nursing homes and patients in order to gain the trait of compassion.

In addition, in the findings, it was understood that some participants considered it normal that every person can make mistakes, but they also put forward conditions such as the individual's regret and not repeating the mistake in order to help that person. This situation can be explained by compassion fatigue that may arise depending on individuals' experiences and observations. Figley (2002) reported that compassion fatigue is accompanied by factors such as anxiety, traumatic experiences, sense of achievement and compassion-induced stress that may be experienced due to empathy. Pehlivan and Güner (2018) reported that physical, emotional and mental burnout will lead to compassion fatigue. Based on all these, it can be said that having positive emotions, thoughts, attitudes and behaviours will play an important role for an individual to be compassionate to other people. However, care should also be taken to maintain the functionality of compassion trait.

Contribution

When the findings obtained are examined, it can be understood that the experience gained by the participants while dealing with someone in any subject will make positive contributions to themselves, and that they will also make positive contributions to the society and their families with the experience they have gained. The participants explained these contributions as having a good mental health, organising their lives, being connected to life, creating a purpose in life, coping with negative moods, having a positive approach, not judging, taking preventive steps and applying positive attitudes and behaviours. In the literature, Atchley (1989) reported that contribution helps to have a successful identity, to provide continuity in social roles, and to create the meaning and purpose of life. Various studies highlight the positive impact of contribution and social interaction on individual well-being. Lerner et al. (2005) demonstrated that contributing empowers individuals to cultivate positive emotions, thoughts, and experiences through their actions. Their research also indicated that engaging in social activities, utilizing leisure time meaningfully, and interacting with others significantly influence an individual's overall well-being. Furthermore, the family environment plays a crucial role. Eccles et al. (1997) reported that positive experiences within the family facilitate positive experiences in other contexts, such as school and peer groups. These researchers also emphasized that interactions with parents and older siblings are highly effective in mitigating depressive affect. Their study additionally found that parental and peer interactions are vital in preventing problematic behaviors. Similarly, Cook et al. (2002) observed that individuals with positive experiences in their social environment tend to gain positive experiences in other interaction areas, including family and school, and also foster a stronger sense of self, such as autonomy.

When we look at studies that are based on compassion, we can see that people can make positive changes in their own lives and the lives of others by being compassionate. Crocker and Canevello (2008) revealed that compassion has a positive relationship with the concept of social support. In this study, the researchers reported that mutually helping each other, feeling open and connected to other people, and not being in conflict with others are effective in creating goals related to compassion. In another study, Dunn, Aknin and Norton (2008) found that individuals believed that spending on themselves rather than other people would make them happier. However, in the same study, the researchers found that happier individuals spent for other people and had a higher level of happiness. In summary, contribution provides positive effects towards the self and other people. However, it can be seen that individuals can also make positive contributions to themselves and other people in compassion-based actions. This may be due to the positive characteristics underlying the concept of compassion. When the literature is examined, the

fact that both concepts are addressed together with positive psychology shows that there are common points between these concepts.

Positive Affect

When the results are looked at more closely, it seems that the people taking part said that volunteering their time to someone in any subject and making a positive contribution to that person would have a positive effect on them. Participants mentioned peace, hope, compassion, self-compassion, life purpose and self-improvement as positive situations. Diener and Seligman (2002) showed that happy individuals feel good about themselves and have rich, positive and healthy relationships with other people. In addition, researchers found that happy individuals spend very little time alone. Veenhoven (2009) reported that the environment as well as a positive life is necessary to increase happiness. Inglehart (1990) reported that having a good group of friends and being appreciated by other people increases an individual's happiness.

In addition, in this study, the researcher reported that pro-social behaviours, early maternal care and engaging in positive activities were effective on well-being. The results of our study are consistent with the tenets of Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory. The practice of compassion has been demonstrated to contribute to an increase in positive emotions by activating brain regions that enhance empathy and benevolent behaviours (Fredrickson, 2001). In addition to the Eudaimonic Well-Being theory, our research has demonstrated that acts of compassion and contributions to society enhance individuals' levels of happiness. The findings indicate that individuals achieve greater life satisfaction by exhibiting virtuous behaviours and contributing to society (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Seligman (2002) stated that the factors that determined the happiness level of an individual are the attitude towards happiness, living conditions and voluntary activities. Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, Rozario and Tang (2003) also reported that people who took part in voluntary activities felt better. Aknin et al. (2013) reported that individuals who recently donated to charities had higher subjective well-being than other individuals when they examined economic differences in income. In addition, in this study, researchers found a significant positive correlation between pro-social expenditures and well-being. When the literature is analysed, it is understood that contribution plays a role in increasing an individual's happiness.

When we look closely at what other people have written, we can see that being kind makes people happier. In 2017, İsgör said that there is a strong link between compassion and how happy people feel, and that compassion can be a good way to predict how happy people will be. However, the researcher said there was no big difference in how the students felt or how much compassion they showed, no matter where they lived. Although there are opinions in the literature stating that happiness is the ultimate goal (İskend, 2005), there are also findings in some studies that happiness predicts compassion (Erdoğan, 2017; Kapıcıoğlu, 2019).

To sum up, it's clear that being kind makes people happier. In fact, it can be seen that giving is also good for your happiness. There are only a few studies that show how giving can make people happier (Jelicic et al., 2007). But when we look at what compassion is based on in theory and in scientific studies, we see that it includes things that help people on an individual level. This supports what was found in the research (Aktaş and Bozdoğan, 2016; Crocker and Canevello, 2008; Konca-Uğurlu, 2017; Lyubomirsky, 2008; Neff, 2011b; Romano et al., 2013). Compassion is important for happiness, but not all activities that contribute to the individual can be based on compassion (Jelicic et al., 2007; Lerner et al., 2005).

Based on the results of the study, issues such as knowing how compassion is perceived in relation to compassion, contribution and happiness, and understanding the sources of contribution and happiness can be focused on. In addition, studying the concepts of compassion, contribution and happiness together with concepts such as values, taking part in voluntary activities, sense of responsibility, self-perception, gratitude, peace, meaning of life, differentiation of self, spirituality, self-acceptance and tolerance may be useful in enriching the literature. In addition, by determining the factors that affect compassion, contribution and happiness (violence, tolerance, benevolence, prosocial behaviours, etc.), different models can be created that include these factors together. Through these models, skills that will improve compassion, contribution and happiness of individuals can be learnt. In addition, the findings obtained regarding the concepts of compassion, contribution and happiness can be tested with individuals of different sexual orientations. Again, the current study was conducted with a non-clinical study group. The structure of the model obtained in the research can be tested with different study groups. At the same time, it may be important in terms of mental health care to realise contribution-based practices (such as

taking responsibility, participating in voluntary activities, helping and visiting patients) that will enable children to contribute both to themselves and to other people in pre and post-school processes. However, in order to gain positive characteristics such as compassion, contributing to oneself and other people and happiness, involving students in pre-school and primary school period in activities such as social responsibility activities, visiting patients and nursing homes, pro-social behaviours and being involved in voluntary activities before teaching can prepare the environment for the individual to grow up as a person with high awareness with positive characteristics at an early age.

Ethical Declaration

“*The Mediating Role Of Contributon In The Relationship Between Compassion And Happiness And The Opinions Of Adult Individuals: The Mixed Model*” the scientific, ethical and citation rules were followed during the writing process of the study; no falsification was made on the collected data and this study was not sent to any other academic publication environment for evaluation. The necessary ethics committee permissions were obtained from Ondokuz Mayıs University Social and Humanities Sciences Ethics Committee (Date: 30/10/2020 and Decision no: 2020/648) to conduct the research

Etik Beyan

“*Merhamet İle Mutluluk Arasındaki İlişkide Katkının Aracı Rolü ve Yetişkin Bireylerin Görüşleri: Karma Model*” başlıklı çalışmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel kurallara, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmamış ve bu çalışma herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiştir. Gerekli olan etik kurul izinleri Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulunun 30.10.2020 tarih ve 2020/648 sayılı kararı ile alınmıştır.

Declaration of Contribution Rate of Researchers

In this study, the first author contributed 60% to the study and the second author contributed 40% to the study.

Arařtırmacıların Katkı Oranı Beyanı

Bu çalışmada birinci yazar %60, ikinci yazar ise %40 katkı sağlamıştır.

Conflict Declaration

The researchers do not have any conflict of interest with other individuals or institutions within the scope of the study.

Çatışma Beyanı

Çalışmada herhangi bir potansiyel çıkar çatışması söz konusu değildir.

Notes

This study was developed from a doctoral thesis conducted under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Seher BALCI ÇELİK.

Not

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GENİř ÖZET

Bu çalışma, bireylerin merhamet, katkı ve mutluluk seviyelerini incelemekte ve bu üç kavram arasındaki ilişkilerde katkının aracı rolünü arařtırmaktadır. Hem nicel hem de nitel yöntemleri içeren karma modelle tasarlanan araştırma, Türkiye’den 1018 yetişkin bireyin katıldığı anket çalışmaları ve 17 bireyle yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelerden elde edilen verilere dayanmaktadır. Çalışma, bireylerin merhametli olma özelliklerinin, topluma ve bireysel yaşamlarına sağladığı katkıları ve bunun mutluluk üzerindeki etkilerini analiz etmeyi hedeflemiřtir. Arařtırmanın nicel bulguları, merhamet, katkı ve mutluluk arasında anlamlı pozitif ilişkiler olduğunu göstermiřtir. Pearson korelasyon analizleri, merhamet ile katkı arasında ($r = .40$, $p < .01$), katkı ile mutluluk arasında ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) ve merhamet ile mutluluk arasında ($r = .37$, $p < .01$) pozitif yönde ve orta düzeyde ilişkiler ortaya koymuřtur. Yapısal eřitlik modeli (SEM) analizleri, bu üç kavram arasındaki doğrudan ve dolaylı etkileri daha ayrıntılı şekilde deęerlendirmiřtir. Merhametin katkırı ve katkının mutluluęu anlamlı düzeyde yordadığı, ayrıca katkının merhamet ve mutluluk arasındaki ilişkide kısmi bir aracı rol üstlendięi belirlenmiřtir. Sobel testi sonuçları, merhametten mutluluęa giden yol katsayısında katkı eklendiğinde ($\beta = .307$ ’den $.108$ ’e) anlamlı bir düşüş olduğunu göstermiřtir. Bu da katkının, merhametli olmanın mutluluk üzerindeki etkisini artırmada aracı bir işlev gördüğünü kanıtlamıřtır. Nicel verilere göre, katılımcılar günlük yaşamlarında olumlu duygular, düşünceler ve davranıřlarla çevrelerine karşı merhamet gösterebilmekte, kendilerine ve başkalarına katkıda bulunabilmektedir. Örneęin, bireylerin çevresindekilere yardım etmelerinin ve zaman ayırmalarının, mutluluk seviyelerinde artışa neden olduğu saptanmıřtır. Katılımcılar, yaşamlarına olumlu katkılar sundukça, kendi iyilik halleri ve topluma karşı sorumluluk duyguları arasında bağlantı kurabilmektedir. Arařtırmada kullanılan ölçekler; Merhamet Ölçeęi, Üç Boyutlu Katkı Ölçeęi ve Oxford Mutluluk Ölçeęi, geçerlik ve güvenilirlik analizlerinden olumlu sonuçlar almıřtır. Bu durum, ölçeklerin bireylerin merhamet, katkı ve mutluluk düzeylerini deęerlendirme açısından uygun ve güvenilir olduğunu göstermiřtir. Arařtırmanın nitel bölümünde, üç ana tema ve bu temalar etrafında şekillenen alt temalar belirlenmiřtir: merhamet, katkı ve olumlu etki. Merhamet teması altında, bilinçli farkındalık, sevecenlik ve paylaşımların bilincinde olma alt temaları öne çıkmıřtır. Katılımcılar, insanların sorunlarına yaklařırken ön yargıdan uzak durmayı, soęukkanlılıkla dinlemeyi ve empati yapmayı önemli bulduklarını belirtmiřlerdir. Merhametli olmanın, sevgi, şefkat ve hoşgörü duygularını dięer bireylere aktarmayı ve böylece daha yapıcı ilişkiler kurmayı kolaylařtırdığı ifade edilmiřtir. Bunun yanı sıra, katılımcılar, herkesin hata yapabileceğini kabul ettiklerini ancak hatalardan ders çıkarılmasının önemli olduğunu vurgulamıřlardır. Katkı teması ise, bireyin kendisine, topluma ve ailesine sağladığı katkılar üzerinden deęerlendirilmiřtir. Kendine katkı alt temasında,

bireylerin olumlu bir ruh sağlığına sahip olma, yaşamlarını düzenleme ve yaşamda bir amaç oluşturma gibi kazanımlar elde ettikleri ifade edilmiştir. Örneğin, katılımcılar, başkalarına yardım etmenin, kendilerinde psikolojik rahatlama ve bir işe yaradıklarını hissetme duygusu yarattığını belirtmişlerdir. Topluma katkı bağlamında, bireylerin diğer insanlara ön yargısız yaklaşarak, empati kurarak ve olumlu bir tavır sergileyerek sosyal bağlarını güçlendirdikleri görülmüştür. Aileye katkı alt temasında ise, katılımcıların edindikleri deneyimlerin aile içi ilişkileri üzerinde olumlu etkiler yarattığı, aile üyelerinin bireysel farklılaşmalarını desteklediği ve daha sağlıklı iletişim kurmalarına yardımcı olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Olumlu etki teması, bireylerin merhamet ve katkı yoluyla mutluluk, huzur, umut, şefkat ve yaşam amacı gibi pozitif duygular elde ettiklerini göstermiştir. Katılımcılar, gönüllü faaliyetlere katılmanın ve başkalarına yardımcı olmanın yaşam kalitelerini artırdığını ve kendilerini daha iyi hissetmelerine yol açtığını dile getirmiştir. Bazı katılımcılar, kendilerindeki değişimlerin yalnızca psikolojik değil, aynı zamanda sosyal ve fiziksel boyutlarda da olumlu etkiler yarattığını ifade etmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, bireylerin merhametli davranışlarının hem bireysel hem de toplumsal düzeyde önemli etkiler yaratabileceğini göstermektedir. Merhamet, bireyin kendine, ailesine ve topluma katkıda bulunmasını sağlayan bir itici güç olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Aynı zamanda, katkı yoluyla bireylerin sosyal bağlarını güçlendirdiği ve mutluluk seviyelerini artırdığı saptanmıştır. Bu bulgular, merhametin, toplumsal uyum ve bireysel iyi oluş üzerinde nasıl önemli bir rol oynadığını ortaya koymaktadır. Nicel bulgular, merhametin mutluluk üzerindeki doğrudan etkisini ve bu etkinin katkı ile güçlendiğini göstermektedir. Bu bağlamda, katkının, bireylerin topluma ve çevresine sağladıkları olumlu etkilerin yalnızca bir aracı değil, aynı zamanda bireysel gelişimleri ve mutlulukları için de kritik bir bileşen olduğu ifade edilebilir. Nitel bulgular ise, bireylerin merhametli davranışları sonucunda hem kendilerine hem de çevrelerine sundukları katkıların önemini destekler niteliktedir. Katılımcılar, bu süreçlerin bireysel mutluluklarını artırdığını ve toplumsal bağlarını güçlendirdiğini açık bir şekilde ifade etmişlerdir. Bu bulgular, literatürdeki mevcut çalışmalarla uyum içindedir. Örneğin, Seligman (2002) ve Lyubomirsky (2008), bireylerin gönüllü etkinliklere katılmasının ve diğer insanlara destek olmasının mutluluğu artırdığına dikkat çekmiştir. Benzer şekilde, Dunn, Aknin ve Norton (2008), bireylerin diğer insanlara yönelik gerçekleştirdikleri katkıların mutluluk seviyelerini artırdığını bulmuştur. Araştırma, bireylerin merhamet ve katkı davranışlarını geliştirmeye yönelik eğitim programlarının ve sosyal sorumluluk projelerinin tasarlanmasının önemine işaret etmektedir. Özellikle erken yaşlarda merhamet ve katkı özelliklerini destekleyen eğitim yaklaşımları, bireylerin pozitif özellikler kazanmalarını sağlayabilir. Örneğin, okul öncesi ve ilköğretim düzeyinde, merhamet ve katkı temelli etkinliklerin uygulanması, bireylerin farkındalığını artıracak ve sosyal becerilerini geliştirecektir. Benzer şekilde, yetişkinler için düzenlenecek gönüllülük programları ve toplumsal dayanışma projeleri, bireylerin hem ruhsal hem de sosyal anlamda gelişimlerine katkı sağlayabilir.