Investigation of Psychological Well-Being Emotional Awareness and Expression of Emotion of Turkish and English University Students with Respect to Country and Gender

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Abstract

The aim of this study is Turkish and English university students' psychological well-being, emotional awareness and expression of emotions of how differ according to gender and to the country. The research is a descriptive study. The Turkish group of the research was 349 Turkish university students educated at Gazi University in 2010-2011. The English group was 251 English university students. 229 of these students were from University College of London, University of London or Middelesex University in 2010-2011; 19 of these students wereparticipated in the online research which was addressed as www.mediko.gazi.edu.tr/survey. Toronto-Alexithymia 20 Scale (Bagby, Parker and Taylor, 1994; Beştepe, 1997), Psychological well-being Scale (Ryff,1989; Cenkseven, 2004), and Personal Information Form were used to collect data. Multi analysis of variance (MANOVA) and t test were used for analysis. The results of the research showed that psychological well-being, emotional awareness and expression of emotions of Turkish university students was lower than the English students. The results were evaluated in terms of literature and institutional prospect; the suggestions were made by considering the future research and practical implication for counseling services.

Keywords: Emotional Awareness, Expression of Emotion, Well-being, Culture

Extended Summary
Introduction

Well-being is an important concept in positive psychology. It is accepted that there are two basic outlooks about well-being: Hedonizm ve Eudaimonizm. In heodonizm well-being is taking pleasure from life. In other words, in that viewpoint well-being includes subjective evaluations, it is subjective well-being. In eudaimonizm, well-being is exactly to be in psychological function. Conceptually it is called as psychological well-being (Keyes, Shmotkin ve Ryff, 2002).

It is important that relationship between psychological well-being, culture (Christopher, 1992; 1999; Dinnel, Kleinknecht ve Matsumi, 2002; Kim, Kasser ve Lee, 2003) and emotion. Because of that culture, emotional awareness and expression of emotion were included the research. Two different culture types, which effect the individual emotion, though and motives by different ways and guide the individual, could be defined: Individual culture and collective culture. Individual culture symbolizes the west culture where the individualism is common. In this culture the individual does not effect from environment. Collective culture symbolizes non-west society who are tied to others, belongs to a group and fitting. Emotional awareness is a competence to recognize the feelings of self and others (Lane and Schwartz, 1987). Expression of emotion is a competence to disclose emotions in verbal or non-verbal language (Lane and ark. 1990).

Purpose

The aim of this study is Turkish and English university students' psychological well-being, emotional awareness and expression of emotions of how differ according to gender and to the country.

Method

The research is a descriptive study. The Turkish group of the research was 349 (211 female, 138 male) Turkish university students educated at Gazi University in 2010-2011. The foreign students were not included in this sample. The English group was 251 (143 female, 108 male) English university students. 229 of these students were from University College of London, University of London or Middelesex University in 2010-2011; 19 of these students were participated in the online research which was addressed as www.mediko.gazi.edu.tr/survey. In order to state the emotional awareness and the expression of emotions of students, the original form of Toronto-Alexithymia 20 Scale, developed by Bagby, Parker ve Taylor, (1994) and adapted to Turkish by Beştepe (1997), is applied to English group and the adapted one is used for the Turkish group. In order to measure psychological well-being of students the original form of Psychological well-being Scale, developed by Ryff (1989) and adapted to Turkish by Cenkseven (2004), is applied to English group and the adapted form is used for the Turkish group. Moreover, the information about the age, sex and ethnical structure of the students were collected via Personal Information Form prepared by the researcher. Multi analysis of variance (MANOVA) and t test were used for analysis.

Results

The results of the research showed that psychological well-being (F=37.79, p<.001), emotional awareness (F=27.49, p<.001) and expression of emotions

(F=41.15, p<.001) of Turkish university students was lower than the English students. It was found that the level of psychological well-being (F=3.98, p<.05) of the female students was higher than the male students. The emotional awareness (F=.22, p>.05) and expression of emotions (F= .12, p>.05) of university students did not show differences in terms of gender. It was found that the level of psychological well-being (t=-4.69, p<.001), the emotional awareness (t=3.42, p<.001), and expression of emotions (t=4.78, p<.001) of English female university students were higher than Turkish the female students. It was found that the level of psychological well-being (t=-4.09, p<.001), the emotional awareness (t=3.97, p<.001), and expression of emotions (t=4.38, p<.001) of English male university students were higher than Turkish the male students.

Discussion

Discussion focused on the distinction between individual and collective culture with psychological-well-being, emotional awareness and expression of emotions.

Conclusion

The results were evaluated in terms of literature and institutional prospect; the suggestions were made by considering the future research (similar studies should be done in order to be generalize the results) and practical implication for counseling services (Counselor should be taken into account self-construal of client).

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