Predictor Relationships between the Values the Adolescents Have and Their Levels of Subjective Well-Being and Social Appearance Anxiety: A Model Proposal [*]

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Abstract

The purpose of the current research was to examine the predictor relationships among adolescents' social appearance anxieties, subjective well-beings and the values they have; and to test the model set with reference to these relationships. The research was carried out by using relational survey model. Convenience sampling method was used to select the sample of the study. The sample of the study consisted of adolescents who were enrolled in public high schools of a city located at the centre region of Turkey in 2013-2014 education year. 322 male and 278 female students and in total 600 students aged between 13 and 18 participated in this study. In the present research, "Human Values Scale" developed by Dilmaç (2007); "Adolescent Subjective Well-being Scale" developed by Eryilmaz (2009); "Social Appearance Anxiety Scale Adolescent Form" developed Hart (2008) and Turkish adaptation of by Doğan (2011) were used as the data collection instruments of this study. Data were analyzed using AMOS 19 software according to "Structural Equation Model". The findings showed that the direct effects of values on social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being, the direct effect of social appearance anxiety on subjective well-being.

Introduction

The concept of value has been an issue of debate through the human history since antiquity. Value has been one of the three main problems of philosophy for centuries (Yılmaz, 2006), and values that form the basis of the behaviors of individuals has been the basic issue of axiology (Tokdemir, 2007). In psychology, the concept of value has been considered from a different point of view when compared to philosophy. Psychology does not consider whether values are dependent on objective bases, but it puts considerable emphasis on the role values play in guiding people's behavior. In this respect, psychology handles the concept of value only as a belief (Güngör, 1993).

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The concept of value, which was coined by Znaniecki (1998) in social sciences was derived from the word "valare" which meant "being of value" or "being strong" in Latin (Bilgin, 1995). Güngör (1998) defined value as the belief on something being desirable or not desirable whereas Doğanay (2006), defined value as the thoughts that affect our lives and what we consider important in life. Çağlar (2005) defined values as the cultural elements that set standards in the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals. On the other hand, value was defined by Ulusoy and Dilmaç (2012) as the body of beliefs that directs the behaviors of individuals.

Ancient philosophers regarded values as the source of happiness. Such that, according to an ancient philosopher Socrates, being happy meant being virtuous (Gökberk, 1996). According to Aristoteles, the ultimate goal of humans in life is happiness, and the means to obtain this goal are virtue, and grace (Kaya, 1983).

Happiness has been the most desired thing since the beginning of human history. Individuals are always in search of happiness. Similarly, societies are in search of happiness as well. From past to present, what happiness is and how it is found have been the questions that have been asked to obtain this desire (Acaboğa, 2007). Happiness is generally the most basic goal of life and all individuals want to be happy (Selim, 2008). Psychology happiness has been considered together with the concept of subjective well-being (Eryılmaz, 2011). The concept of subjective well-being consists of the concepts of positive and negative affect and life satisfaction. Individuals' high levels of subjective well-beings is dependent upon experiencing higher positive affect than negative affect and owning positive cognitive judgements about the quality of their own lives. (Tuzgöl-Dost, 2005). Subjective well-being was described as experiencing positive emotions frequently, and negative emotions rarely; and experiencing high levels of life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). These three factors are important not only for the subjective well-beings of adults but also for that of adolescents (Myers & Deiner, 1995).

Despite the rapid development of science and technology, people's subjective well-beings do not develop at the same rate. People's development of their subjective well-beings may even be in contrast with the development of science and technology. For instance, according to the happiness researches carried out in 2000 in USA, 32% of the people were very happy, 58% of the people were moderately happy and 11% of the people not happy. However, the findings obtained in 2008 about happiness showed that 30% of the people were very happy, 55% of the people were moderately happy and 16% of the people not happy (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2011). Besides, Campbell, Converse and Rodgers (1976) found out that demographic variables (e.g., gender, income level, and marital status) explained a variance that is less than 20% of subjective well-being. This shows that other factors may have crucial impact on subjective well-being as well.

The relationship between values and happiness is based on the fact that human life has a goal and it is in search of meaning (Özdemir & Koruklu, 2011). There are many values that make people happy or that are the sources of happiness. Some of these are power, success, job, health, love, and money. The measures of these values vary for each individual (Selim, 2008). The importance of values may differ from society to society. For example, social welfare, social benefit, and well-being are regarded as values that are the sources of happiness in eastern socities to a large extent. However, in western societies, an individual's acquisition of his own goals and his personal enjoyment bring happiness (Özdemir & Koruklu, 2011). Values are the determiners of individuals' behaviors, choices, evaluations, relationships and many other social actions (Yılmaz, 2008). Every human being is born into a society surrounded by the world of values and continue their lives by creating a unique hierarchy of values of their own (Ülken, 1958). However, today with the examination of effects and structures of human values systems, it is debated that explaining the neglected determiners of life quality is also important (Andrews & Withey, 1976).

Young people forms the most dynamic part of the society that best reflects the changes and structuring. In adolescence, individuals form their own values system and try to create their own identities (Ercan, 2001). During this period, adolescents pay more attention to the values of his own society and to societal issues. Adolescents attain the mental maturity to design and criticize their own

values critically only in this period. This mental power provides adolescents to reconcile the values that seem contradictory (Ercan, 2001). Adolescents start creating their own values system in this period. However, settling this values system may continue up until the young adulthood period (Özbay & Özturk, 1992).

One of the main features of adolescence is that adolescents may attach excessive importance to their appearances. In this period, appearance becomes very important together with the influence of environmental factors. For adolescents, the imperfection in appearance brings into existence an important problem (Doğan, 2011). In this period, temporary social anxiety is a normal part of development. However, this anxiety may lead to a permanent anxiety in adolescents (Mash & Wolf, 2002). Social appearance anxiety can be defined as "the individuals' anxiety of being negatively evaluated because of their appearance" (Hart et al., 2008). Doğan (2009) stated that social appearance anxiety is the result of individuals' negative perceptions and evaluations related to body image and their appearance, and the result of individuals' evaluation of themselves in terms of their appearance.

Adolescence period can be described as a pretty rough period (Hall, 1904; Akt: Arnett, 1999). In this period, individuals are very sensitive about the evaluations on their body, as with other issues. Adolescents are resentful, suspicious, and insecure. They can think that people are talking about themselves even without a reason (Dönmezer, 2001). They generally evaluate or are evaluated about their own appearances or the appearances of other people around themselves. But understanding how affective their appearance is on other people is really important for them (Smith, 2007). From this perspective, it can be thought that social appearance anxiety is an important factor is adolescence period and it has a deterministic role on adolescents' subjective well-beings as well. In addition, adolescence is period in which adolescents start to form their own values system (Ercan, 2001) and these values owned by individuals effect their own attitudes, perceptions and pattern of behaviours (Ayral, 1992). Thus, it can be said that the values owned by adolescents may have considerable impact on adolescents' social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being levels. In this respect, the current study aimed to examine the direct effects of values on social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being, the direct effect of social appearance anxiety on subjective well-being, and the indirect effect of values on social appearance anxiety and to test the model set.

Method

Research Design
The purpose of the current study was to examine the relationships among adolescents' social appearance anxieties, subjective well-beings, and the values they have, and to test the model created by these relationships. Relational survey model which is a subtype of general survey model was used in the research. Relational survey is a research model that is conducted in order to define the relationship between two or more variables, and to obtain clues related to cause and effect relationships (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2008).

Sample
The sample of the study was selected by using convenience sampling strategy. It consisted of adolescents who were enrolled in public high schools of a city located at the centre region of Turkey in 2013-2014 education year. One of the schools was a vocational high school and the other four schools were Anatolian high schools and the selected students were enrolled in different grade levels. 322 male and 278 female students and in total 600 students aged between 13 and 18 participated in this study. One student was 13 year old, 113 students were 14 years old, 224 students were 15 years old, 118 students were 16 years old, 131 students were 17 years old, and 13 students were 18 years. Finally, the mean of the students participated in this study was 15.50.

Data collection instruments
Human Values Scale (HVS): This scale was developed by Dilmaç (2007) in order to determine adolescents' humanistic values. It is a likert scale which consists of 6 sub-dimensions and 42 items. The increase in individuals' Human Values Scale scores shows that individuals have more humanistic

values. The Cronbach Alpha internal reliability coefficients of the scale and its responsibility, friendship, reconciliation, respect, honesty, and tolerance sub-dimensions were .92, .73, .69, .65, .67, .69, and .70 respectively. In addition, the determination coefficients of the scale and its responsibility, friendship, reconciliation, respect, honesty, and tolerance sub-dimensions were .87, .73, .91, .80, .88, .75, and .79 respectively.

Adolescent Subjective Well-being Scale: This scale was developed by Eryılmaz (2009) in order to measure adolescents' subjective well-being levels. This scale consists of 15 items and four sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions are satisfaction in family relations, satisfaction from relations with important people, satisfaction from life and positive affection. The increase in Adolescent Subjective Well-being Scale scores point to individuals' high levels of subjective well-beings.

The factor analysis of scale showed that 4 factors explained the 61.64% of the total variance. The 35.79% of this explained variance was explained by satisfaction with family relations sub-dimension, 9.7% of it was explained by satisfaction with important people sub-dimension, 8.69% of it was explained by life satisfaction sub-dimension, and 7.44% of it was explained by positive feeling sub-dimension. Items' factor loads varied between 0.63 and 0.79. Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients were calculated as 0.86 for the whole scale; 0.83 for the satisfaction with the family relations sub-dimension; 0.73 for satisfaction with important people sub-dimension; 0.81 for life satisfaction sub-dimension; and 0.66 for positive feelings sub-dimension. Spearman Brown reliability coefficients were calculated as 0.83 for the whole scale, 0.83 for the satisfaction with the family relations sub-dimension; 0.61 for satisfaction with important people sub-dimension; 0.79 for life satisfaction sub-dimension; and 0.54 for positive feelings sub-dimension. Test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.83, after implementations carried out in two-weeks intervals. Corrected item-total correlations varied between 0.40 and 0.69 (Eryılmaz, 2009).

Social Appearance Anxiety Scale-Adolescent Form (SAAS-A): This scale was developed by Hart et al. (2008) in order to measure individuals' levels of social appearance anxieties. Doğan (2010) conducted adaption studies of this scale on undergraduate students. Later, Doğan (2011) developed Social Appearance Anxiety Scale-Adolescent Form by selecting adolescents as the sample of the study. SAAS-A was a 5 point likert scale consisting of 16 items and a single dimension. Higher SAAS-A scores indicate a higher level of social appearance anxiety. The items analysis showed that corrected item-total correlations of the scale ranged between .29 and .72. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin coefficient was calculated as .94. for 16 items. Barlett Spehericity test χ^2 value was found as 2885.96 (p<001). As a result of AFA, a single factor structure of 6.83 eigenvalue that can explain the 42.72% of the total variance was found. Factor loadings of the scale items were observed to vary between .34 and .78. Fit index of the model was examined with confirmatory factor analysis and the results were as follows: χ^2 = 284.02, *SD* = 96, AGFI = 0.90, GFI = 0.93, NFI = 0.93, RFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.95, RMR = 0.038, IFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.066. Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was found as .91. Test-retest reliability coefficient was calculated as .80 in the implementation carried on 229 students within two weeks interval. Corrected items total correlation coefficients were found to vary between .29 and .72. (Doğan, 2011).

Validity and reliability studies of the Turkish version of SAAS-A was conducted by Doğan (2011). In this validation study, Doğan (2011) selected 453 elementary school students as the sample and the partcipants' ages ranged between 12 and 15. However, there is no such validation study that include high school students as the sample. To resolve this issue, the researcher was contacted and he was asked for necessary permissions to validate the scale on high school level. The scale was conducted on 600 high school students between the ages of 13 and 18, who study at different schools in a central city of Turkey. During this process, information was exchanged with the researcher, and besides expert opinions were received. Confirmatory factor analysis was carried on the data obtained from 600 high school students in order to determine whether item scales were confirmed in the research sample; and the fit index values were as follows: χ^2/sd = 2.949, , RMSEA = 0.057, AGFI = 0.918, CFI = 0.969, GFI = 0.951, IFI = 0.969, NFI = 0.954, RFI = 0.932 and SRMR = 0.0386. Factor loadings of the scale varied between 0.27 and 0.87.

Data Analysis

In this study, structural equation modeling was performed to test the direct effects of values on social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being, the direct effect of social appearance anxiety on subjective well-being, and the indirect effect of values on social appearance anxiety. Structural equation modeling is a statistical approach that aims to test the theoretical model by estimating causal relations among observed and latent variables (Shumacker ve Lomax, 2004). In this study, structural equation modeling was performed by using AMOS 19 software.

Findings

In the model obtained (X^2 = 160.237, df = 39, p < .001), there were six exogenous (responsibility, friendship, peacefulness, respect, honesty and tolerance), and two endogenous (social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being) variables. Each path shown in the model was found to be statistically meaningful. The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index (NFI), The Tucker-Lewis coefficient fit index (TLI) and other fit indexes showed that model was pretty acceptable (Table 1). Each of the two-way correlations between the endogenous data in the model have high values and are statistically meaningful. This is also affected from the correlation values of the sub-dimensions in the values scale used in the current study.

Table 1. Statistical values related to the fitting of Structural Equation Model

Measure	*Good fit*	*Acceptable fit*	*Fit Index Values of the Model*
(X^2/sd)	≤ 3	≤ 4-5	4.11
RMSEA	≤ 0.05	0.06-0.08	0.07
SRMR	≤ 0.05	0.06-0.08	0.05
NFI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	0.93
CFI	≥ 0.97	≥ 0.95	0.92
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	0.95
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	0.92
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	0.94

When the fit values in Table 1 is examined, the following values are found: X^2/sd = 4.11, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.05, NFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.92, GFI = 0.95, AGFI = 0.92 ve TLI = 0.94. It can be seen that, the model has the fit values at a desired level in general (Bollen, 1989; Browne ve Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2010; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; Tanaka and Huba, 1985). Single factor model that was tested is presented in Figure 1. All the paths shown in the model are meaningful at 0.001 level.
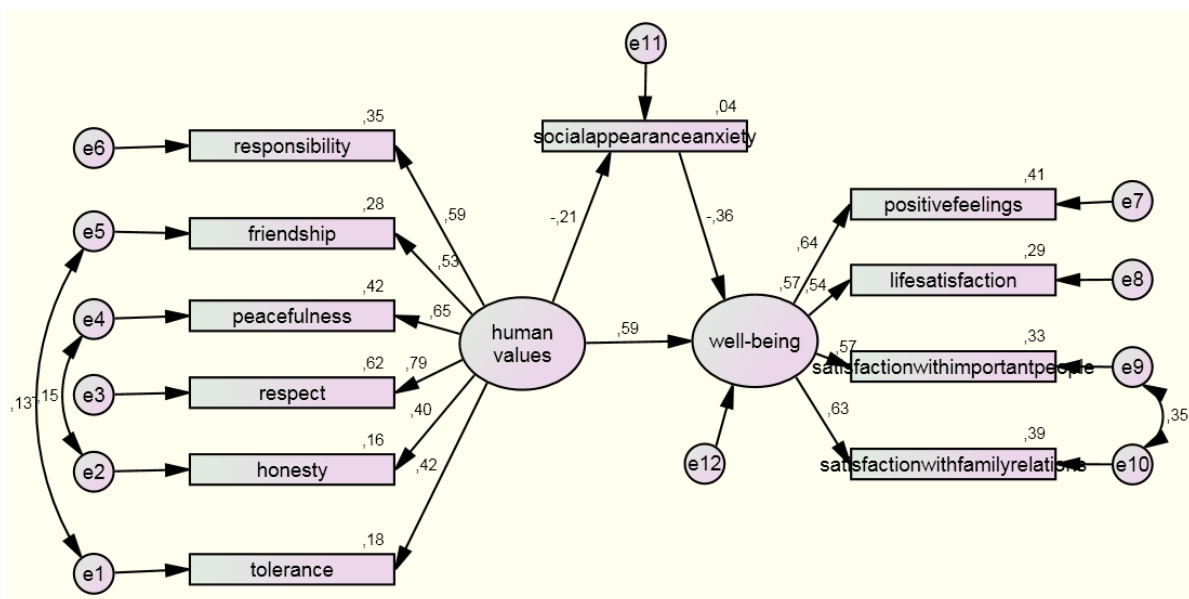

Figure 1. The path diagram of the model of this study

Table 2. Model for the Predictor Relationships between the Values Adolescents have and their levels of Subjective Well-being and Social Appearance Anxiety

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Standard Error	Critical Value
Value	Social Appearance Anxiety	-0.21	-0.21	0	0.4	-4.26*
Value	Subjective Well-being	0.59	0.59	0	0.07	7.30*
Social Appearance Anxiety	Subjective Well-being	-0.36	-0.36	0	0.01	-7.71*

[a] Total effect = Direct effect + Indirect effect, *$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$.

Examination of the model in Figure 1 and the data in Table 2 shows that the most important independent variable affecting social appearance anxiety ($t = -4.26$, $p < 0.01$) is values. Correlation coefficient of this factor was found as $\beta = -0.21$. The predictor relationship between the values adolescents have and their social appearance anxiety levels is a negative linear relationship. In other words, these findings indicate that as adolescents' values increase, their social appearance anxiety levels decrease.

It can be seen in the model that the most important independent variable affecting subjective well-being ($t = 7.30$, $p < 0.01$) is values. Correlation coefficient value of this factor was determined as $\beta = 0.59$. The predictor relationship between adolescents' values and their subjective well-being levels is a positive linear relationship. In other words, findings indicated that as the adolescents' values increased, their levels of subjective well-being increased as well.

In addition, the second most important variable affecting subjective well-being in the tested model ($t = -7.71$, $p < 0.01$) is social appearance anxiety. Correlation coefficient value of this factor was found as $\beta = -0.36$. The predictor relationship between adolescents' social appearance anxiety and their subjective well-being levels is a negative linear relationship. In other words, findings revealed that as adolescents' social appearance anxiety levels increased, their subjective well-being levels decreased.

Discussion, Conclusion, and Implications

In this part, the findings related with the model that is proposed as a result of the predictor relationships among social appearance anxiety, subjective well-being and the values of the adolescents were presented were discussed. According to the findings, predictor relationship between the values that the adolescents have and their levels of subjective well-being is a positive linear relationship. Findings show that as the values that the adolescents have increase, their subjective well-being levels increase as well. In one way, subjective well-being can be defined as abundance of positive feelings and lack of negative feelings, and the satisfaction with life. Kasser and Ryan (1996) found out that well-being is negatively correlated with extrinsic goals while it is positively correlated with intrinsic goals. If it is considered that this study examined humanistic values as one form of values, it can be said that the findings of the current study support the findings of Kasser and Ryan (1996). Keng, Jung, Jiuan and Wirtz (2000) examined the effect of materialistic tendency on life satisfaction in their research. Diener and Oishi (2000), examined the relationship between material value and subjective well-being in their research conducted on university students in nineteen countries. Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) examined the relationship between the importance paid on material values and well-being in a similar research. Considering the common findings of these researches, it can be claimed that there is a negative relationship between the importance paid on material values and subjective well-being. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the importance paid on material values and negative emotional states such as depression.

Özdemir and Koruklu (2011), examined the relationship between values and happiness in their research conducted on university students. They used Schwartz Values Scale to gather data and found out that the strongest predictor values of happines among ten different values in the values list were universalism (understanding people, caring, protecting, tolerance etc.) and benevolence (being helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible etc.). If it is considered that these two values contain values such as tolerance, responsibility, honesty, and reconciliation, it can be said that the previous research studies point to findings that are similar to the findings of the current study. By examining the related literature and the conducted researches, it can be concluded that there is a negative relationship between the external and material values and subjective well-being, and there is a positive relationship between humane and spiritual values and subjective well-being. Examining the predictor relationships between human values and subjective well-being, it can be claimed that the positive linear relationship that was found comply with the other researches conducted in the related field.

Another finding of the present research is that the predictor relationship between adolescents' social appearance anxiety and their subjective well-being levels is a negative linear relationship. Findings showed that as the adolescents' social appearance anxieties increased, their subjective well-being levels decreased. Social appearance anxiety is comparatively a newer concept and therefore, literature in the related field is quite limited. Similar researches were examined considering that social appearance anxiety involves the concepts of body perception, body image and that it predicts social anxiety (Hart et al., 2008; Levinson & Rodebaugh, 2011). Gilman and Huebner (2006) examined the features of adolescents having life satisfaction in their research and they found that there is a negative correlation between life satisfaction and the variables of social stress and anxiety. Adolescents with higher life satisfaction levels have lower social stress and anxiety scores. Delfabro, Winefield, Anderson, Hammarström, and Winefield (2011) studied body image and psychological well-being in their research conducted on 1281 adolescents. They found that negative body image of the female students is higher than the male students at a significant level. Besides, they found that body image of the female students explain psychological well-being better than male students. Kashdan and Roberts (2004) studied the relationships between social anxiety, social competence expectation, and positive and negative feelings, and they found that students with higher social anxiety levels have more negative feelings. As can be understood from the related researches, there is a negative relationship between social appearance anxiety and subjective well-being. In the present research, we found that

the predictor relationship between adolescents' social appearance anxiety and their subjective well-being level is a negative linear relationship. This finding of the present research complies with the findings of other related researches.

Finally, it was found out that the predictor relationship between the values that adolescents have and their levels of social appearance anxiety is a negative linear relationship. Findings showed that as the values that adolescents have increased, their social appearance anxieties decreased. The literature on the related area is quite limited. However, Cash, Theriault and Natasha (2004) found in their research that high level social-evaluative anxiety is related with body image dissatisfaction, caring too much about the appearance and circumstantial body image dissatisfaction. In addition, it was found that the individuals with body image problems have very high levels of social-comparison (Stormer & Thompson, 1995). The more these individuals are busy with social interaction, the more attention they will pay on the appearances of the people around them. Considering the related literature, we can expect that the more comparing and evaluative an individual is, the higher levels of social appearance anxiety they will have.

According to the findings of the current research, it is quite meaningful that there is a negative linear relationship between the human values and social appearance anxiety levels. As the individuals have more human values such as tolerance, friendship, respect, and peacefulness, they will be less comparing and less evaluative. Considering this fact, it can be said that the findings of the current research comply with the findings of the previous studies existing in the literature.

In parallel with all these findings, it is thought that this study would contribute much on the literature by helping researchers in understanding adolescents and in particular in evaluating their attitudes and behaviours properly. However, there are some limitations of the current study. Thus, it is thought that the repetition of this study by selecting adolescents from different cities might increase external validity. In addition, the sample of the study is limited with adolescents whose age ranged between 13 and 18. For this reason, it is not possible to generalize the findings of the current study to a broader age group. Hence, conducting this study with other age groups might also increase external validity.

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