Examining Life Satisfaction and Communication Skills of University Students as the Predictors of their Motivation

Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Motivasyonunda Yaşam Memnuniyeti ve İletişim Becerilerinin Rolü

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Özet

Bu çalışmada üniversite öğrencilerinin yaşam memnuniyetleri ile iletişim becerilerinin motivasyonu yordama gücünün incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma örneklemi 603 lisans öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcıların 435'i kadın, 168'i erkek ve yaş ortalamaları ise 20.2'dir. Öğrencilerin genel akademik ortalamaları 4.0 üzerinden 1.87 ile 3.91 arasında değişmektedir. Çalışmadaki veriler üç tane veri toplama aracıyla toplanmıştır. Üniversite öğrencilerinin yaşam memnuniyetleri, iletişim becerileri ve motivasyon düzeyleri arasındaki ilişki ile bağımsız değişkenlerin bağımlı değişkeni yordayıp yordamadığını tespit etmek için çoklu regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre, üniversite öğrencilerinin yaşam memnuniyetleri, iletişim becerileri ve motivasyonları arasında pozitif ve anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu görülmektedir. Motivasyon düzeyi ile en yüksek düzeyde ilişkinin saygı alt boyutunda olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bulgular ayrıca katılımcıların yaşam memnuniyetleri ve iletişim becerilerinin öğrencilerin motivasyonlarındaki varyansı açıklayabildiğini göstermektedir. Motivasyondaki varyansın en yüksek şekilde saygı alt boyutu (%16.6) tarafından açıklanabildiği bulunmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: İletişim becerileri, motivasyon, üniversite öğrencileri, yaşam memnuniyeti.

Abstract

This study examines the predictive roles of university students' life satisfaction and communication skills on their motivation. The participants of this study include 603 undergraduate students. Of the participants, 435 are female, 168 are male, and the mean age is 20.2 years. Students' GPA averages range from 1.87 to 3.91 on a 4.0 scale. The data were collected through three data collection instruments. A multiple regression analysis was employed to find out the relationships between all of the variables, and examining the predictive roles of independent variables on the dependent variable. The findings show that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between life satisfaction, communication skills, and motivation of university students. The highest correlation was found between motivation and respect, which is a dimension of communication skills. The findings also indicate that the participants' life satisfaction and communication skills explain the variances of students' motivation. The highest predictor of motivation among all dimensions is respect, as it explains the variances by 16.6%.

Keywords: Communication skills, life satisfaction, motivation, university students.

Motivation is considered as a power that drives, maintains and directs individuals towards their goals. Motivation is commonly viewed to improve learning and success. Motivation includes acting or doing something to accomplish goals in life (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It appears as an applied structure that explains the reasons of what individuals do for their success. According to Brophy (2012), behaviors related to priority targets with special results and strategies to achieve personal goals create motivation. Motivation is described as term that is related to wishes, desires, needs, impulses, and interests (Cüceloğlu, 2005).

Peklaj and Levpušček (2006) stress that motivation encourages students to take action and helps them realize what they have to do during school years. In that sense, academic motivation plays a pivotal role in determining students' desires and wishes to be successful in the classroom. Academic motivation is considered as the main determinant of academic performance and success by many studies (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002). Academic motivation may be explained as a factor affecting students' time, energy, and approach to academic tasks (VanZile-Tamsen & Livingston, 1999). It has strong relationships with academic performance, learning approaches, and

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learning styles (Komarraju & Karau, 2005). Researchers also explain that it is associated with various outcomes such as curiosity, continuity, learning and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Academic motivation is also defined as factors that urge individuals to attend school or obtain a degree. It is associated with behaviors that include desires for achieving goals beyond effectiveness or a reward (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991).

The level of motivation is crucial for students as it can explain the start, direction, intensity, and continuation of their behaviors in the school. Educators need to be aware of the students' motivation because its role on people's cognitive and social regulation explains their curiosity, persistence, learning, and performance. Motivating students is not an easy task for teachers, school administrators, and parents (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). Although unmotivated students tend to move away from school, the motivated ones spend more time on their learning tasks (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). In most cases, having students involved in learning activities may be quite challenging for many. Thus, it is a huge deal for educators to have highly motivated students to reach educational goals established for their schools. Studies show that student success has a relationship with motivational qualities such as talent, intrinsic motivation, perceptions of academic assignment, and belonging (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998; Greene & Miller, 1996). Therefore, motivation directly affects the cognitive variables associated with success (Miller, Behrens, Greene, & Newman, 1993). The dimension of motivation, which affects students' academic achievement, school attendance, and desire to attain a degree is called academic motivation, which is the production of energy required for academic tasks (Eccles, 2002; Yun Dai, 2001).

The current study employed social cognitive theory (SCT) and self-determination theory (SDT) as the theoretical frameworks to explain the effects of different variables on students' academic motivation. Parallel to this approach, Bandura (1989) suggests that SCT explains the motivational factors affecting students' social competencies. This framework explains that learning occurs in a social context where the reciprocal interaction of the human exists with environment (Bandura, 1989). This research also employed SDT to determine how things in social contexts support or undermine individuals' motivation (Kahn et al., 2002). Both theories reflect how life satisfaction and communication skills of university students affect their academic motivation in social contexts with the existence of such independent variables (Yenilmez & Çemrek, 2008). In their study, Doğan and Koçak (2014) found that a higher level of communication skills of a setting created higher levels of moti-

vation among individuals. In addition, Şantaş, Işık, and Çilhoroz (2018) found that high motivation levels result in life satisfaction. Thus, the relationship of motivation with life satisfaction and communication skills is quite evident.

Research indicates that the motivation of individuals has strong associations with their life satisfaction (Yerlisu-Lapa, Ağyar, & Bahadır, 2012). Life satisfaction was first introduced by Neugarten in 1961 suggesting that it was directly proportional to the ability of a person to realize his/her dreams (Dilmaç & Ekşi, 2008). According to Pavot and Diener (2008), life satisfaction includes positive life domains along with moods and emotions of people. Schimmack, Diener and Oishi (2002) state that life satisfaction is associated with family relationships and academic achievement. Yılmaz and Altınok (2009) define life satisfaction as the things achieved by a person in life, which arises with the expectations of the individual about life and their level of fulfillment. Özdevecioğlu and Doruk (2009) stress that life satisfaction included the emotional reactions of people as it could include both professional and non-professional aspects of life. Based on these definitions, it may be inferred that the fulfillment of the needs has a relationship with motivation (Reeve & Lee, 2018). Similarly, Özer (2009) found that motivated individuals had high levels of life satisfaction as their psychological needs were met in social contexts. Studies also emphasize that the signs of well-being may be considered as the indications of thorough communication skills, which reinforce people's motivation in an organization (Gilley, Gilley, & McMillan, 2009). Supporting this, Gülnar and Balcı (2011) report that students with high level of satisfaction are encouraged to participate more in social and learning tasks (Eryılmaz, 2010; Eryılmaz & Ercan, 2011). These assumptions confirm the potential relationship between motivation, life satisfaction, and communication skills of students.

Students with effective communication skills seem to be motivated and eager to participate in learning activities and thus increase their academic achievement (Kadakal Dölek, 2015). As communication skills are important for effective learning, school leaders know what may be necessary to improve such skills among students. Some of the items needed to improve communication skills include problem-centered organization, the opportunity to receive and offer feedback, and the existence of motivating factors (Green & Ellis, 1997; Knowles, 1978; Kurtz, Silverman, & Draper, 1998). In terms of definitions, researchers have different explanations about the concept of communication skills. Brislin and Yoshida (1994) state that communication skills involve verbal and nonverbal messages, as well as to interpersonal relations in social contexts.

According to Kelley and Meyers (1995), communication skills are linked to both verbal and non-verbal attitudes, which are associated with personal beliefs and values. People engaging in the act of communication with others use gestures, facial expressions, and body language to share ideas and obtain new knowledge (Cihangir, 2004; Korkut, 2005; Yüksel Şahin, 1997). It is evident that the level of motivation is related to a person's performance in certain tasks. Some studies report that there is a significant relationship between the communication skills of the individuals and their performance in an organization (Bowden, 2000; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Zhang, Dolan, & Zhou, 2009). Based on these studies, it seems that there is an association between communication skills and motivation as well (Mowles, 2008).

The active involvement of students in the learning process requires them to be motivated and willing. Therefore, it is important for the stakeholders in education to determine the factors affecting student motivation (Karataş & Erden, 2012). According to Clark and Schroth (2010), motivated students are those who are attentive and open to new learning experiences. Research indicates that high motivation levels promote students' interpersonal relationships through communication, academic success, and cognition (Walker, Greene, & Mansell, 2006). Some studies indicate that it is crucial to keep the level of motivation high among students as it increases their social engagement with peers and teachers (Rienties, Tempelaar, Van den Bossche, Gijselaers, & Segers, 2009), academic performance (Ning & Downing, 2010; Pimparyon, Caleer, Pemba, & Roff, 2000)), and satisfaction with life (Ratelle, Simard, & Guay, 2013). Studies also confirm that students with effective communication skills tend to achieve their personal goals in life, and as a result they feel satisfied with the overall outcomes (Tiryaki, 2015; Wang, 2006). It may be inferred that motivated students are inclined to succeed not only in school but also in life. Substantial communication skills and satisfaction with life encourage students to feel enthusiastic about developing peer relations, performing better in school, and engaging in learning activities willingly (Fergusson, 2003; Gottfried, 1985; Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005).

The research findings above indicate that motivation is related with life satisfaction and communication skills.

Research suggests that motivated students are encouraged to acquire certain goals, are attentive listeners and communicators, and are satisfied with their accomplishments in life (Buehl & Alexander, 2005; Galand, Bentein, Bourgeois, & Frenay, 2003; Moneta & Spada, 2009; Sankaran & Bui, 2001). In addition, research shows that there is a relationship between moti-vation and life satisfaction. Researchers have found that students' level of motivation is positively correlated with their academic success and life satisfaction (Chang, 1998; Nonis & Wright, 2003; Seligman, 2006). Based on the literature above, there might be predictive role of life satisfaction and communication skills on motivation. Although there is some evidence showing the relationships among these variables, there is hardly any study conducted, particularly in the context of Turkey, showing the predictive effect of life satisfaction and communication skills on university students' motivation. Thus, as its main goal, this study attempts to reveal the predictive role of life satisfaction and communication skills in such context and aimed to make a contribution to the current literature. This research poses two hypotheses:

- Life satisfaction and communication skills are positively associated with motivation.
- Life satisfaction and communication skills are the predictors of motivation.

Method

Research Design

In the study, a descriptive model based on a relational screening research design was used. This design is employed to explain the past or current situations (Karasar, 2010). In addition to the predictive roles of life satisfaction and communication skills on students' motivation, the relationship between motivation, life satisfaction and communication skills of the students studying in various programs of the university was examined.

The participants were 603 undergraduate students of whom 435 were female and 168 were male (■ Table 1). The study was conducted at a university located at Western Black Sea Region in Turkey. Of the participants, 218 were freshmen, 121 sophomore, 173 junior, and 91 senior students. Based on the programs of study, the participants were enrolled in six different programs; Turkish education (*n*=135), school counseling (*n*=179), science education (*n*=42), elementary education (*n*=108), special education (*n*=58), and pre-school (*n*=81). Their average GPA ranged from 1.87 to 3.91 on a 4.0 scale.

Data Collection Tools

The Higher Education Life Satisfaction Scale (HELSS) was first developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985). Then, the instrument was adapted to Turkish language by Erol and Yıldırım (2016). It included 29 items with five dimensions: General University Satisfaction (GUS, 13 items), Satisfaction with Instructors (GI, five items), Satisfaction with University

Features		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Gender		Male	Female					
	n	168	435					603
	%	27.9	72.1					100
Grades		Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior			
	n	218	121	173	91			603
	%	36.2	20.1	28.7	15.1			100
Program		Turkish Education	School Counseling	Science Education	Elementary Education	Special Education	Pre-School	
	n	135	179	42	108	58	81	603
	%	22.4	29.7	7.0	17.9	9.6	13.4	100

Social Services (SUSS, four items), Satisfaction with University Facilities (SUF, four items), and Satisfaction with University Administration (SUA, three items). The HELSS is a 5-point Likert scale (from 1= absolutely disagree to 5= absolutely agree). The reliability coefficients of the instrument was measured and that Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be .93 for overall instrument. Cronbach alpha coefficient was also found .92 for GUS, .81 for GI, .73 for SUSS, .69 for SUF, and .81 for SUA. For the current study, the reliability coefficients of the scale were also measured. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the overall HELSS was found as .92. In addition, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was found .93 for GUS, .84 for GI, .70 for SUSS, .70 for SUF, and .85 for SUA.

The second data collection instrument was called the Communication Skills Scale (CSS). It was developed by Karagöz and Kösterelioğlu (2008). The 5-point Likert (from 1= absolutely disagree to 5= absolutely agree) construct included 25 items with six subscales. The subscales included respect (five items), ability of expression (five items), desire (four items), democratic attitude (three items), value (four items), and obstacles (four items). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for overall instrument was found as .88. In the present study, the reliability coefficients of the CSS was also measured and found as .90. Also, Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be .88 for respect, .91 for ability of expression, .89 for desire, .89 for democratic attitude, .83 for value, and .85 for obstacles.

Finally, an instrument called the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) was used to examine students' level of motivation. The tool was developed by Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2014) and included 28 items. This 5-point Likert (from 1= absolutely disagree to 5= absolutely agree) scale also included seven dimen-

sions. However, only the overall instrument was considered to investigate the relationship between life satisfaction, communication skills, and motivation of university students. In that sense, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for AMS was calculated to be .87. The reliability coefficients of the overall instrument was also measured and found to be .89 for the current study.

Data Analysis

The data collection took place after all necessary permissions were obtained from the department of ethics. In addition, pre-study folders were labeled with the participants' identification numbers to collect information about their grade levels, GPA scores, and demographics. The purpose of the research in which the students voluntarily participated was explained to them and the participant confidentiality was ensured. Therefore, all of the folders were kept in locked cabinets. To test both hypotheses, determine the relationships between all of the variables, and examine the predictive roles of independent variables on the dependent variable, a multiple regression analysis was employed in the study.

Results

Internal consistency, standard deviations, means, and inter correlation coefficients of the study are shown in ▪▪ Table 2. The findings showed that respect ($r=.41$, $p<.01$) had a positive and meaningful relationship with motivation at moderate level. Ability of expression ($r=.39$, $p<.01$), desire ($r=.36$, $p<.01$), democratic attitude ($r=.33$, $p<.01$), value ($r=.37$, $p<.01$), obstacles ($r=.20$, $p<.01$), GUS ($r=.25$, $p<.01$), GI ($r=.29$, $p<.01$), and SUA ($r=.26$, $p<.01$) had a positive and weak relationship with motivation. The findings also showed that SUSS ($r=.15$, $p<.01$) and

Table 2. Descriptive statistics, alphas, and inter-correlations of the variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1- Respect	1											
2- Ability of expression	.76*	1										
3- Desire	.74*	.77*	1									
4- Democratic attitude	.69*	.67*	.67*	1								
5- Value	.75*	.74*	.71*	.72*	1							
6- Obstacles	.31*	.33*	.34*	.23*	.30*	1						
7- Motivation	.41*	.39*	.36*	.33*	.37*	.20*	1					
8- GUS	.26*	.25*	.22*	.26*	.27*	.08**	.25*	1				
9- GI	.40*	.41*	.38*	.45*	.44*	.33*	.29*	.42*	1			
10- SUSS	.27*	.25*	.20*	.20*	.27*	.08	.15*	.38*	.25*	1		
11- SUF	-.01	.04	.01	-.01	-.01	.02	.08**	-.15*	.01	-.14*	1	
12- SUA	.31*	.29*	.27*	.31*	.31*	.19*	.26*	.42*	.52*	.29*	.01	1
Mean	3.47	3.62	3.75	3.59	3.54	4.24	3.64	2.67	3.47	2.73	3.83	3.17
Standard deviation	.70	.65	.68	.75	.74	.73	.55	.63	.69	.89	.86	.77
Cronbach's alpha	.74	.82	.79	.75	.71	.78	.78	.75	.68	.81	.73	.80

*$p<.01$; **$p<.05$.

SUF ($r=.08$, $p<.05$) had a positive and quite weak relationship with motivation.

Before addressing the assumptions of multiple regression, the tests of normality and homogeneity were conducted. Kolmogorov- Smirnov test was conducted for the normality, and the findings ($p>.05$) suggested that the assumptions of normality were met. Levene's test was conducted through ANCOVA for homogeneity, and the result showed that the homogeneity of variances was ensured as the groups of the study sample were equivalent ($p>.05$). In the study, also the Mahalanobis distance (D^2) was used to examine the outliers. This approach is used to determine an outlier as an observed case that demonstrates abnormal distance from the majority of values in a sample from a population (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In this study, four of the cases were labeled as outliers and then they were deleted since their values were less than .001 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). After all required assumptions were met, a multiple regression analysis was employed for data analysis. In the study, the independent variables were the subscales of life satisfaction and communication skills, and the dependent variable was motivation.

A regression analysis was performed to find out the predictive roles of independent variables on motivation. The findings showed that the significant predictors of motivation included respect ($p<.05$), GUS ($p<.05$), and SUF ($p<.05$) (Table 3).

The results also indicated that the subscales such as ability of expression, desire, democratic attitude, value, obstacles, GI, SUSS, and, SUA did not significantly predict motivation. After this analysis, a multiple regression analysis was performed using the stepwise model. This model was employed to perform multiple regression several times, each time excluding the weakest correlated study variable.

The findings of Table 3 showed the subscales that could explain students' motivation. In that case, it seemed that the subscales including respect, GUS, and SUF were able to predict motivation. In the stepwise model (Table 4), respect was entered in the equation first, accounting for 16.6% of the variance in predicting motivation ($R^2=.167$, adjusted $R^2=.166$, $F_{1,608}=120.435$, $p<.01$). Then GUS ($R^2=.191$, adjusted $R^2=.188$, $F_{2,600}=70.627$, $p<.01$) was entered accounting for an additional 2.2% variance. Finally, SUF ($R^2=.204$, adjusted $R^2=.200$, $F_{3,599}=51.107$, $p<.01$) was entered, accounting for an additional 1.2% variance.

The initial regression model factors included respect, ability of expression, desire, democratic attitude, value, obstacles, GUS, GI, SUSS, SUF, and SUA. On the other hand, the final regression model included only respect, GUS, and SUF (Table 4). Based on the findings, the significant factors including respect, GUS, and SUF were able to predict the variances of students' motivation by 20.0%. Lastly, the final regression

Table 3. Summary of linear regression analysis for variables predicting academic motivation.

Variables	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.66	.18		9.06	.00
Respect	.14	.05	.19	2.89	.01
Ability of expression	.10	.05	.12	1.82	.06
Desire	.01	.05	.01	.22	.82
Democratic attitude	-.01	.04	-.01	-.31	.75
Value	.04	.04	.05	.89	.37
Obstacles	.03	.03	.04	1.21	.22
GUS	.11	.03	.13	3.06	.01
GI	.02	.03	.03	.69	.49
SUSS	-.01	.02	-.01	-.30	.76
SUF	.06	.02	.10	2.68	.01
SUA	.04	.03	.06	1.53	.12

model showed that that the value of the standardized beta coefficient was found to be significant for respect (β=.36, p<.01), GUS (β=.17, p<.01), and SUF (β=.11, p<.01).

Discussion

The relationship between life satisfaction, communication skills, and motivation of students in higher education was examined in the study. The results indicated a positive and meaningful relationship between life satisfaction, communication skills, and motivation of university students. The subscales of life satisfaction included general university satisfaction (GUS), satisfaction with instructors (GI), satisfaction with university social services (SUSS), satisfaction with university facilities (SUF), and satisfaction with university administration (SUA). Respect, ability of expression, desire, democratic attitude, value, and obstacles were the subscales of communication skills.

The findings showed that the relationship between motivation and respect, which was a factor of communication skills was at moderate level. In a similar study, Dalkılıç (2006) found that students who were able to communicate with others with a proper manner performed better in learning tasks in the classroom. Students with acceptable attitudes in social environments tend to perform well in academics and develop social skills as they respectfully leave communication channels open and listen while interacting with teachers and peers. Supporting that, Aktuğ (2010) stresses the importance socially accepted behaviors of adolescents for effective communication. It may be inferred that students with effective communication skills are those who pay attention to others in a social context

Table 4. Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting academic motivation.

Models	Variables	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig.
Model 1	(Constant)	2.53	.10		24.50	.00
	Respect	.32	.02	.41	10.97	.00
Model 2	(Constant)	2.27	.11		19.12	.00
	Respect	.28	.03	.36	9.61	.00
	GUS	.13	.03	.15	4.18	.00
Model 3	(Constant)	1.96	.15		12.61	.00
	Respect	.28	.03	.36	9.54	.00
	GUS	.15	.03	.17	4.67	.00
	SUF	.07	.02	.11	3.15	.00

and are encouraged to perform better in learning settings. The results of the study also indicate a meaningful but weak relationship between motivation and the other subscales of communication skills; desire, democratic attitude, value, and obstacles. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students can be motivated to put in more efforts for academic success in learning environments that stimulate their desire for learning through an established democratic and open setting. VanZile-Tamsen and Livingston (1999) emphasize that students are inclined to spend more time and energy to accomplish learning tasks in settings that have motivating factors available. Such factors may include supporting students' communication skills and offering feedback on learning activities (Green & Ellis, 1997; Knowles, 1978; Kurtz et al., 1998).

The findings indicate that the level of motivation has significantly positive and weak relationships with all subscales of life satisfaction. The strongest relationship among these however is between students' general university satisfaction and academic motivation. Such relationship may be due to the fact that students, who have a sense of belonging towards their schools are motivated to perform better in their courses (Eccles et al., 1998; Greene & Miller, 1996). Basically, students may feel satisfied when they develop positive feeling about their universities. Supporting this, Pavot and Diener (2008) found that life satisfaction was associated with good moods and emotions of individuals. Such positive moods of the students may eventually end up with satisfying academic outcomes (Schimmack et al., 2002). University administrators may positively affect students' academic achievement and motivation (Deci et al., 1991) by creating a university with good living and learning conditions (Ratelle et al., 2013).

In the second part of this study, as a dimension of communication skills, respect explained the variances of student motivation by 16.6%. The level of student motivation may be predicted by many factors (Can Bilgin, 2015; Yıldırım, 2015) including the person's attitude while communicating with others. Having a conversation that includes the themes of respect, empathy, and understanding between teachers and students may help the messages generated between the two to flow with no difficulty, and thus increasing the student motivation due to clarity and provided feedback in the process of communication (Caplan, 2005). Supporting this, Clark and Schroth (2010) found that the way people handle communication influences their level of motivation. Therefore, school leaders and teachers need to be aware of the fact that the way they communicate with their students might affect students' competence (Gottfried, 1985), and motivation (Rienties et al., 2009; Walker et al., 2006).

The findings of the study also show that general university satisfaction and satisfaction from university facilities as the dimensions of life satisfaction explain the variances of student motivation by 3.4%. This finding implies that educational settings that provide adequate opportunities for the students enhance their learning, sense of belonging, and motivation (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992). Teachers, school administrators, and parents need to understand that student motivation is crucial in schools because unmotivated students spend less time on learning tasks and eventually fail (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Problems with lower levels of student motivation may be resolved when the school leaders learn how to address the needs of their students, and accordingly, provide opportunities including a welcoming learning environment, enough facilities, and quality education (Eryılmaz, 2010; Eryılmaz & Ercan, 2011). Universities with better opportunities will fulfill the needs of the students and enhance their motivation (Özer, 2009). Supporting this, Gülnar and Balcı (2011) found that students who eagerly participate in social and learning events have high level of satisfaction.

Based on the findings, it may be concluded that university students' life satisfaction and communication skills are significant predictors of their motivation, which suggests that students who have high levels of life satisfaction and effective communication skills are inclined to perform better and take responsibilities to achieve their goals (Yenilmez & Çemrek, 2008). These findings are also in line with the theoretical frameworks employed for this study that the inner and environmental factors affect people's motivation as mentioned in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989) and self-determination theory (Kahn et al., 2002). As motivation is considered acting and doing things to succeed in life, it may be affected by the factors such as the feelings about life and the effectiveness aligned with the quality of communication with others (Brophy, 2012; Cüceloğlu, 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Peklaj & Levpušček, 2006). It may be inferred that students with good communication skills mainly feel well about themselves and their confidence level, and they do not hesitate to engage in meaningful tasks with their peers and teachers to acquire new knowledge. These tasks require substantial amounts of energy, desire, and performance for the students to succeed at (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Komarraju & Karau, 2005; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002; VanZile-Tamsen & Livingston, 1999). Considering all the findings from the current study, stakeholders in education have to understand the importance of motivation, life satisfaction, and communication skills of the students as they all are associated with meaningful outcomes, which include but are not limited to academic achievement, social

engagement, interpersonal relationships, good feelings about life, and fulfillment of the needs (Gilley et al., 2009; Pavot & Diener, 2008; Schimmack et al., 2002).

Finally, school administrators and teachers with vision and leadership skills have to know how to create a satisfactory learning setting and support students to improve their communication skills. Considering the fact that life satisfaction and communication skills affect students' motivation, it would be crucial for stakeholders in education to be knowledgeable about these factors. That is why an effective way for the transfer of such knowledge should be established school-wide. To achieve this, it is strongly recommended that the Ministry of National Education must come up with effective solutions such as providing in-service training courses and workshops for school administrators, teachers, and parents. It is also important to point out that this study has some limitations. In addition to examining the relationship of student motivation with life satisfaction and communication skills, concepts such as free time management, school atmosphere and culture, retention, self-efficacy, school leadership, and teacher burnout may be examined as well. Also, instead of including participants only from a public university, some participants from a private university may be included in the study as well. Lastly, as this study was carried out by using only a quantitative method, a qualitative method may be used to obtain deeper insights about the subject.

Etik Standartlara Uygunluk / Compliance with Ethical Standards: Yazarlar bu makalede araştırma ve yayın etiğine bağlı kalındığını, Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu'na ve fikir ve sanat eserleri için geçerli telif hakları düzenlemelerine uyulduğunu ve herhangi bir çıkar çakışması bulunmadığını belirtmiştir. / *The authors stated that the standards regarding research and publication ethics, the Personal Data Protection Law and the copyright regulations applicable to intellectual and artistic works are complied with and there is no conflict of interest.*

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