

Investigation of the Relationship between Humor Coping and Psychological Strength of University Students Doing Sports

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between humor and psychological stability of university students doing sports. The research consists of 219 university students who were selected by simple random sampling method among the students attending Gazi University Faculty of Sport Sciences in 2019-2020 academic year. The research was designed according to relational screening model. The data were collected using the Coping with Humor Scale, the Brief Psychological Reliability Scale, and the demographic data that might be effective in the research; A personal information form prepared by the researcher was used to ask age, gender and perceived income level. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be 0.593 in both scales. Data were analyzed by SPSS program on computer. Firstly, normal distribution values related to the type of tests to be used were analyzed. Skewness and Kurtosis values were found to be normal. Independent samples t test was used for binary comparisons and Anova test was used for multiple comparisons. Pearson correlation test was used for correlation analysis. Significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ was used for all tests. The data obtained by the students doing sports according to gender; The mean scores of psychological robustness of men were found to be significantly higher than women. There was no significant difference in terms of gender in terms of coping with humor ($p < 0.05$). According to age, there was no significant difference in the mean scores of the participants in terms of coping with psychological robustness and humor. According to the income level, the level of coping with psychological robustness and humor of the students with good-medium economic level was higher than those who perceived the income level badly ($p < 0.05$).

1. Introduction

University years are one of the most important turning points for students in their lives. In particular, it is supported by researches that students who play sports are more robust in terms of psychological difficulties. It can be thought that students who actively participate in sporting activities have the ability to cope with adverse situations by developing a humorous point of view and this situation is caused by the relaxation and positive thinking given by the sport.

People experience many negative experiences and experiences throughout their lives (29). In order to cope with these negative experiences and to remain psychologically sound, they sometimes resort to humor. The word

humor is translated into our language from Arabic. It is an art that shows the ridiculous, unusual and opposite aspects of an existing situation, makes people think and entertain. Humor starts with a funny urge and ends with a smile or a laugh, and is a pleasant situation (27). Tolerance lies in the basis of his humor. Apart from having fun and laughing, it is one of the ways to tell people without breaking or hurting them (33). People with a strong sense of humor sometimes reflect things in everyday life to people in a funny way and sometimes interpret sad events from a different perspective. It is often a way to soften the environment, reduce tension, increase social relationships, or look cute. In addition, humor is not always used positively and can be used as a mediator in negative situations such as humiliation and ridicule (21).

The sense of humor positively affects individuals in terms of psychological robustness. It can be thought that it is an effective way to deal with life-long adversities and tensions. Psychological robustness is the ability of people to cope with and adapt to negative and unwanted situations (6). According to another definition, when an individual is faced with very difficult conditions, it can be thought that he / she has psychological strength if he / she has the ability to manage and overcome the existing situation easily (18). Furthermore, (7); In a study, psychological robustness, whether people have experienced any bad events, whether it is necessary to deal with difficult life conditions and stress as the ability to think. In a study, it is accepted that psychological soundness is a personality trait brought about by the effect of heredity in humans. On the other hand, it can be concluded that this feature is a property that can be acquired and improved by shaping it under the influence of the environment (20).

University years coincide with the first step in the transition from adolescence to adult life, where students experience various experiences. It is a period of change in many aspects such as separation from family and habitual environment, a new environment, new friendships and social relations, academic life, taking responsibility for itself, independence from family and managing money. Some problems may arise in the students who try to adapt to this change. Some students deal with this transition process without any problem, while others face some difficulties (17).

There are some activities in the university where students can socialize and relax outside the classroom. Sports activities are the leading ones. Active lifestyles affect and maintain the health and well-being of individuals (5). Students in the faculty of sports sciences may be considered to be more advantageous in this respect. It is advantageous for a healthy body and mind to have a part of the lessons especially with exercise content and the fact that most of the students are athletes and they deal with a sports branch. It is possible for students who participate in regular physical activity to take some time away from the stress of classes and daily life by taking advantage of the relaxation effect of sports. It can be thought that individuals who adopt acting, laughing, entertaining and humor as a way of life while dealing with negative situations may be more psychologically powerful. For this reason, some researches on psychological resilience consider university students as people at risk (16, 25, 32).

The sense of humor is a factor that contributes to psychological well-being, strengthens the immune system of the body, increases the strength of the heart and muscles, and contributes to physical and mental health as well as exercise and sport activities (11). In addition, thanks to exercise, university students have a healthy body by staying away from obesity which is the problem of our age, obesity is a result of unconscious eating habits, passive lifestyle, lack of physical activity and hereditary factors (13). In this context, the aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between the levels of coping with humor and psychological stability of university students doing sports. To this end, it is to seek answers to some questions. Do the levels of coping with humor and psychological resilience differ according to gender, age and perceived income level, is there a relationship between coping with humor and psychological resilience?

As a result, in terms of coping with psychological robustness and humor, age did not affect the results and economic status and gender caused significant differences in the results. When the studies in the literature are examined, it is seen that there are studies about coping with humor and psychological stability. However, there was no study in which these two subjects were studied together in sports groups. Therefore, it is thought that the research will fill the gap in the literature and shed light on the future studies.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The study consists of a total of 219 volunteer university students, 104 female and 115 male, selected by simple random sampling method among the students attending Gazi University Faculty of Sport Sciences in 2019-2020 academic year.

2.2. Materials

Data Collection Tools

The research was designed according to relational screening model. This screening model is a model that allows comparison of at least two variables and whether there is a relationship between them, and if there is a relationship between variables (8,19). In order to determine the levels of coping through humor in the collection of data, the students of the faculty of sports sciences developed it in (22), (35) adapted it to Turkish, and coped with the Humor Coping Scale in order to measure the psychological stability level of the students (10). The scale was used. In this study, the demographic data which are thought to be effective; A personal information form prepared by the researcher was used to ask age, gender and perceived income level. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of both scales was found to be 0.593.

Data Analyses

Data were analyzed by SPSS program on computer. Firstly, normal distribution values related to the type of tests to be used were analyzed. Skewness and Kurtosis values were found to be normal. Independent samples t test was used for binary comparisons and Anova test was used for multiple comparisons. Pearson correlation test was used for correlation analysis. Significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ was used for all tests.

3. Results

The findings of the study investigation of the relationship between humor coping and psychological strength of university students doing sports are presented below.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of participants

	n	%
Gender		
Woman	104	47,5
Male	115	52,5
Age		
18-24	200	91,3
25 and later	19	8,7
Perceived Income Status		
Good	51	23,3



Middle	142	64,8
Poor	26	11,9
Total	219	100

When the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants were examined, it was seen that 52.5% were men and 47.5% were women, and the majority (91.3%) of the participants were between 18-24 years of age and perceived themselves as moderate in terms of perceived income level.

Table 2. Means of coping with psychological robustness and humor of the participants

	$\bar{X}$	ss	min	max
Brief Psychological Robustness Scale	19,00	5,04	6	30
Humor Coping Scale	18,89	3,33	7	28

While the average score of the short psychological robustness scale of the participants was 19.00, the average score of coping through humor score was 18.89.

Table 3. Coping scores through psychological robustness and humor by gender

	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	ss	t	p
Brief Psychological Robustness Scale	Woman	104	18,22	5,74	-2,173	,031*
	Male	115	19,71	4,21		
Humor Coping Scale	Woman	104	18,55	3,23	-1,408	,161
	Male	115	19,19	3,40		

*p<0,05

When the scale mean scores of the students doing sports were examined, it was seen that there was a significant difference in the mean score of the short psychological robustness scale. The mean score of psychological well-being of men is higher than that of women. No significant difference was found in the mean scores of coping with humor scale.

Table 4. Coping scores through psychological robustness and humor for age

	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	ss	t	p
Brief Psychological Robustness Scale	18-24	200	19,19	4,67	1,167	,257
	25and later	19	17,05	7,84		
Humor Coping Scale	18-24	200	18,85	3,31	-,509	,611
	25and later	19	19,26	3,55		

When the scale scores of the students doing sports were examined, it was seen that the mean scores of short psychological robustness scale and coping with humor scores did not differ significantly according to age.

Table 5. Coping scores through psychological robustness and humor according to perceived income level

	Perceived,Income Level	n	$\bar{X}$	ss	F	p	Significant Difference
Brief Psychological Robustness Scale	A Good	51	19,86	4,97	7,791	,001	A>C B>C
	B Middle	142	19,33	4,57			
	C Poor	26	15,50	6,25			
Humor Coping Scale	A Good	51	19,86	2,69	7,075	,001	A>C B>C
	B Middle	142	18,90	3,18			



C	Poor	26	16,92	4,39
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*p<0,05

When the scores of psychological resilience scale and coping with humor scale were evaluated according to perceived income level, it was seen that scores of psychological resilience scale and coping with humor scale differed according to perceived income level. According to the post-hoc test, the difference between the good-middle and bad groups, ie the difference in income level between the good and middle and the bad ones, and the psychological strength and humor of the people with good-medium economic level. coping levels were higher.

Table 6. Investigating the Relationship Between Psychological Persistence and Humor Coping Scores

		Humor Coping Scale
Brief Psychological Robustness Scale	r	221**
	p	,000

*p<0,01

When the relationship between short psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale score is evaluated, it is seen that there is a statistically significant and low level relationship between short psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale. Psychological robustness increases as coping with humor increases.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study examining the relationship between coping with humor and psychological robustness of university students doing sports, the variables of age, gender and perceived economic level of the students were examined and the results were discussed with the literature.

When the demographic characteristics of the students participated in the study, 52.5% were male and 47.5% were female. When the mean scores of university students according to gender are examined, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean score of psychological robustness. It is seen that the level of psychological resilience of men is higher than that of women. There was no significant difference between the genders in terms of coping with humor.

Most of the studies are similar to our findings when comparing the various systems related to the subject when the literature is examined. In some studies, different results were obtained. (4); university education, a region, health and medical departments of the departments that study, according to the gender variable, psychological robustness levels (1) in the city, university planning; psychological resilience, happiness and humor styles. (2), (26), a connection to be made, university students, men's women's psychological stability levels were higher, (23) study, in a room where the faculty of education, psychological stability level is higher than that of women in men. (12); there was no difference in gender in terms of psychological robustness. (30); According to gender variable, it is based on coping, psychological resilience, problem solving and well-being. In terms of coping with humor, the studies are in parallel with our findings. (35); In his study, it has been investigated whether there is a significant difference in terms of coping with humor of university students according to gender variable and no difference has been found in terms of gender (34); In the study, although the mean scores of destructive and aggressive humor of male students were higher than female students, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of male and female students. (31); In his study with athletics athletes, the level of coping with humor was significantly higher in female athletes than in male athletes. When the information in the literature was evaluated, it was found that gender

was a distinctive feature in terms of psychological robustness. This may be due to the fact that male students are physically stronger than women or that unpredictable psychological factors affect the results. Coping with humor also supports our study to a great extent. However, it is seen that these two issues are not studied much in this age group. In the future, working together with individuals of different age groups on subjects of humor and psychological stability will contribute to the literature.

No statistically significant difference was found in terms of coping with psychological robustness and humor when the students' mean scores were compared. (9); In his study, it was found that there was a negative correlation between the levels of psychological endurance and age of the students doing judo sports, and the age variable was not statistically different in the level of psychological resilience of the participants. (12); supports the findings of this study. (31); In the study of coping with humor in athletics athletes, no significant difference was observed in the level of coping with humor according to the age variable. It can be thought that this is due to the close age of the students participating in the study and does not affect the results. In the literature, national and international research, sporting people, age variable and humor through coping with a way to find a study. When students' coping scores through psychological robustness and humor were evaluated according to perceived income level, it was seen that there was a statistically significant difference in their mean scores. This difference was found between the students with good and moderate income and the students with poor income. Persons with good to moderate economic status were found to have higher levels of coping with psychological resilience and humor than those with poor status. When the literature is examined, studies on the relationship between income level and psychological robustness support our study to a large extent. (15); In his research, it is seen that the psychological robustness of the participants with low income status is statistically significantly lower than the participants with low-income income level. In another study, in a study examining the relationship between father and unemployed individuals and psychological resilience, psychological resilience and well-being of individuals with low income status were found to be low (3). In another study, good income level of the family is an important and protective factor in the psychological well-being of people (14). (28); In a study where income level was examined in terms of coping with humor in university students, when the mean scores of participant and developer humor dimensions were examined, it was seen that the higher the income level, the higher the level of humor scores. The studies are similar to our findings. Good and moderate income status affects psychological well-being positively. When the relationship between psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale score is evaluated, it is seen that there is a statistically significant and low level relationship between short psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale. Psychological robustness increases as coping with humor increases.

As a result, psychological robustness levels of university students doing sports differ statistically. The level of psychological robustness of men is higher than that of women. There was no significant difference between the genders in terms of coping with humor. When the students were compared according to the age variable, no statistically significant difference was found in terms of coping with psychological robustness and humor. When psychological robustness and humor coping levels are evaluated according to perceived income level, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference. This difference is between good and medium income students and poor students. Persons with good to moderate economic status were found to have higher levels of coping with psychological resilience and humor than those with poor status. In addition, when the relationship between psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale score is evaluated, it is seen that there is a statistically

significant and low level relationship between short psychological robustness scale and humor coping scale. As the coping with humor increases, psychological resilience level increases.

Findings from the research can provide many benefits. It is not possible for people to lead a problem-free and trouble-free life. From this point of view, university students, both sports and non-sports, can overcome the problems by changing their perspective when they are left alone with the problems. Therefore, by developing a humorous perspective when faced with undesirable situations, looking at events from their funny and laughing sides can help to remain psychologically sound and to strengthen interpersonal relationships when difficult situations are encountered. Indirectly, the health of the individual can contribute to the health of society. In addition, students who can use coping strategies through humor and have psychological resilience can positively reflect this well-being to their courses, academic achievements, family and social environment. As a suggestion, sporting activities in universities should be expanded in a way that every student can reach. Inclusion in all departments as part of the education and conducting the courses in the plan and program may give positive results (36). Trainings and seminars may be given to the academicians of the universities related to the studies that may increase the psychological resilience of the students (36). In addition, psychological resilience and coping with humor can be applied to athletes in various sports branches, individuals of different age groups, people doing and not doing sports. The results can enrich the literature of sports psychology.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declare no conflict of interest.

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