

Quality of work life and psychological well-being levels of special education teachers during the COVID-19 process

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the quality of work life and psychological well-being of special education teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic process. In this study, relational scanning was carried out by employing the general scanning model. The sample of the study encompasses 448 special education teachers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, special education teachers were reached online in electronic media via Google Forms. In the research, "Demographic Information Form", "Work Life Quality Scale" and "Psychological Well-Being Scale" were used for data collection. It has been determined that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of special education teachers from the Work-Life Scale in general and the sub-dimensions of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions and family-work-life balance in the scale based on their gender. A statistically significant difference was obtained between the scores of the teachers in the family-work-life balance subscale according to their marital status.

Keywords: COVID-19 Process, Quality of Work Life, Psychological Well-Being, Special Education Teacher.

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 (coronavirus) disease has affected the TRNC, Turkey and all countries in the world, causing it to be declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (2020) and directly or indirectly affected individuals, societies and individual levels. Along with this, it is noticed that individuals experience psychological problems (interruption of the economic life developed by the closure of the workplaces, damage to the social relations resulting from the closures) due to the unfamiliar living conditions experienced by the individuals. In many studies, individuals experience this process as fear of falling ill (Jehn, Kim, Bradley, & Lant, 2011; Leggat, Brown, & Speare, 2010), anxiety (Garfin, Holman, & Silver, 2015; Thompson, Garfin, & Holman, 2017), depression. (Elbay, Kurtulmus, Arpacioğlu, & Karadere 2020), anxiety about being disconnected from the social environment and protection against illness (Setbon, Pap, Letroublon, Caille-Brillet, & Raude, 2011; Wong & Sam, 2010), it is observed that they experience emotional problems such as perception of quality of work life and psychological well-being. Furthermore, it was found out that the private and working lives of many working individuals are affected, and both private areas come to the intersection point with each other. Currie and Eveline (2010) state that information technology provides working individuals with the opportunity to do their jobs more easily by saving time and providing ease of work environment. In order to prevent the risk of disease transmission to individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic process, remote working methods have been preferred in business sectors that can be carried out remotely. It is thought that the sudden, forced change of working patterns and methods of working individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic period affects working individuals deeply (Elmas-Atay & Gercek, 2021).

The quality of work life is a concept that concerns the improvement of the factors influencing the working conditions, the adequacy of the efficiency obtained from the production, the balance of social life and the satisfaction of the working individuals with their jobs (Aba, 2009). The existence and level of work life quality can provide a qualified organization of the working environment, boost the work performance of the employees and their willingness to work. Working in line with undesirable conditions or working with an extra workload reduces the quality of work life of teachers (Demir, 2016). It is expected that there will be rise in the productivity level, as the improvement of working conditions will ensure the welfare of the quality of work life. The better the quality of work life of teachers and the desired level, the better they can train their students (Demir, 2016). Yet, looking at other studies, most of the teachers experience anxiety and stress situations (Ozdemir, Sezgin, Kaya, & Recepoglu, 2011; Karakus & Cankaya, 2012; Sanli, 2017). This stress and anxiety experienced can also be carried to external environments when appropriate. The occurrence of stress and anxiety leads to a decline in the motivation of teachers, and the lack of motivation causes a decrease in their job performance (Elma, 2003). It is found out that students, who are one of the masses heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, have to adapt to various changes and unknowns from their teachers in order to continue the learning-teaching process. Kırmızıgül (2020) states that teachers had to adapt themselves into technology during this forced transition process and they had to resort to different ways and produce new methods in communication with students, in lecture strategies. Along with the COVID-19 pandemic process, it has been observed that there are variables, especially the anxiety status of individuals. For example, having factors that may cause the risk of contracting the disease (living in areas where the disease is intense, being in risk groups), taking responsibility for family members (Yang & Ma, 2020), not having the opportunity to work remotely (Colgecen & Colgecen, 2020; Dogan & Duzel, 2020), being a woman and being single (Goksu & Kumcagiz, 2020) affect individuals' psychological well-being levels in variety of ways. At the same time, being constantly exposed to news about the COVID-19 pandemic through electronic media can cause individuals to have difficulties in controlling their anger (Dogan & Imamoglu, 2020). In this respect, it can be added that the unconscious engagement in media during the global pandemic period has a negative effect on the psychological well-being of adolescents and children (Sarman, Tuncay, & Sarman, 2020).

There are different definitions of psychological well-being in the literature. The most widely accepted definition among these definitions is the one made by the World Health Organization. Accordingly, it

is defined as “the individual's ability to be productive and useful in business life, to cope with the stress encountered in unexpected situations, to be aware of his own limitations and abilities, and to contribute to society in line with his abilities” (WHO, 2004).

Further, stress factors experienced before the COVID-19 pandemic, social life and economic inadequacies due to the COVID-19 stand out as the factors that rise the stress level of adults during the lockdown (Shanahan, Steinhoff, Bechtiger, Murray, Nivette, Hepp, Ribeaud & Eisner, 2020). As a consequence of these effects, it can be mentioned that adults prefer a lifestyle in which irregular activities or no physical activity occurs. These negativities experienced after the COVID-19 deeply impacted the mental health of individuals from different aspects and caused fears in line with the thoughts of illness (Wang, Pan, Wan, Tan, Xu, Ho, & Ho, 2020). Therefore, it is concluded that the quality of work life and psychological well-being of special education teachers will have positive influence primarily on themselves, then on their students, then on parents and directly on the society (Cicek, Tanhan, Discovery, & Arslan, 2020; Demir & Turk, 2020; Doyumgac, Tanhan & Kıymaz, 2021; Ugur, Kaya & Tanhan, 2020).

Considering all, primary purpose is to examine the work life quality and psychological well-being levels of special education teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic process. Sub-objectives below set to seek out answers:

1. Work-life quality and psychological well-being levels of special education teachers in the COVID-19 process: Does it differ according to age, gender, marital status and monthly household income?
2. Is there a relationship between the work-life quality and psychological well-being of special education teachers during the COVID-19 process?
3. Do special education teachers' work-life quality scale scores predict their psychological well-being scale scores during the COVID-19 process?

METHOD

Research Model

Relational scanning was carried out using the general scanning model for this study. Relational scanning can be considered as a research model used to determine the existence and/or degree of change related to two or more variables (Buyukozturk vd., 2008).

Population and Sample

Convenience sampling technique, one of the non-random sampling methods, was employed in the selection of special education teachers included in the present research. In the convenience sampling method, the researcher began to form the sample starting from the most accessible respondents until he reaches a group of the size he needs, or he works on a case sample that is the most accessible and will provide maximum savings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2005). Special education teachers were reached online in electronic media via Google Forms due to the COVID 19 pandemic period. The research sample consists of 448 special education teachers. The distribution of special education teachers in the sample according to their demographic characteristics is as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants by Socio-Demographical Characteristics

	n	%
Age Group		
20-29 ages	266	59,38
30-39 ages	124	27,68
40 age and above	58	12,95
Gender		
Female	300	66,96

Male	148	33,04
Marital Status		
Single	249	55,58
Married	199	44,42
Monthly Household Income		
3500 TL and below	93	20,76
3501-6500 TL	198	44,20
6501 TL and above	157	35,04

When the socio-demographic characteristics of the special education teachers who are included in this study are examined, 59.38% of the special education teachers are in the 20-29 age group, 27.68% are in the 30-39 age group, and 12.95% are in the 40 and above age group. It was observed that 66.96% were female and 33.04% were male. 55.58% of special education teachers are single and 44.42% are married, 20.76% of them have a monthly household income of 3500 TL and below, 44.20% of them are between 3501-6500 TL while 35.04% of them have 6501 TL and above.

Data Collection Tools

In this section, the measurement tools used in the research are given.

Demographic Information Form

This form is for special education teachers, who serve as special education teachers in special education institutions. It was prepared by the researcher in order to obtain information concerning the age, gender, marital status and monthly household income.

Work Life Quality Scale

The work life quality scale, which was initially developed by Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007) to measure the perception of health workers' quality of work life, was adapted to Turkish and applied to teachers in educational institutions by Akar and Ustuner (2017). Akar and Ustuner (2017) conducted the validity and reliability studies of the completed scale; Van Laar, Edwards and Easton stated that they allowed researchers to use the work life quality scale free of charge on their website at <http://www.qowl.co.uk> and he e-mailed that he gave the permission for the adaptation of the work life quality scale into Turkish and educational institutions.

Besides, it is stated that the work life quality scale developed by Van Laar, Edwards and Easton (2007) is a qualified scale that can be applied to determine the work life quality of teachers serving in educational institutions in Turkey (Akar & Ustuner 2017). The work life quality scale consists of 23 items and 6 sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions of the study are "Family-work-life balance, work-career satisfaction, stress in work life, job control, working conditions and general well-being". When the confirmatory factor analysis result of the 6-factor structure of 23 items of the scale is examined, it is revealed that the scale meets the validity criteria. It is stated that items 7, 9 and 19 in the scale are items that should be reverse scored (Akar & Ustuner, 2007). The adaptation study of the scale into Turkish was carried out within the data collected from 324 educators working in Gaziantep. It has been reported that the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the sub-dimensions of the scale is between .70 and .91, and the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale in general has the value of .93. The aforementioned scale, which was adapted into Turkish by Akar and Ustuner (2007), consists of a 5-point Likert type and corresponds to 5: totally disagree, 4: mostly agree, 3: moderately agree, 2: slightly agree, and 1: disagree (Akar & Ustuner, 2007).

Psychological Well-Being Scale

The psychological well-being scale, adapted into Turkish by Telef (2013), consists of eight items. The scale named as "Psychological Well-Being Scale" by Diener et al. (2009) was later replaced with the definition of "Flourishing Scale" which is thought to convey the meaning of well-being more accurately. Telef (2013) used the definition of psychological well-being in his study of adapting the psychological well-being scale into Turkish, since the word "flourishing" does not exist in Turkish. The items of the

scale are answered between 1-7 as I strongly disagree (1) to I strongly agree (7). All items are expressed positively. The scores obtained from the scale items range from 8 to 56. If I strongly disagree with all the items, the score is 8, and if I strongly agree with all the items, the score is 56. High scores obtained from the scale items indicate that the individual's psychological well-being has increased (Diener et al., 2009).

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, "Quality of Work Life and Psychological Well-Being Scale", which was developed by carrying out validity and reliability studies, was utilized to collect data. Due to the fact that the research was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, the scales were sent to special education teachers between 01.03.2021 and 15.05.2021 via mail or messaging applications and they were asked to answer them electronically. A total of 448 special education teachers were reached through the Google Forms and data were obtained in this way. After the data collection process, the collected data were evaluated for analysis. The analysis of the data obtained in the research was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0 program. In accordance with the sub-objectives of the research, the following statistical operations were carried out. In order to determine the hypothesis tests to be used in the research, the "Kolmogorov-Smirnov" test was applied to examine the normal distribution of the data and it was determined that it did not show normal distribution. In the study conducted to examine the relationship between the quality of work life and psychological well-being of special education teachers serving in special education institutions, the "Kruskal-Wallis H" test was employed to determine whether the teachers differ according to their age and income status. "Mann-Whitney U" test was utilized to determine whether "Spearman Correlation Analysis" was conducted to determine the relationship between the quality of work life and psychological well-being levels of special education teachers serving in private education institutions. In addition, regression analysis was performed to investigate the effect of teachers' work life quality on their psychological well-being levels.

RESULTS

this part, the findings obtained by the analysis of the data collected from the teachers in the sample group for the "Quality of Work Life" and "Psychological Well-Being" scales are given.

Table 2. Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores

	n	\bar{x}	SS	Min	Max
Work-Life Quality Scale	448	76,17	17,20	27	112
Job Career Satisfaction	448	20,80	4,63	6	30
General Well-being	448	18,90	5,03	6	29
Ability to Control Work	448	9,99	3,02	3	15
Working conditions	448	9,45	3,04	3	15
Stress at Work	448	7,48	2,11	2	10
Family-Work-Life Balance	448	9,55	2,94	3	15
Psychological Well-Being Scale	448	43,70	7,26	11	56

When the scores of the teachers from the psychological well-being scale are examined, it is seen that they got an average of 43.70 ± 7.26 points from the scale. It was revealed that the lowest score obtained from the scale was 11 and the highest score was 56.

20.80 ± 4.63 points in the work-career satisfaction sub-dimension of the teachers included in the study, 18.90 ± 5.03 in the general well-being sub-dimension, 9.99 ± 3 in the job control sub-dimension. 02, an average of 9.45 ± 3.04 points in the working conditions sub-dimension, 7.48 ± 2.11 points in the stress at work sub-dimension, and an average of 9.55 ± 2.94 points in the family-work-life balance sub-

dimension. It was elicited that the teachers got 76.17 ± 17.20 points from the work life quality scale and the lowest score from this scale was 27 and the highest score was 112.

Findings Concerning the Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores by Age Group

The test results of the comparison of the “Work-Life Quality Scale” and “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores of the special education teachers participating in the research based on the age groups are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores by Age Group

	Age Groups	n	\bar{x}	SS	M	SO	χ^2	p
Job-Career Satisfaction	20-29 ages	266	20,92	4,52	21	225,74	0,516	0,773
	30-39 ages	124	20,64	5,11	21	227,11		
	40 age and above	58	20,57	4,09	21	213,24		
General Well-being	20-29 ages	266	18,72	4,99	19	220,42	0,998	0,607
	30-39 ages	124	19,20	5,48	20	234,31		
	40 age and above	58	19,05	4,18	19	222,22		
Ability to Job Control	20-29 ages	266	10,01	2,88	10	223,88	0,020	0,990
	30-39 ages	124	9,93	3,44	10	225,85		
	40 age and above	58	10,02	2,72	10	224,44		
Work Conditions	20-29 ages	266	9,36	3,12	9	219,46	1,945	0,378
	30-39 ages	124	9,40	3,13	10	225,55		
	40 age and above	58	9,97	2,40	11	245,35		
Stress in Work-Life	20-29 ages	266	7,42	2,10	8	220,46	0,879	0,644
	30-39 ages	124	7,58	2,25	8	233,48		
	40 age and above	58	7,57	1,83	8	223,84		
Family-Job-Life Balance	20-29 ages	266	9,39	3,06	10	217,67	2,340	0,310
	30-39 ages	124	9,82	2,91	10,5	239,08		
	40 age and above	58	9,71	2,34	10	224,64		
Job-Life Quality Scale	20-29 ages	266	75,82	16,85	77,5	220,54	0,848	0,654
	30-39 ages	124	76,56	19,14	81	233,47		
	40 age and above	58	76,88	14,48	76	223,47		
Psychological Well-Being Scale	20-29 ages	266	43,44	7,27	44,5	219,04	1,169	0,557
	30-39 ages	124	44,29	6,64	46	232,53		
	40 age and above	58	43,66	8,49	46	232,36		

It was elicited that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of special education teachers in the general work life quality scale according to their gender and in the sub-dimensions of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions and family-work-life balance in the scale ($p < 0.05$). The scores of female teachers in the overall quality of life scale and in the sub-dimensions of job career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions and family-work-life balance were found to be lower than male teachers.

Also, it was found out that there was no statistically significant difference between the scores of the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” based on the gender of the special education teachers included in the study ($p > 0.05$).

Findings Concerning the Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores According to Marital Status

Table 4 indicate the results of the “Mann-Whitney U” test used in the comparison of the “Work-Life Quality Scale” and “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores of the special education teachers included in the study based on their marital status.

Table 4. Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores by Marital Status

	Marital Status	N	\bar{x}	SS	M	SO	Z	p
Job-Career Satisfaction	Single	249	20,81	4,66	21,00	221,34	-1,164	0,244
	Married	199	20,79	4,61	21,00	240,47		
General Well-being	Single	249	18,59	5,30	19,00	222,28	-0,817	0,414
	Married	199	19,28	4,66	20,00	235,71		
Ability to Job Control	Single	249	9,96	3,04	10,00	223,61	-0,331	0,741
	Married	199	10,02	3,00	10,00	229,02		
Work Conditions	Single	249	9,38	3,16	9,00	222,32	-0,808	0,419
	Married	199	9,54	2,89	10,00	235,53		
Stress in Work Life	Single	249	7,29	2,11	8,00	222,74	-0,656	0,512
	Married	199	7,72	2,08	8,00	233,40		
Family-Work- Life Balance	Single	249	9,36	3,09	10,00	217,17	-2,710	0,007*
	Married	199	9,79	2,72	11,00	261,54		
Job-Life Quality Scale	Single	249	75,39	18,08	76,00	221,03	-1,277	0,201
	Married	199	77,14	16,04	81,00	242,06		
Psychological Well-being Scale	Single	249	43,59	7,77	46,00	221,48	-1,111	0,267
	Married	199	43,84	6,59	45,00	239,74		

* $p < 0,05$

Findings Regarding the Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores Based on Monthly Household Income

The results of the “Kruskal-Wallis H” test for the comparison of the “Work-Life Quality Scale” and “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores of the special education teachers included in the study according to their monthly household income are demonstrated in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Comparison of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores by Monthly Household Income

	Monthly Household Income	n	\bar{x}	SS	M	SO	X ²	p	Difference
Job-Career Satisfaction	3500 TL and below	93	19,41	5,38	20	190,97	12,140	0,002*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	20,75	4,55	21	220,74			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	21,69	4,04	21	249,10			
General Well-being	3500 TL and below	93	16,44	5,17	17	165,80	25,775	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	19,32	4,86	19	232,29			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	19,81	4,72	21	249,45			
Ability to Job Control	3500 TL and below	93	8,78	3,36	9	175,30	19,167	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	10,10	2,82	10	228,74			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	10,56	2,87	11	248,29			
Work Conditions	3500 TL and below	93	8,09	3,36	8	169,81	27,104	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	9,49	2,87	10	224,17			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	10,20	2,78	11	257,32			
Stress in Work Life	3500 TL and below	93	6,33	2,23	6	156,47	38,696	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	7,58	1,98	8	228,24			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	8,04	1,93	8	260,08			

Family-Work-Life Balance	3500 TL and below	93	8,47	3,19	9	181,69	24,852	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	9,44	2,78	10	214,78			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	10,33	2,76	11	262,12			
Job-Life Quality Scale	3500 TL and below	93	67,53	19,74	72	168,11	28,304	0,000*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	76,68	16,18	77	224,26			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	80,63	14,92	83	258,21			
Psychological Well-being Scale	3500 TL and below	93	41,24	7,52	42	182,13	13,828	0,001*	1-2
	3501-6500 TL	198	43,74	7,20	46	228,91			1-3
	6501 TL and above	157	45,11	6,84	46	244,04			

* $p < 0,05$

Considering the monthly household income of the special education teachers included in the study, there was a statistically significant difference between the work-life quality scale and the subscales of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, job control, working conditions, work-life stress and family-work-life balance ($p < 0.05$). This difference stems from teachers whose monthly household income is 3500 TL or below. As obtained, the scores of teachers with a monthly household income of 3500 TL or less on the work-life quality scale and on the subscales of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, job control, working conditions, work-life stress and family-work-life balance subscales are lower than the other teachers. It was revealed that the difference between the scores of special education teachers from the psychological well-being scale based on the monthly household income was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The scores of those with a monthly household income of 3500 TL or less on the psychological well-being scale were found to be lower than the teachers in other income groups.

Findings Related to the Correlations between Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores

“The Spearman” test findings regarding the correlations between special education teachers' Work-Life Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale scores are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6. Correlations between Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores

		Job-Career Satisfaction	General Well-Being	Ability to Job Control	Work Conditions	Stress in Work Life	Family-Work-Life Balance	Job-Life Quality Scale	Psychological Well-being Scale
Job-Career Satisfaction	r	1	0,526	0,772	0,730	0,404	0,597	0,848	0,491
	p		0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*
General Well-Being	r		1	0,491	0,595	0,472	0,647	0,802	0,571
	p			0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*
Ability to Job Control	r			1	0,679	0,453	0,546	0,808	0,464
	p				0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*
Work Conditions	r				1	0,508	0,707	0,857	0,437
	p					0,000*	0,000*	0,000*	0,000*
Stress in Work Life	r					1	0,549	0,634	0,262
	p						0,000*	0,000*	0,000*
Family-Work-Life Balance	r						1	0,819	0,343
	p							0,000*	0,000*
Job-Life Quality Scale	r							1	0,553
	p								0,000*
Psychological Well-being Scale	r								1
	p								

As it was elicited, there were positive and statistically significant correlations between the scores of the teachers included in the study from the “Work-Life Scale” in general and from all sub-dimensions in the scale and the scores of the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” ($p < 0.05$).

If the teachers' scores on the “Work-Life Quality Scale” and all the sub-dimensions in the scale increase, their scores on the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” also rise.

Findings Regarding the Prediction of Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale Scores

Table 7 illustrates the findings obtained from the linear regression analysis regarding the prediction of the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores of the “Work-Life Quality Scale” scores of the special education teachers included in the study.

Table 7. The Prediction of Special Education Teachers' Work-Life Quality Scale Scores on Psychological Well-Being Scale Scores

	Non-standard Coefficients		Standard Coefficients	t	p	F	R ²
	B	S.H.	Beta				
(Fixed)	22,41	1,69		13,300	0,000*		
Work-Life Satisfaction	0,35	0,11	0,22	3,209	0,001*		
General Well-Being	0,89	0,07	0,62	12,235	0,000*	52,782	0,456
Ability to Job Control	0,38	0,15	0,16	2,441	0,015*	0,000*	0,448
Work Conditions	-0,13	0,16	-0,06	-0,859	0,391		
Stress in Work Life	-0,05	0,15	-0,02	-0,347	0,729		
Family-Work-Life Balance	0,59	0,15	0,24	-4,074	0,000*		

Job Career Satisfaction ($\beta=0.35$; $p < 0.05$), General Well-being ($\beta=0.89$; $p < 0.05$), Job Control ($\beta= 0.38$; $p < 0.05$) and Family-Work-Life Balance ($\beta=0.59$; $p < 0.05$) sub-dimensions were found to predict the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores in a statistically significant and positive direction.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

When the perceptions of work life quality of special education teachers based on the "age" groups are examined, it is elicited that there are no significant differences in the sub-dimensions of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions, stress in work life and family-work-life balance sub-dimensions of general work life quality and work life quality. When the literature was scrutinized, Yaman (2019) argues that there was no significant difference between the work life quality of preschool teachers according to age in his study. In a study conducted by Demir (2016) on the relationship between the perceptions of vocational high school educators regarding their quality of work life and their degree of commitment to the organization, it was revealed that the perceptions of work life quality did not differ according to age, among 307 teachers working in vocational high schools in the province of Istanbul in the 2014-2015 academic year. As a result of the study conducted by Kosterelioglu (2011), it was elicited that there was no significant difference between the quality of work life of teachers based on the age. Accordingly, the fact that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of work life quality in special education teachers according to the age variable, the general quality of work life and the subscales of the quality of work life are perceived not based on the age factor, but due to the intense feeling of the factors that increase the quality of work life during the time they do the work.

When the psychological well-being levels of special education teachers according to the "age" groups are examined, it is seen that there are no significant differences. This situation turned out to be contrary to expectations. There are studies supporting the findings that psychological well-being obtained as a result of the research does not change according to age. For example, in the study conducted by Karacam (2016), no significant differences were found in the psychological well-being

levels of the physical education teachers participating in the research according to the age variable. Likewise, Timur (2008) concluded in his study that the age variable was not a significant predictor of psychological well-being. In the same line, Oymak (2017) and Nuri & Uzunboylu (2017) stated in his study that no significant differences were found between psychological well-being according to the age variable.

Apart from that, it has been elicited that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of special education teachers in the general work life quality scale compared to their gender and the sub-dimensions of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions and family-work-life balance in the scale. The scores of female teachers in the overall quality of life scale and in the sub-dimensions of job career satisfaction, general well-being, working conditions and family-work-life balance were found to be lower than male teachers. Some studies supporting that the quality of work life may vary according to the gender variable are as follows; in the master's thesis study conducted by Demir (2019), in which he examined the quality of work life of teachers, it was stated that male teachers perceived more quality of work life than female teachers when the averages were examined. Similarly, in the study conducted by Ismetoglu (2017), significant differences were found in the gender variable, and it was determined that male participants included in the study perceived higher quality of work life than female participants. In their study, Celebi & Uysal (2019) found that males perceive more work-life quality and work-life balance than females. Demir (2019) found a significant difference in the family work-life balance dimension in his master's thesis study. This finding is parallel to our study. This difference is that the quality of work life of male teachers is higher than that of female teachers. It was thought that male teachers could maintain the balance between work and family life better than female teachers. It is concluded that female teachers reflect more emotional perspectives on events to their family lives than males in the problems they experience at schools or the problems they experience with administrators. In the study conducted by Dogrul and Tekeli (2010), similar findings were obtained. Great responsibilities are placed on working female, spouses and mothers. It can be noted that this causes work-life conflict and affects the quality of work-life (Dogrul & Tekeli, 2010; Thomas, Kumar & Singh, 2020).

When the psychological well-being levels of special education teachers based on the gender variable are examined, it is revealed that there is no statistically significant difference. When the literature is reviewed, it was elicited that there is no significant difference between the physical respect levels of the individuals participating in the study and the gender variable in the study conducted by Karacam (2016). Likewise, in Timur's (2008) study, which aimed to examine the factors affecting the psychological well-being of married couples who are in the process of divorce and who are not, it is seen that the gender variable is not a predictor of psychological well-being. It can be said that the absence of significant differences in the psychological well-being levels of special education teachers in terms of the gender variable may be due to the fact that male and female teachers do not have differences in the strength to affect the psychological well-being levels depending on the gender factor, and that there is no deficiency or excess among the factors affecting the psychological well-being levels.

As a result of the research, it was seen that there were no significant differences in the sub-dimensions of general work life quality and work career satisfaction, general well-being, ability to control work, working conditions, and stress in business life, according to the marital status variables of special education teachers. When the literature is scrutinized, studies that overlap with the research findings are available. In the master's thesis study conducted by Demir (2016), it is seen that there is no significant difference between the marital status of primary school teachers and the overall quality of work life. In the same line, the study of Celebi and Uysal(2019) and in the study conducted by Turk, Cetin and Fedai (2012), it is noticed that no significant differences were detected between the marital status variable and the overall quality of work life. According to the marital status of the special education teachers, it is revealed that the scores of the married teachers in the family-work-life balance sub-dimension, which is one of the sub-dimensions of the quality of work life, were higher

than the single special education teachers (Bartkowiak, Krugiełka, Dama, Kostrzewa-Demczuk, & Gawel-Luty, 2022). Family work-life balance states that a person's working life and private life are different from each other, and that positive or negative events experienced by individuals in their business life can also affect family life (Bircan, 2014). Therefore, the fact that the married special education teachers have a higher family-work-life balance compared to the single ones can be associated with the fact that they are married and have a regular life. Also, the fact that married teachers have a regular family life and are motivated to work by looking at the problems from the positive aspects may have increased their perceptions of work life quality. In parallel with the research, Demir (2016), in his master's thesis study conducted in parallel with the research, determined that, based on the marital status of the primary school teachers participating in the research, single teachers scored lower on the family work-life balance subscale, which is one of the subscales of work-life quality, compared to married teachers.

When the psychological well-being levels of special education teachers according to their "marital status" are investigated, it is found out that there are no statistically significant differences. In general, when it is considered that the married individuals are happy in their marriage, the support of the spouses to each other and not being alone, the psychological well-being levels are expected to be higher compared to the single ones. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted by Timur (2008), it is argued that the psychological well-being levels of married individuals are higher than those of single participants. Likewise, in the study conducted by Kim and Kim (2002), it was aimed to examine the level of psychological well-being and marital adjustment, and at the end of the research, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between psychological well-being and marriage. In addition, Proulx, Helms, and Buehler (2007) found that there is a strong relationship between psychological well-being and marital adjustment in their study. Yet, based on the research outcomes, no significant differences were found in the psychological well-being levels of married and single individuals. When we look at the studies that overlap with the research findings, it is seen that there are no significant differences as in the result of the research when the level of psychological well-being is examined according to the marital status variable in the study conducted by Oymak (2017).

According to the "monthly household income" of special education teachers, it is elicited that there are statistically significant differences from the general work-life quality scale and the subscales of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, job control, working conditions, stress in work life and family-work-life balance in the scale. The difference is that teachers with a monthly household income of 3500 TL or less have low scores in the work-life quality scale and in the sub-dimensions of work-career satisfaction, general well-being, job control, working conditions, work-life stress, and family-work-life balance. It can be said that the reason for this situation may be due to the fact that the economic power possessed cannot meet the requirements. Accordingly, the quality of work life is affected and it can be interpreted that teachers' commitment to work decreases. As a matter of fact, Avsaroglu et al. (2005) state that low monthly salary increases the problems that may be experienced by teachers and triggers family problems. Otacioglu (2008) also determined in his study that monthly income increase reduces occupational burnout in individuals and increases job satisfaction. Likewise, in the study conducted by Demirel et al. (2005) and Nuri, Demirok & Direktör, 2017, it is stated that as the income level of teachers increases, their burnout decreases, and as the income level increases, burnout and depersonalization towards work decrease. These findings are in line with the research findings.

When the psychological well-being levels of special education teachers are examined looking at their monthly household income, it is revealed that the psychological well-being levels of teachers with a monthly household income of 3500 TL and less are lower than those of other monthly household income groups. Therefore, it is worth stating that this situation may be due to the difficulty in meeting the economic expenses of the monthly household income level. As a matter of fact, Tuzgol Dost (2010) found in his study that individuals with high economic status perceive higher psychological well-being compared to those with lower economic status. Eroglu and Parlar (2018) also mentioned that

psychological well-being increased with the increase in income level in their study, which aimed to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and monthly income in married individuals.

Apart from that, it is elicited that there are positive and statistically significant correlations between the scores of the special education teachers included in the study from the “Work-Life Scale” in general and from all sub-dimensions in the scale and the scores of the “Psychological Well-Being Scale”. The correlation is that if the scores that teachers get from the “Work-Life Scale” in general and from all the sub-dimensions in the scale increase, their scores on the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” also rise. It can be interpreted that as the perceptions of special education teachers' work life quality increase, their psychological well-being levels also increase based on the efficiency they get from business life. At the same time, it can be mentioned that the high perception of work life quality of special education teachers is directly affected and integrated by the level of psychological well-being of teachers. Likewise, in the study of Akman and Akman (2017), which aimed to investigate the integration of the perception of work life quality in teachers with work, they found that if the teachers included in the study do not experience stress at work, their professional relationships are positively affected and they are more in interaction with their profession as a result of their happiness and they have achieved sufficient job satisfaction by integrating with their profession. This situation is reflected in the psychological well-being of individuals and affects individuals' perceptions of psychological well-being.

It has been found out that the scores of special education teachers in the “Job-Career Satisfaction”, “General Well-being”, “Ability to Control Work” and “Family-Work-Life Balance” sub-dimensions in the “Work-Life Scale” predict the “Psychological Well-Being Scale” scores in a statistically significant and positive way. In parallel with the research findings, in the master's thesis study conducted by Turan (2014), which aimed to examine the relationship between psychological empowerment and work life quality, it was stated that the level of psychology empowerment had an effect on the quality of work life in general, and that there were significant differences between general psychological improvement and quality of work life.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

Within the scope of this research, the following points can be recommended: looking at the research, it has been elicited that the stress levels of special education teachers are high in business life. The reason for this may be related to the fear experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic process, the overload of communication, the transition to unfamiliar models and the difficulties experienced in warming up to the process. In order to minimize the stress levels of teachers in business life, platforms that will enable them to interact with each other on online platforms and applications that will enable them to access the desired information quickly can be implemented. It is revealed that several variables in special education teachers included in the study affect psychological well-being. In this context, more studies can be conducted aiming to study the psychological well-being of teachers serving in different educational institutions in terms of different variables or to examine the factors affecting teachers' psychological well-being.

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