



**INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE AND
LIFE SATISFACTION AS THE PREDICTOR OF
RUMINATION ABOUT AN INTERPERSONAL OFFENSE**

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Abstract:

In this study, it was aimed to investigate the relationships between rumination about an interpersonal offense, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction. The dependent variable of this research is rumination about an interpersonal offense, and its independent variables are interpersonal competence and life satisfaction. The study was conducted on a total of 434 (340 females, 78.3%, and 94 males, 21.7%) individuals, whose ages range between 21 and 59 (= 30.61). Participants completed the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire, the Rumination About an Interpersonal Offense Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale in accordance with the volunteering principles. The data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, t-test, Pearson correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis techniques. According to the results of the t-test, women's average points of rumination about an interpersonal offense is significantly higher than that of men. As a result of the correlation analysis, significant negative relationships were found between the scores of the rumination about an interpersonal offense, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction. Regarding the regression analysis result, independent variables significantly predict the rumination about interpersonal offense scale.

Keywords: rumination about an interpersonal offense, interpersonal competence, life satisfaction, individuals

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1. Introduction

The psychological needs of people, who are a social entity, like their physiological needs, are also important (Henry, Von-Hippel, Molenberghs & Sachdev, 2016; Park, Crocker & Mickelson, 2004). Building social relationships is one of the basic needs of individuals, and they develop and maintain healthy relationships throughout their lives efforts (Ekin Şahin & Gizir, 2013). The individual, a social entity, faces many difficulties throughout her/his life. Each individual uses different methods to cope with these difficulties. One of the ways of coping is rumination (Lyubomirsky, S., & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1993).

The rumination can be defined as the process of individuals' constantly thinking about the emotions or problems (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco & Lyubomirsky 2008). In other words, it means mental rumination or repetitive thoughts circulating in the mind (Nolen-Hoeksema & Morrow, 1991). The concept of rumination has been explained by many theories. Examples of these theories are Response Styles Theory, Goal Progress Theory, Emotional Schemas Theory and Multiple Rumination Theory. Response Styles Theory reveals the relationship between rumination and depression (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, and Lyubomirsky, 2008). According to the Goal Progress Theory, rumination is repetitive thoughts on goals that have not yet been reached. It occurs when people fail to progress satisfactorily towards a goal. However, these ruminative thoughts are stated to have a supportive role for individuals in achieving their goals (Martin & Tesser, 1996). According to another theory, Emotional Schemas Theory, the individual who cannot accept the negative emotion has a tendency to show rumination. As the tendency to show rumination increases, people find it difficult to express their emotions (Leahy, 2002). According to the Multiple Rumination Theory, rumination is examined in 3 sub-dimensions. These are: Instrumental rumination is the way of thinking looking for a solution to the problem. Emotion-focused rumination is harmful in dealing with negative emotional states. Rumination, searching for meaning, prevents the negative mood to change positively (Steers-Wentzell, 2003).

As can be seen, although the literature supporting rumination is sufficient, rumination has no unified definition or standard measurement method (Smith, & Alloy, 2009). Rumination is a concept with many types like anger rumination (Sukhodolsky, Golub, & Cromwell, 2001), positive rumination (Gilbert, Liking, Pagliaccio, Luby, & Barch, 2017), co-rumination (Rose, Carlson, & Waller, 2007) mourning-related rumination (Eisma et al., 2014). In this study, rumination about an interpersonal offense was used as a variable. The rumination about an interpersonal offense can be defined as a repetition of cognitive thinking about interpersonal life, where the individual focuses her/his attention on the negative events and results in her/his interpersonal relationships (Wade, Vogel, Liao, & Goldman, 2008).

It was seen that rumination concept was examined with depression level (Yıldız & Eldeleklioğlu, 2018, Cooney, Joormann, Eugène, Dennis, & Gotlib, 2010), perfectionism (Kalfa, Yalçınkaya & Alkar, 2019; Xie, Kong, Yang & Chen, 2019), stress (Aksöz- Efe, 2018; De Lissnyder, 2012), anxiety (Yılmaz, 2014; McLaughlin, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2011),

irrational beliefs (Ayğar & Çapri, 2018; Szasz, 2010), emotional intelligence (Lale-Gülaçtı, 2020; García-Sancho, Salguero, & Fernández-Berrocal, 2016) and conscious awareness (Blanke, Schmidt, Riediger, & Brose, 2019; Önder-Cenkseven & Utkan, 2018). One of the areas where the concept of rumination needs to be examined is interpersonal relationships (Calmes & Roberts, 2008). Rumination usually focuses on social and interpersonal themes and may have the function of influencing other people's responses and limiting the impact of other people's behavior. Therefore, many ruminations focus on suggesting and predicting other people's negative reactions or criticisms (Watkins, 2016). For this reason, interpersonal competence is thought to be related to rumination.

While Waters and Sroufe (1983) define the concept of interpersonal competence as combining environmental and personal resources with emotions, thoughts and behaviors and using it as a good developmental outcome; Yeates and Selman (1989) define it as the development and transfer of cognitive skills to behavior in order to achieve psychosocial harmony with one's environment. Ogbu (1981) defines it as the ability to perform culturally defined tasks. Interpersonal competence includes dimensions such as being willing to have an attempt to start a new relationship, defending one's rights, opening oneself, being with others in their negative experiences, contributing to the solution of problems in close relationships. (Buhrmester, Furman, Wittenberg, & Reis, 1988). As the interpersonal competence of individuals increases; they become more successful and feel happy in friendship, romantic relationships, business and academic fields (Baydemir, 2016).

Considering the studies, the relationship between the concept of interpersonal competence and empathic tendency (Çelikkaleli & Avcı, 2015), anger and anger expression styles (Kıran Esen & Çelikkaleli, 2016), cyberbullying levels (Ateş & Güler, 2016), empathy (Chow, Ruhl, & Buhrmester, 2013) was examined. It can be considered that one of the concepts that interpersonal competence affects is life satisfaction (Adamczyk & Segrin, 2016). In order for individuals to establish healthy relationships, it is very important for them to enjoy life and have positive feelings towards their life (Aktaş & Şahin, 2018). In other words, the life satisfaction of the individual plays an important role in her/his healthy communication.

Life satisfaction is a component of subjective well-being that reflects the cognitive assessment of whether a person is satisfied with her/his life (Cheung, & Lucas, 2014). Life satisfaction, in the most general sense, is the individual's evaluation of her/his life based on her/his subjective criteria (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). In addition, life satisfaction reflects the happiness and quality life of the individual (Piccolo et al., 2005). Personality plays a big role in life satisfaction. Individuals with positive personality structure have more life satisfaction than individuals with negative personality structure (Hırlak, Taşlıyan & Sezer, 2017).

It was seen that in the researches, the concept of life satisfaction is examined with various concepts like humor (Traş, Yılmaz, Yakıcı, Işık, 2018), procrastination (Öztemel, Traş & Büyükalim, 2018), level of happiness (Uğraş & Güllü, 2020), optimism (Hırlak et al., 2017), perceived social support (Türkseven et al., 2020), social appearance anxiety

(Ürün& Şafak-Öztürk, 2019), loneliness (Yakıcı & Traş), commitment to life (Sakarya & Dilmaç, 2020), self-esteem in existential anxieties (Sezer, Güleroğlu,2017), perceptions regarding supervisor support, co-worker support (Ergün, Nartgün, 2017) and depression (Morsünbül, 2013). Although there are many researches about life satisfaction, it can be thought that it is a concept that is still important in terms of revealing its dynamics. Investigating the dynamics of life satisfaction is important for the permanent life satisfaction of the individual (Kim, & Jeong, 2017). It can be thought that one of the dynamics that affect life satisfaction is rumination. Rumination can lead to a negative assessment of life. Studies on the direct link between rumination and life satisfaction have also shown that rumination is a risk factor for low life satisfaction (Zheng, Zhou, Liu, Yang, & Fan, 2019).

Based on the above information, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between rumination, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction. In addition, the predictive effect of interpersonal competence and life satisfaction on rumination was examined. Since the rumination about offense in interpersonal relations is a new concept investigated in the Turkish sample, whether it differs in terms of gender is also examined.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Research Model

This research, which aims to examine the relationships between rumination about interpersonal offense, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction, was designed with quantitative method. In the research, a scanning model based on a certain data collection process and analysis techniques was used (De Vaus, 2002). The dependent variable of this research is rumination about interpersonal offense, and its independent variables are interpersonal competence and life satisfaction.

2.2. Study Group

The study group of the research consists of a total of 434 individuals living in Turkey, 340 (78.3%) females and 94 (21.7%) males. The ages of the participants range between 21 and 59, and the average age is 30.61 (Sd = 8.51). The individuals participating in the research are distributed according to level of education as 4 people (0.9%) with a primary school degree, 4 people (0.9%) with a secondary school degree, 21 people (4.8%) with a high school degree, 79 (18.2%) university students and 326 people with a university degree (75.1%). According to income level variable, there are 86 people (19.8%) perceiving low perceived income levels, 306 people (70.5%) perceiving medium level and 42 people (9.7%) perceiving high level. There are 189 (43.5%) people who stated that they have a romantic relationship and 245 (56.5%) people who stated that they do not have a romantic relationship.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

A. The Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense Scale

The scale was developed by Wade, Vogel, Liao and Goldman (2008) and adapted to Turkish culture by Oral and Arslan (2017). The scale consists of 6 items and is a 5-point Likert type. DFA results showed that the scale has a single factor structure ($\chi^2 / sd = 3.82$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.096, SRMR = 0.04, GFI = 0.97, AGFI = 0.92, CFI = 0.98). Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .88 (Oral & Arslan, 2017). In this research, Cronbach's alpha value was found as .93.

B. The Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire

It was developed by Buhrmester, Furman, Wittenberg and Reis (1988). It was adapted to Turkish culture by Ekin Şahin and Gizir (2013). The scale is a 5-point Likert type. It consists of 25 items in total. The scale appears to consist of five sub-dimensions (initiating relationships, providing emotional support, asserting displeasure with other's actions, self-disclosure and conflict resolution). In addition, the scale can be calculated on the total score. According to the confirmatory factor analysis results, acceptance of the scale's fit index ($\chi^2 (249) = 441.40$, $\chi^2 / sd = 1.77$, RMSEA = .036, SRMR = .049, GFI = .94, AGFI = .93 and CFI = .96) appear to be within acceptable limits. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the total score of the scale is .87. The test-retest reliability coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as .89 (Ekin Şahin & Gizir, 2013). In this study, the Cronbach alpha value of the scale was found as .89.

C. The Satisfaction with Life Scale

It was developed by Diener Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985). The scale was adapted to Turkish Culture by Köker (1991). The scale is a 7-point Likert type. The scale consists of 5 items. As a result of the reliability studies of the scale; test-retest reliability was $r = .85$, and item-test correlations were calculated between .71 and .80. In this study, Cronbach's alpha value was found to be .90.

D. Personal Information Form

In the research, a personal information form was prepared by the researchers to determine demographic information such as gender, age, educational level, perceived income level, and romantic relationship status of the participants.

2.4. Collection of Data

The data collection process of the research was carried out over the Internet via Google-forms. The participants were informed that the study was based on volunteering principles and that the study would be conducted by taking into consideration the principle of confidentiality. In line with these interests, data were collected from volunteer participants who agreed to participate in the study. It took the participants about 20 minutes to fill in the scale form.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the SPSS 22.00 package program. Descriptive statistics were used to have general information about the scales and participants, and t-test was

used to determine whether the rumination about interpersonal offense differed according to the gender variable of the participants. Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation Technique was applied to examine the relationship between the rumination, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction variables of the participants. In addition, multiple linear regression analysis was performed on whether interpersonal competence and life satisfaction predict the rumination about interpersonal offense.

3. Results

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variables	N	\bar{X}	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Rumination	434	19.69	7.26	-.236	-1.024
Competence in Interpersonal Relationships	434	83.47	13.61	-.143	-.067
Life Satisfaction	434	22.02	6.77	-.415	-.404

In the research, firstly, outliers were extracted by looking at Mahalanobis Distance, Cook's Distance and Leverage values. Mahalanobis Distance, Cook's Distance and Leverage values are used to determine the outlier (Kannan & Manoj, 2015). Afterwards, the skewness and kurtosis values were examined to see if the data are suitable for normal distribution. As seen in Table 1, the skewness-kurtosis coefficient of the Interpersonal Competence and Satisfaction with Life scales is in the range of ± 1.0 . If the skewness and kurtosis coefficients are in the range of ± 1.0 , it can be assumed to have a normal distribution feature (George & Mallery, 2019). Also, for the Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense Scale, skewness coefficient was found as -.236 and kurtosis coefficient as -1.024. If the skewness and kurtosis values are between +1.96 and -1.96, it can be accepted that there is a normal distribution (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). In this case, it can be accepted that data has a normal distribution. It is seen that rumination mean score is \bar{X} = 19.69, the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire mean score is \bar{X} = 83.47; and the Satisfaction with Life Scale mean score is \bar{X} = 22.2.

Table 2: t-test Results for the Comparison of Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense by Gender Variable

Variables	Gender	n	\bar{X}	Ss	t	P	η^2
Rumination	Female	340	20.15	7.30	2.567	.011*	.30
	Male	94	18.00	6.89			

*p<.05

As it can be seen in Table-2, the female participants' mean scores of Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense Scale (\bar{X} = 20.15) is significantly higher than the average score of the male participants (\bar{X} = 18.00) ($p < .05$).

Correlation coefficients related to rumination about interpersonal offense, interpersonal competence and life satisfaction that constitute the variables of the study are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Results Related to Rumination about Interpersonal Offense, Competence in Interpersonal Relationships and Life Satisfaction

Variables	1	2	3
1. Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense	-		
2. Competence in Interpersonal Relationships	-.15**	-	
3. Satisfaction with Life	-.32**	.25**	-

Note: ** $p < .01$

When Table 1 is examined, it was found that there is a negative relationship between rumination about an interpersonal offense scale scores and interpersonal competency questionnaire scores ($r = -.15$, $p < .01$) and satisfaction with life scale scores ($r = -.32$, $p < .01$).

The coefficients showing that interpersonal competence and life satisfaction levels predict significantly the levels of rumination about an interpersonal offense are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Findings about Predicting the Level of Rumination about an Interpersonal Offense

Variables	B	SE	β	t	p	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	30.249	2.128		14.211	.000		
Competence in Interpersonal Relationships	-.040	.025	-.075	-1.605	.109	.934	1.071
Satisfaction with Life	-.327	.050	-.305	-6.477	.000***	.934	1.071

$R = .332$, $R^2 = .110$, $\text{Adj } R^2 = .106$, $F_{(2-431)} = 26.718$, $p < .001$ $DW = 1.973$ *** $p < .001$

Before the regression analysis was made, it was checked whether the data provided the necessary postulations. One of the postulations is that the tolerance value is expected to be greater than .10 and the VIF value be less than 5 in order to avoid multi collinearity problems between variables (Daoud, 2017). The Tolerance (.934) and VIF (1.071) values of this research are in the desired range. Another postulation is that the Durbin-Watson coefficient takes a value between 1 and 3 as an indication of no autocorrelation between error terms. (Field, 2018). The Durbin-Watson coefficient of this study was found to be 1,973. In this case, it can be thought that the data comply with the conditions required for regression.

When the Table 4 and regression analysis results are examined, it is seen that independent variables significantly predict rumination about an interpersonal offense ($R = .332$, $R^2 = .110$, $\text{Adj } R^2 = .106$, $F_{(2-431)} = 26.718$, $p < .001$). Satisfaction with life scores ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .001$, $t = -6.477$) significantly predict rumination about an interpersonal offense score. Independent variables explain approximately 11% of the total variance of rumination about an interpersonal offense.

4. Discussion

In this study, it is seen that women score higher than men on the rumination about an interpersonal offense scale. It is stated in the literature that women are more prone to

rumination than men (Barstead, Bouchard, & Shih, 2013). According to evolutionary perspective, the reason why women think ruminative more than men may be due to the fact that men typically face more lethal situations due to their hunter roles and therefore develop problem-solving skills instead of ruminative thinking (Brotman, & Derubeis, 2004). In similar studies examining rumination in terms of gender, it was found that women have higher rumination levels than men (Bugay, Erdur-Baker, 2016; Neziroğlu, 2010; Jose and Brown, 2008, Nolen-Hoeksema & Harrell, 2002; Nolen-Hoeksema, & Jackson, 2001). Cimsir (2019) found that rumination about an interpersonal offense did not differ significantly according to gender variable, whereas men were observed to score higher than women in anger rumination (Guerra & White, 2017). Cilalı (2015) found that gender was effective on rumination. It is seen in the literature that there is no common conclusion on the effect of gender on rumination. The reason why the findings in the literature do not reach a common result is that the structures in which women and men are located can reflect different social meanings and/or the individual's character may reflect different mechanisms for traditional roles (Lengua, & Stormshak, 2000).

Another finding of this research is that there is a negative relationship between the score of rumination about an interpersonal offense and interpersonal competence. In a similar study, a positive relationship was found between co-rumination and interpersonal perceived stress (Murdock, Gorman, & Robbins, 2015). It is remarkable that as ruminative thinking increases, socialization decreases (Lale & Gülaçtı, 2020). Because one of the negative consequences of having more ruminative thoughts in individuals can be thought to be lower social competence due to less socialization. Because some individuals have social anxiety, they may sometimes have trouble creating social relationships. It is seen that there is a positive relationship between rumination and social anxiety (Kashdan & Roberts, 2007). In addition, another study found a positive relationship between rumination and shyness (Palmieri et al., 2018). The relevant literature overlaps with the findings of the research. Interpersonal competence helps the individual find a way to confront and resolve existential and political contradictions with others. Interpersonal competence is in continuous dialogue between theory and practice, between objective and subjective (Torbert, 1981). For this reason, it can be thought that individuals with high interpersonal competence tend towards effective problem-solving instead of ruminative thinking of their interpersonal offenses in relationships.

Another finding of the research is that there is a negative relationship between rumination about an interpersonal offense and life satisfaction. In addition, life satisfaction significantly predicts rumination about an interpersonal offense. In a study conducted by Zanon, Hutz, Reppold, & Zenger (2016), it was found that there is a negative relationship between life satisfaction and rumination. Tsai (2010) found a negative correlation between rumination and life satisfaction for both groups in his study on European-American and Asian-American students. Ysseldyk, Matheson, K., & Anisman (2007) and Turan (2019) found a negative relationship between life satisfaction and rumination types. It is seen that there are other study results, which obtained a negative relationship between rumination and life satisfaction (McCullough, Bellah,

Kilpatrick, Johnson, 2000; Gebhardt, Van Der Doef, Massey, Verhoeven, & Verkuil, 2010, Locatelli, Kluwe, & Bryant, 2012; Eldeleklioğlu, 2015; Romero-Moreno, Márquez-González, Losada, Fernández-Fernández & Nogales-González, 2015; Marttinen, Dietrich, & Salmela-Aro, 2016; Karabati, Ensari, Fiorentino, 2017; Jarrar, 2017; McGuirk, Kuppens, Kingston, & Bastian, 2018, Newman and Nezelek, 2019). When we look at the literature, there are also findings (Eldeleklioğlu, 2015; Jarrar, 2017) indicating that rumination negatively predicts life satisfaction. This finding coincides with the findings that ruminative thinking decreases as the meaning in life increases (Deniz, Amanvermez & Genç, 2017). In a research on life goals, it was found that individuals' having goals related to the future helps to reduce their ruminative thinking (Teismann, Het, Grillenberger, Willutzki, Wolf, 2013). When there is a discrepancy between what people want or expect and the reality of what is present, they may not achieve sufficient life satisfaction and this discrepancy may increase the rumination levels of individuals (Randall, 2013). The literature appears to be mostly consistent with this research. However, there are also studies that are inconsistent with this research. For example, in a study conducted by Kopperson (2017), no significant relationship was found between rumination about an interpersonal offense and life satisfaction. In another research, no significant relationship was found between life goals and rumination (Roekel, 2017).

4.1 Limitations

Gender is an important concept affecting rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema, & Jackson, 2001). It is thought that the gender is not homogeneously distributed in the study and it is a limitation for the study.

4.2 Recommendations

In this study, rumination about an interpersonal offense was examined in terms of gender variable. Feminine and masculine features, which are more related to the characteristics of the individual than biological gender, are thought to have an impact on rumination (Simonson, Mezulis, & Davis, 2011). In further research, rumination about an interpersonal offense can be examined in terms of gender, as well as the feminine and masculine characteristics of individuals.

In this study, a significant negative relationship was found between interpersonal competence and rumination about an interpersonal offense. It is thought that rumination is a negative coping method (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco and Lyubomirsky, 2008). It is thought that individual and group counseling services will help individuals gain positive coping skills to help them gain interpersonal competence skills.

In this study, the relationship between rumination about an interpersonal offense and life satisfaction was investigated. Life satisfaction is a subjective feeling used to indicate the general well-being of the individual (Koivumaa-Honkanen et al. 2000). Specific concepts like satisfaction with job, school, romantic relationship, etc. can be studied with rumination about an interpersonal offense.

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