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Research Article

Determination the Relationship of Coronavirus Anxiety with Meaning of Life and Life Satisfaction in Adults

Hasan SEVİNİK[1] Neslihan LÖK[1*]

[1]Selcuk University Faculty of Nursing.

*Corresponding Author: Neslihan LÖK, Selcuk University Faculty of Nursing, Turkey.

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the relationship between coronavirus anxiety with the meaning of life and life satisfaction in individuals aged 20-64. The sample population consisted of 386 people between the ages of 20-64 living in Konya central districts. Personal Information Form, Coronavirus Anxiety Scale Short Form, Meaning of Life Scale and Life Satisfaction Scale were used in data collection. The data were collected via social media between January and February 2021. In the descriptive analysis number, percentage, mean and standart deviation; in the correlation analysis Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis tests and Spearman correlation were used. Significant difference was found between coronavirus anxiety scale and gender, educational status, health perception, being Covid-19 positive / suspicious, being in quarantine as a result of being Covid-19 positive / contact and the effect of Covid-19 on the general life. It was determined that coronavirüs anxiety has negative relationship with existing meaning in life and life satisfaciton while has positive relationship with search meaning in life. As a result, it was determined that coronavirüs anxiety differs according to some personal caharacteristics. As the Covid-19 anxiety increases, existing meanning in life and life satisfaciton decreases; and search meaning in life increases. In line with these results, it is recommended to make plans to protect or increase the meaning in life and life satisfaction in a process such as a pandemic that changes life order of the person.

Keywords: covid-19; anxiety; meaning in life; life satisfaction

Introduction

Epidemics are traumatic events that can have a wide variety of mental and physical health consequences. All over the world and in Turkey, the Covid-19 epidemic threatens the health and welfare of people globally (Chao, Chen, Liu, Yang, & Hall, 2020). The Covid-19 epidemic, which was first detected in Wuhan, China, later spread outside of China and became a global pandemic. Due to the rapid spread of the epidemic, it was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 (Nowicki et al., 2020). Covid-19, which poses a serious threat to the physical health of the individual, has also brought along various psychological problems such as panic disorder, depression and anxiety (Bicer, Cakmak, Demir, & Kurt, 2020; Roy et al., 2020).

Anxiety is an unpleasant distress that individuals experience in certain periods and accompanied by various physiological symptoms (Zengin & Gümüş, 2019). The individual feels and defines this situation as an unexplained feeling of distress and anxiety (Kasapoğlu, 2020). Concerns in the society during the epidemic affect every individual in various dimensions globally (Roy et al., 2020). The ongoing coronavirus epidemic arouses feelings of fear, uncertainty and anxiety in the society.

Individuals have become worried about their own and others' health and even possible death (Trzebiński, Cabański, & Czarnecka, 2020).

As a result of a major traumatic event, a lot of meaningful existences face destruction and reconstruction. Loss of life, fear of death and sense of helplessness affect the values that individuals have (Chen, Zhang, Xu, Chen, & Lin, 2020). Whether facing an epidemic or not, people can contemplate their own death. Being aware of death also raises questions of meaning and purpose such as "why do we exist", "what is the meaning of life" (Tyner & Rice, 2020). By human nature the feeling of satisfaction intertwines the meaning of life with positive emotions. Therefore, positive emotions can lead to the meaning of life or be associated with its consequences. Whatever the mode of action, positive emotions are associated with welfare, happiness and psychological well-being (Bryan, Bryan, Rugo, Hinkson, & Leifker, 2020).

Meaning in life can be defined as the extent to which one understands the meaning of one's own life and perception degree of having a greater goal than him/herself. While the existence of meaning in life is negatively asoociated with indicators of psychological instability such as anxiety, depression, stress and negative affect; it is positively associated with

various indicators of psychological well-being, such as self-esteem, satisfaction with life, optimism, hope, positive social interactions and intrinsic religiosity. A meaningful or purposeful life is a life in which an individual engages in something greater than her/himself and lives for a greater purpose (Campos, Bredemeier, & Trentini, 2020). Extremely threatening and stressful situations can compromise existential security and trigger crises of meaning. It has been shown that meaning in life is a crucial factor for resilience and coping ability, especially in times of crisis (Schnell & Krampe, 2020). It is stated that people who see their lives as meaningful have higher self-esteem, are more hopeful about life and can cope with loss easily. Conversely, It is stated that depression, substance use, and suicidal thoughts are associated with meaningless in life (Sezer, 2012).

Covid-19, which almost created a traumatic effect, has had a great impact on the global meaning of life that individuals initially created. Thus, individuals try to reconstruct the source of the meaning of life and adapt to cope with difficult traumatic situations (Chen et al., 2020). The meaning of life is an issue that will continue to be discussed as long as human beings exist on earth (Sezer, 2012). It is stated that there is a connection between the regular functioning of human life and the meaning of life, and the perception about the meaning of life has a strong relationship with the mental and physical health of the individual. The lack of meaning in life can lead to negative consequences such as increased feelings of loneliness, higher level of anxiety and depression, helplessness and suicide (Chen et al., 2020). It is stated that acquiring a sense of meaning in life plays a positive role in the psychological rehabilitation of the individual (Chen et al., 2020; Hofer et al., 2018; Trzebiński et al., 2020).

While the meaning of life brings life satisfaction in the individual, optimism and coping behavior with critical situations in life are observed (Deb, Thomas, Bose, & Aswathi, 2020). People are stronger when their lives are meaningful; they can cope better with depression and disturbed emotions. In this case, there is more life satisfaction, the person feels that life has a purpose and is motivated to achieve goals (Gungor & Ucman, 2019). Since life satisfaction reported by the individual reflects social and economic conditions, it is thought that it can be seen as an indicator of how life is perceived (Heng, Fulmer, Blau, & Pereira, 2020).

This study was designed to determine the relationship between coronavirus anxiety with meaning of life and life satisfaction in individuals aged 20-64.

Materials and Methods

Type of study: The study is a descriptive and correlational study.

Sample: The population of the study consisted of 386 participants between the ages of 20-64 living in the central districts of Konya (Karatay, Meram, Selçuklu) and meeting the inclusion criteria of the study.

The *inclusion criteria* of the study were determined as being between the ages of 20-64 and being at least literate.

Data collection: The data of the study were collected through Google Forms between January and February 2021. The questionnaires were delivered to the participants via social media. After reaching the sample quorum, the data collection process was terminated.

Data collection: Personal Information Form, Coronavirus Anxiety Scale Short Form, Meaning of Life Scale and Life Satisfaction Scale were used in data collection.

Personal Information Form: In line with the literature (Karataş, 2020; Nowicki et al., 2020; Schnell & Krampe, 2020; von Humboldt et al., 2020) it consisted of fourteen questions to determine sociodemographic and Covid-19 characteristics.

Coronavirus Anxiety Scale Short Form: The scale was developed by Lee (Lee, 2020). It's validity and reliability to Turkish was done by Biçer et all. The scale consists of five questions and has no sub-dimension. In the Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was found to be 0.832. Scoring of the scale is "0-never", "1-rarely, less than one or two days", "2-several days", "3-more than seven days" and "4-almost every day in the last two weeks". The highest score obtained from the scale is 20. A score of 9 and above is interpreted as a high level of anxiety (Bicer et al., 2020).

Meaning of Life Scale: It was developed by Steger et all (Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006) to evaluate whether the individual understands the meaning of life in general. It's Turkish validity and reliability was done by Demirdağ and Kalafat. In the Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was found to be 0.81 and 0.85 for the sub-dimensions. The scale consists of 10 items and scored as a 7-point Likert item from "Absolutely False" to "Absolutely True". The scale consists of two sub-dimensions: existing meaning in life and search meaning in life (Demirdağ & Kalafat, 2015). A minimum of 10 and a maximum of 70 points can be obtained from the scale. As the score obtained from the scale increases, the level of meaning in the life of the individual also increases (Altan Sarıkaya & Öztürk, 2018).

Life Satisfaction Scale: The scale was developed by Lavalle et all (Lavallee, Hatch, Michalos, & McKinley, 2007). It's Turkish validity and reliability was done by Akın and Yalnız. In the Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was found to be 0.73. The scale is scored as a 7-point Likert item from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". A minimum of 5 and a maximum of 35 points can be obtained from the scale. As the score obtained from the scale increases, life satisfaction also increases (Akın & Yalnız, 2015).

Ethical procedures: In order to carry out the study, the approval of Selcuk University Faculty of Nursing Non-Interventional Clinical Research Ethics Committee (Date: 01.12.2020, Number: 2020/14), "Scientific Research Platform Study Approval" from the Ministry of Health and "Informed Consent Form" were obtained from the participants. In addition, permission was obtained from the scale owners for the use of the scales.

Data analysis: Statistical analysis of the data was done by SPSS 25 package program. In the descriptive analysis number, percentage, mean and standart deviation; in the correlation analysis Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis tests and Spearman correlation were used. Significance was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

Results

The descriptive characteristics of the participants in the study are given in Table 1. 65% of the participants were between the ages of 20-29, 71,8% were women, 57,3% were single, 63% had no children, 83,2% were at least university graduates, 53,4 % were working, 54,9% perceived their income as "moderate" and 56,5% perceived their health as "good". In addition, 8,5% were positive/suspected for Covid-19, 2,8% were hospitalized due to Covid-19, 32,1% remained in compulsory quarantine as a result of being positive/contact with Covid-19, 66,1% had a risky person in terms of Covid-19 in their family, 53,1% perceived their level of knowledge about Covid-19 as "good" and 75,9% thought their life was affected "a lot" by Covid-19.

	Number	(%)
Age		

20-29	251	65
30-39	97	25,1
40-64	38	9,8
Sex		
Male	109	28,2
Female	277	71,8
Marital status		
Single	221	57,3
Married	165	42,7
Having childiren		
Yes	143	37
No	243	63
Education		
Primary/secondary school	24	6,2
High school	41	10,6
University and above	321	83,2
Working status		
Yes	206	53,4
No	180	46,6
Income		
Low	25	6,5
Moderate	212	54,9
Good	149	38,6
Health perception		
Bad	14	3,6
Medium	154	39,9
Good	218	56,5
Being positive/suspected for Covid-19		
Yes	33	8,5
No	353	91,5
Hospitalization due to Covid-19		
Yes	11	2,8
No	375	97,2
Remaining in compulsory quarantine as a result of being positive/contact with Covid-19		
Yes	124	32,1
No	262	67,9
Having a risky person in terms of Covid-19 in the family		
Yes	255	66,1
No	131	33,9
Perceived level of knowledge about Covid-19		
Poor	10	2,6
Medium	171	44,3
Good	205	53,1
Impact of Covid-19 on general life		
No	9	2,3
A little	84	21,8
A lot	293	75,9
TOTAL	**386**	**100**

Table 1. *Sociodemographic and Covid-19 related to characteristics of the participants*

The mean scores of the participants on the Coronavirus anxiety scale, the meaning of life scale, and the life satisfaction scale are given in Table 2. It was found that the mean score of the coronavirus anxiety scale was 2.35±3.31. In the meaning of life scale mean score of "existing meaning" sub-dimension was 26.51± 6.34, of the "search meaning" sub-dimension was 21.31± 8.50. Also, Life satisfaction scale mean score was found to be 20.40±6.81.

Scale	X±SS
Coronavirus Anxiety Scale	2,35± 3,31
Meaning of Life Scale Existing meaning sub-dimension Search meaning sub-dimension	 26,51± 6,34 21,31± 8,50
Lise Satisfaction Scale	20.40± 6.81

Table 2. *The mean scores of the coronavirus anxiety scale, the meaning of life scale, and the life satisfaction scale.*

The comparison of anxiety level and sociodemographic characteristics of the participants is given in Table 3. There was no significant difference between coronavirus anxiety with age, marital status, having children, working status and income (p>0.05). Coronavirus anxiety was higher in women compared to men, in those who had at least university degrees compared to high school graduates, and in those who perceived their health as "moderate" compared to those who perceived their health as "good" (p<0.05).

Sociodemographic characteristics		Coronavirus anxiety		
		n	**Mean Rank**	**Test value and p**
Age	20-29 30-39 40-64	251 97 38	193,55 202,21 170,96	KW= 2,329 p= 0,312
Sex	Male Female	109 277	158,87 207,13	MW-U= 18,872 **p= 0,000**
Marital status	Single Married	221 165	193,44 193,58	MW-U= 18,246 p= 0,990
Having children	Yes No	143 243	189,54 195,83	MW-U= 16,808 p= 0,577
Education	Primary/secondary school[1] High school[2] University and above[3]	24 41 321	203,85 139,10 199,67	KW= 11,893 **p= 0,003** (2 ve 3)
Working status	Yes No	206 180	183,56 204,87	MW-U= 20,587 p= 0,051
Income	Low Moderate Good	25 212 149	188,14 201,74 182,67	KW= 2,845 p= 0,241
Health perception	Bad[1] Medium[2] Good[3]	14 154 218	194,86 218,16 175,99	KW= 14,021 **p= 0,000** (2 ve 3)

Table 3. *Comparison of the participants' coronavirus anxiety level with sociodemographic characteristics.*

The comparison of the coronavirus anxiety level of the participants with the characteristics related to Covid-19 is given in Table 4. There was no significant difference between the participants' coronavirus anxiety level with hospitalization due to Covid-19, having a risky person in terms of Covid-19 in the family and perceived level of knowledge about Covid-19 (p>0.05). It was found that those who were in quarantina due to Covid-19 and were Covid-19 positive/suspicious had higher coronavirus anxiety. Also, those who thought that the effect of Covid-19 on their general life was "a lot" had a significantly higher level of coronavirus anxiety than those who thought that it was "a little" (p<0.05).

Being positive/suspected for Covid-19	Yes No	33 353	249,53 188,26	MW-U= 3,976 **p= 0,002**
Hospitalization due to Covid-19	Yes No	11 375	198,82 193,34	MW-U= 2,004 p= 0,867
Remaining in compulsory quarantine as a result of being positive/contact with Covid-19	Yes No	124 262	212,99 184,27	MW-U=13,827 **p= 0,014**
Having a risky person in terms of Covid-19 in the family	Yes No	255 131	196,88 186,92	MW-U= 15,841 p= 0,387
Perceived level of knowledge about Covid-19	Poor Medium Good	10 171 205	169,30 207,24 183,22	KW= 5,222 p= 0,073
Impact of Covid-19 on general life	No[1] A little[2] A lot[3]	9 84 293	132,89 158,58 205,37	KW= 15,440 **p= 0,0001** (2 ve 3)

Table 4. *Comparison of the participants' coronavirus anxiety level with characteristics related to Covid-19.*

Table 5 presents the correlation analysis between the participants' coronavirus anxiety with the meaning of life and the life satisfaction. In our study, it was determined that the coronavirus anxiety level of the participants were negatively correlated with existing meaning of life, positively correlated with search meaning in life, and negatively correlated with life satisfaction.

	Meaning in Life		Life Satisfaction
	Existing meaning in life	**Search meaning in life**	
Coronavirus Anxiety	**r**= -0,131 **p= 0,010***	**r**= 0,116 **p= 0,023***	**r**= -0,183 **p= 0,0001***

r:Spearman correlation, *p<0,05

Table 5. *Comparison of the participants' coronavirus anxiety with the meaning of life and life satisfaction.*

Discussion and Conclusion

In our study, no significant difference was found between coronavirus anxiety with age, marital status, having childiren, working status and income (p>0.05).

In the comparison between genders, we determined that women had higher level of coronavirus anxiety than men. This finding is consistent with previous studies on gender differences. Studies conducted in Mexico (Mora-Magana et al., 2020), Poland (Trzebiński et al., 2020), European countries (Spitzenstatter & Schnell, 2020) and developed/developing countries (de Pedraza, Guzi, & Tijdens, 2020) it was found that women had higher anxiety in the epidemic. In the light of researchs showing the greater psychological vulnerability of women in the Covid-19 epidemic, it is seen that these reactions should continue to be monitored during the epidemic and the need for interventions that reduce the negative impact of Covid-19 on mental health (Broche-Perez, Fernandez-Fleites, Jimenez-Puig, Fernandez-Castillo, & Rodriguez-Martin, 2020).

In this study, it was determined that coronavirus anxiety differed significantly according to education level, and those with "high school" education level had significantly lower anxiety than those with "university and higher". Contrary to our findings, in addition to studies that determined that anxiety levels do not differ according to education level (Ataç, Sezerol, Taşçı, & Hayran, 2020; de Pedraza et al., 2020; Jungmann & Witthoft, 2020), there are also studies that determined that those with higher education levels have higher coronavirus anxiety (Lee, Mathis, Jobe, & Pappalardo, 2020). For this reason, it is thought that more specific studies on the subject are needed.

In our study, the coronavirus anxiety level of those who perceived their health as "good" was determined to be the least, and the coronavirus anxiety level of this group was significantly lower than those who perceived their health as "medium". In a study conducted in Cuba, it was determined that participants who valued the perception of health weaker experienced higher anxiety due to Covid-19 (Broche-Perez, Fernandez-Castillo, et al., 2020). In a study conducted in China, it was reported that those with poor health and chronic diseases experienced higher levels of anxiety (Wang et al., 2020). In another study, it was determined that individuals with better general health experienced less anxiety (de Pedraza et al., 2020). It is stated that individuals with a poor health perception may experience greater vulnerability to contracting the disease and their anxiety reactions may increase (Broche-Perez, Fernandez-Castillo, et al., 2020).

In our study, it was determined that those who were positive/suspicious of Covid-19 experienced significantly higher coronavirus anxiety than those who were not. In a study, it was shown that individuals diagnosed with Covid-19 had higher coronavirus anxiety (Lee et al., 2020). In a study conducted with health professionals, people who were more exposed to the virus reported higher anxiety (Mora-Magana et al., 2020). In another study that conducted with healthcare professionals, it was determined that anxiety scores did not change according to the being diagnosed with Covid-19 (Ataç et al., 2020). Different findings in the literature suggest that anxiety can be affected by different variables.

Another finding in this study is that those who were in quarantine due to Covid-19 had a higher level of anxiety than those who were not in quarantine. In addition to the fact that the feeling of loneliness causes more anxiety (de Pedraza et al., 2020), the level of anxiety may have increased due to reasons such as infecting someone else or fear of death.

In our study, it was determined that the anxiety level of those who thought that the effect of Covid-19 on their general life was "a lot" was significantly higher than those who thought that they were "a little" affected by Covid-19. During the pandemic, the decisions taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19, such as the obligation to wear a mask, suspending face-to-face education, curfew, and keeping workplaces closed, have affected almost all of the society. It is thought that planned and organizational psychosocial programs are necessary in terms of community mental health, since the anxiety that arises in this process can cause increased feelings of fear and insecurity when it spreads to the whole society (Karataş, 2020). In addition, in this period that the time spent at home increased, planning exercises and entertainment at home and applying relaxation exercises are individual precadutions that can reduce anxiety (Wang et al., 2020).

In our study, it was determined that the coronavirus anxiety levels of the participants were negatively related to the existing meaning in life and positively related to search meaning in life. The existing meaning in life is to understand the sense of life, to have a clear life goal, to know what makes life meaningful. The search meaning, on the other hand, deals with evaluation from the perspective of the future and defines the individual's need for a continuous search for meaning and purpose in life (Nowicki et al., 2020). A traumatic crisis, Covid-19, has caused a huge increase in the meaning of life in individuals. Individuals have tried to reconstruct the meaning of life and adapt to cope. In this process, they started to reevaluate the meaning and value of life and their lifestyles. In the study of Chen et al., it was found that people gave up the sources of meaning in life that do not bring them security or control (Chen et al., 2020). In the study of Arslan and Allen, it was reported that the meaning of life, which can play a role in overcoming the stressors in life and helping individuals improve their mental health, played a mediator role between coronavirus stress and subjective well-being (Arslan & Allen, 2021). In another study, it was shown that the meaning of life was inversely related to negative thinking and psychological distress (Ostafin & Proulx, 2020). Because of observation of suicides that depending the anxiety experienced during the epidemic it is stated that preventive and remedial studies are necessary to prevent such tragedies. In addition, it should be emphasized that the idea of "existing and staying for tomorrow" is important in all circumstances (Sami, Toprak, & Gökmen, 2020).

In our study, it was determined that the coronavirus anxiety level of the participants were negatively related to their life satisfaction. In line with this result, we can say that our findings are compatible with the literature. In the study of Rogowska et al. on university students, it was determined that as anxiety increased during the Covid-19 period, life satisfaction

decreased (Rogowska, Kusnierz, & Bokszczanin, 2020). In the study of Satıcı et al., it was determined that there was a negative relationship between the fear of Covid-19 and life satisfaction (Satici, Gocet-Tekin, Deniz, & Satici, 2020). In the study of Trzebinski et al., there was an inverse relationship between the individual's anxiety and life satisfaction (Trzebiński et al., 2020). In addition to the anxiety caused by Covid-19, which is a deadly epidemic, it is thought that the narrowing of the living space due to the necessity of wearing masks, curfews, closing of social areas such as cafe, restaurant, shopping center, increases the anxiety and causes dissatisfaction in life.

As a result, in this study, it was determined that as coronavirus anxiety increased, the existing meaning in life decreased and the search meaning increased. Participation in activities that are part of one's routine is closely related to the meaningfulness of life. Considering the relationship between daily activities and mental health, it is important to find new ones when our old lifestyle is broken. It is thought that this situation can prevent the feelings of emptiness and meaninglessness in the person.

Another finding in our study was that as coronavirus anxiety increased, life satisfaction decreased. In the event of a danger such as a epidemic, it may be recommended to search for sources of life satisfaction that can be temporarily reinforced in terms of life satisfaction. In addition, increasing the psychological distance from the virus in this process can increase life satisfaction. It is thought that getting away from social environments and reading less news about the virus can contribute positively to life satisfaction by reducing anxiety.

Limitations

The findings of the study are limited to the individuals participating in the study and cannot be generalized.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

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