



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WELL-BEING OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Pavlic, K. & Tatalović Vorkapić, S.
Kindergarten „DIDI” & Faculty of Teacher Education in Rijeka, Croatia

Introduction

Some people see themselves, the world around them and the future in a negative light, while others see these in a positive context. However, most people nonetheless think in a positive manner. On the other hand, it is entirely understandable to be oriented toward negative life circumstances, since they are directly threatening and demand that clear and specific action be taken. However, when these two descriptions of their occupation is presented to parents, with the question of which way they would want their children to think of their future occupations, most responses would probably be tied to the second statement. This empirical research also examines this and similar questions tied to the relationship between the attributional style and happiness of preschool children and the life satisfaction of their parents. The focus of this work is thus placed on an analysis of the relationship between the psychological well-being of parents and their children by testing the above-mentioned variables.

Methodology – PARTICIPANTS

- Parents of preschool children (N=328) with an average age of 35.56 years
- Their preschool children (N=178) from 10 towns in the territory of Zagreb, Karlovac and Koprivnica-Križevci Counties

Methodology – MEASURES & PROCEDURE

- Scales for parents: the revised *Life Orientation Test* (LOT-R, Scheier et al., 1994); the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985); the *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999)
- Scales for children: The happiness variable for children was measured by a single question which indicates the level of happiness among children, The attributional style was measured by a set of 12 variables, that were derived from the *Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire* (CASQ, Seligman et al., 1984) and adapted to preschool children.
- The conditions of voluntariness and confidentiality are completely satisfied within this study research

Results – Descriptives

- On the *optimism scale*, the parents exhibited a high result (M=22.45, SD=4.45) – parents were generally optimistic
- In the *life satisfaction measure*, the parents showed a medium high result (M=18.87, SD=4.11) – parents are relatively satisfied with their lives
- Results from the *subjective happiness scale*, showed that the parents exhibit relatively high level of subjective happiness (M=14.81, SD=2.85)
- There were no significant difference between mothers and fathers on these three scales
- The results indicate that the preschool children were happy: 168 children responded that they are happy; most in the world N=121; and very happy 47 of them
- The children exhibited a high degree of a positive explanatory style, thereby confirming the second hypothesis that preschool children show a higher degree of happiness and an optimistic attributional style

Conclusion

Based on the problems and hypotheses put forth, and the established findings, it may be concluded that a relatively high level of optimism, happiness and life satisfaction was ascertained in the test sampling of parents, and that there are no significant gender differences. The preschool children exhibited a high level of happiness and an optimistic attributional style. It was established that parental optimism and life satisfaction are significantly positively linked to the happiness and attributional style of children. Research of this type is rare in Croatia, and it points to very significant factors of maintaining a high level of well-being among children, and a very significant interaction between them.

Results – Parents' and children's well-being

- Parents' life satisfaction is considerably positively linked to optimism. More satisfied parents are also more optimistic. A variable that has the most significant links to other variables is happiness among parents.
- The parents' optimism and life satisfaction of parents are significantly positively linked to the happiness and attributional style of children.
- Only few variables of children's attributional style showed significant correlation with the parents' well-being, which may certainly serve as a foundation for future research.