

The Levels of "Forgiveness" And "Quality of Life" Based on Various Variables Among the Disabled*

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Abstract. Disability is the loss of certain physical, mental, spiritual, social or emotional skills to varying degrees. Therefore, it may result in the inability to fulfill the requirements of normal life and the need for prevention, rehabilitation, therapy and counseling. The increasing number of studies in recent years to recognize people with disabilities are encouraging. The present study investigates the well-being and forgiveness state of the disabled according to their type of disability, work status, gender, and educational status. In the study, Heartland forgiveness Scale and Life Quality Scale have been applied. Regarding the findings, there are no significant differences between the individual's "forgiveness" and "Quality of life" scores by gender and the level of disability. The forgiveness scores of individuals with orthopedic disabilities are lower compared to scores of those with other types of disabilities. Quality of life scores are significantly lower in individuals with permanent disability than those with other disability groups. Concerning the education level and work status, the quality of life scores increases. However, there is no meaningful difference in forgiveness scores.

Keywords: Disabled, forgiveness, quality of life.

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Population and Sources research carried out in 2021 by TÜİK , there are 4 million 876 thousand disabled people in our country. In the last century, positive changes regarding "human rights and freedoms" have gained momentum. The societies have significantly altered their approaches toward disabled people. It took many years that being ostracized and ignorance that people with disabilities are exposed to have been replaced by acceptance by society. Disabled people and their families have been positively affected by the legal and social regulations and rights-based understanding accompanied by these changes. From the point of view of systems theory, it is substantial to consider the disabled person as a whole with the society they live in. Besides, it is indispensable to evaluate the society and the individual in a multidimensional way, taking into account individual differences.

Law numbered 5378, published in the Official Journal of Turkey on 1.7.2005, defined disability as follows; "A disabled individual is a person who has difficulties in adapting to social life and in meeting his daily needs as a result of loss of physical, mental, spiritual, sensory and social abilities at various degrees congenitally or subsequently. Additionally, he/she needs protection, care, rehabilitation, counseling, and support services".

The concept of quality of life can be defined as the individual's life satisfaction and happiness. Or, within the integrity of culture and values, it can be identified as the way people perceive the situation in which they are. The concept of quality of life is related to an individual's physical function, psychological state, social relations within and outside the family, interactions with others, and belief system (Arslantaş et al; 2006; Bozkurt ,2006)". The concept is also expressed as to how people perceive their interests, standard of judgments, individual goals, and standard of living in social life (WHO). Besides, the quality of life is a combination of natural needs, the efforts of the patient's family, and the expectations of the society in this direction (Arslantaş & Gökçe, 2006).

The concept of forgiveness has been associated with various disciplines in different studies. In some of them, forgiveness is described as giving up negative emotions that harm oneself and others and replacing negative emotions with positive ones (McCullough, Pargament, and Thoresen 2000). It also includes variables such as positive features in a person, the level of understanding of others, emotional processes, attachment, and self-esteem. (Alpay,2009).

The present study attempts to explore and find answers to the following questions in order to investigate whether the "quality of life" and "forgiveness" levels of the disabled change by some variables.

Among the disabled;

Does "forgiveness" behavior differ according to gender?

Does "quality of life" behavior differ according to gender?

Does the behavior of "forgiveness" differ according to the type of disability?

Does "quality of Life" behavior differ according to the type of disability?

Does the behavior of "forgiveness" differ according to the degree of disability?

Does the "quality of life" behavior differ according to the degree of disability?

Does "forgiveness" behavior differentiate according to educational level?

Does "quality of life" behavior differ according to education level?

Does the behavior of "Forgiveness" differ according to the working status?

Does "quality of life" differ according to working status?

2. METHOD

This study adopts the correlational survey model to examine the quality of life and forgiveness levels of the disabled according to the variables of gender, education level, and employment status. The study is conducted with valid and reliable tools while examining the "quality of life" and "forgiveness" levels of individuals with disabilities. It is thought that individual awareness and the value given to personal development have an impact on the quality of life. The t-test has been conducted in comparing quantitative continuous data between two independent groups. However, the one way ANOVA test has been utilized to compare quantitative continuous data between more than two independent groups. The findings were evaluated at 95% confidence interval and 5% significance level. Ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from Sakarya University Rectorate Ethics Committee with the decision no. 08 dated 08/06/2022.

Population and Sample

The target population of the research consists of disabled individuals living in Istanbul. The sample of the study consists of 300 individuals with disabilities from İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi the Disabled Coordination Center, Ümraniye / Fatih Region the deaf trainees, Bayrampaşa Municipality The Center for the Disabled and Physiotherapy, The Disabled Federation of Turkey, Fatih Branch of the Visually Impaired, Deaf People Federation, Department of Dialysis in the Private Hospital of Gaziosmanpaşa and The Dialysis Department of Private Şafak Hospital. The scales have been applied to 300 people individually. Table 1 presents the data regarding the sample group.

Table 1

The Distribution of Descriptive Characteristics of Disabled Individuals

Gender	Woman		Man		Total	
	<i>Frequency(n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Frequency(n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
	152	50.7	148	49.3	300	100.0
The type of disability	Visual	Orthopedic	Hearing-Speech	Chronic	Total	
<i>Frequency(n)</i>	80	84	42	94	300	
<i>Percentage (%)</i>	26.7	28.0	14.0	31.3	100.0	
The level of the disability	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%	Total		
<i>Frequency(n)</i>	67	113	120	300		
<i>Percentage (%)</i>	22.3	37.7	40.0	100.0		
Education	None	Literate	Primary	Secondary	University	Total
<i>Frequency(n)</i>	13	33	114	113	27	300
<i>Percentage (%)</i>	4.3	11.0	38.0	37.7	9.0	100.0
Working Status	Yes		No		Total	
<i>Frequency(n)</i>	80		220		300	
<i>Percentage (%)</i>	26.7		73.3		100.0	

Data Collection Tools

In this study, the Disability Demographic Information Form, Quality of Life Scale, and Heartland Forgiveness Scale have been conducted.

The Disability Demographic Information Form

The Disabled Demographic Information Form includes information regarding gender (Female/Male) Information, type of disability (Visual, Orthopedic, Hearing/Speech, Chronic), degree of disability (40%-60%, 60%-80% 80%-100%), educational status (None, Literate, Primary, Secondary, University), and employment status (Yes-No).

Quality of Life Scale

The Rolls Royce Model has been utilized as the quality of life scale. The validity and reliability of the test have been evaluated by Özyılkan et al. (1995) and its final version has been formed with 42 questions. The last version has been conducted in our study. The Quality of Life Scale consists of 8 sub-dimensions and 49 questions. These are

defined as General Well-being, Physical symptoms and Activity, Sleep Disorder, Appetite, Sexual Disorder, Perception Function, Medical Interaction, Social Relationships, and Job Performance.

Heartland Forgiveness Scale

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale, which was developed by Rasmussen, and Billings (2005), and adapted into Turkish by Bugay and Demir (2010), is a 7-point Likert-type scale consisting of 18 items, and 3 sub-dimensions. The Heartland Forgiveness Scale comprises three sub-dimensions as forgiving oneself, others, and the situation. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient values have been found to be .64 for self-forgiveness, .79 for forgiving others, and .76 for the forgiving situation respectively, and the total score of the scale is .81. Moreover, with the application of a series of confirmatory factor analyses, it is indicated that the model defined for the 18 items of the scale and its form consisting of 3 factors sufficiently conforms to the research data with GFI = .92, AGFI = .90, RMSEA = .06.

Data collection and analysis

The forms and scales were applied to individuals with disabilities in the following institutions; Bayrampaşa Center for the Disabled, Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Center, Istanbul Center for the Disabled, Turkey Disabled Association, Turkey Visually Impaired Association, Turkish Federation of the Hearing Impaired, Private Gaziosmanpaşa Hospital and Private Şafak Hospital. The institutions were visited at times determined jointly. First, people with disabilities were informed about the research. Next, scales were applied individually to the disabled who agreed to participate in the study. Private interviews were conducted with those who could participate in the research and did not need support. Participants were supported according to their level of disability. While the scales were read and filled in by the researchers individually for the visually impaired, interpreter support was provided to the people with hearing impairment.

The data obtained in the research were analyzed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows 22.0) program. In evaluating the data, descriptive statistical methods such as number, percentage, mean and standard deviation were applied. T-test and ANOVA tests were employed to compare the groups. The t-test was used to compare quantitative continuous data between two independent groups, and the One-way Anova test was utilized to compare quantitative continuous data between more than two independent groups. The findings were evaluated at the 95% confidence interval and at the 5% significance level.

3. FINDINGS

In the mean of "forgiveness" scores of the disabled people participating in the research, there has been found no statistically significant scores in t-test performed to find the difference in gender variable ($p>0.05$). The analysis results regarding forgiveness scores by gender are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

The Results of The Analysis of "Forgiveness" Scores by Gender

Study Variable	Women					Men				
	N	Mean	Ss	T	P	N	Mean	Ss	T	P
Forgiveness	152	85.191	14.486	-1.584	0.115	148	88.08	17.039	-1.584	0.115

In order to determine the quality of life of the disabled, the difference between the group averages was not found statistically significant as a result of t-test to determine the difference according to the gender variable ($p>0.05$). Table 3 shows the results of analysis for quality of life scores by gender.

Table 3

The Results of The Analysis on "Quality of Life" Scores by Gender

Study Variable	Women					Men				
	N	Mean	Ss	T	P	N	Mean	Ss	T	P
Quality of Life	152	141.0	33.389	-1.600	0.111	148	146.797	29.159	-1.600	0.111

The one-way analysis of variance (Anova) is performed to understand the difference in the "Forgiveness" score averages of the disabled and it is concluded that the difference between the group averages is statistically significant ($F=3.791$; $p=0.011<0.05$). Moreover, complementary post-hoc analysis is conducted to identify the sources of the differences. The "forgiveness" scores of the visually impaired ($89,050 \pm 13,598$) are higher than the forgiveness scores of the orthopedically impaired ($82.214 \pm 14,535$). Besides, forgiveness scores of those with chronic disabilities ($89.117 \pm 19,063$) surpass those with orthopedic disabilities ($82.214 \pm 14,535$). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

The Results of the Analysis of "Forgiveness" Scores by Types of Disability

Forgiveness	Visual	Orthopedic	Hearing-Speech	Chronic
<i>N</i>	80	84	42	94
<i>Mean</i>	89.050	82.214	85.191	89.117
<i>Ss</i>	13.598	14.535	12.373	19.063
<i>F</i>	3.791	3.791	3.791	3.791
<i>P</i>	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011
<i>Difference</i>	1>2 , 4>2	1>2 , 4>2	1>2 , 4>2	1>2 , 4>2

One-way analysis of variance (Anova) is applied to identify the difference in the disability type variable of the mean quality of life scores of the disabled. As a result, it is found out that the difference between group means is statistically significant ($F=72,422$; $p=0,000<0.05$). The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

The Results of Analysis on "Quality of Life" Scores by Types of Disability

Quality of Life	Visual	Orthopedic	Hearing-Speech	Chronic
<i>N</i>	80	84	42	94
<i>Mean</i>	170.850	137.691	158.691	119.777
<i>Ss</i>	21.367	26.200	19.964	25.660
<i>F</i>	72.422	72.422	72.422	72.422
<i>P</i>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<i>Difference</i>	1>2 , 3>2,1>3,1>4, 2>4,3>4	1>2 , 3>2,1>3,1>4,2>4, 3>4	1>2 , 3>2,1>3,1>4,2>4, 3>4	1>2 , 3>2,1>3,1>4,2>4, 3>4

The one-way analysis of variance (Anova) which is conducted to determine whether the mean of forgiveness scores of the disabled differ significantly according to the variable of disability degree indicates that the difference between the group mean scores is not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). The results of the analysis are given in Table 6.

Table 6

The Results of the Analysis of "Forgiveness" Scores by the Degree of Disability

Forgiveness	N	Mean	Ss	F	P
40-60%	67	85.090	15.810	0.773	0.463
60-80%	113	86.133	14.716	0.773	0.463
80-100%	120	87.925	16.86	0.773	0.463

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is conducted to determine whether the mean scores of quality of life differ significantly according to the "degree of disability variable". The difference between group means shows no statistical significance ($p>0.05$). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

The Results of the Analysis of "Quality of Life" Scores by the Degree of Disability

Quality of Life	N	Mean	Ss	F	P
40-60%	67	144.836	28.163	0.041	0.960
60-80%	113	143.575	30.587	0.041	0.960
80-100%	120	143.583	34.132	0.041	0.960

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) employed to understand whether there is a significant difference among "Forgiveness" scores of the disabled based on the variable of educational status, it is found that the difference between the group averages is not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). The results are indicated in Table 8.

Table 8

The Results of The Analysis Regarding "Forgiveness" Scores by Educational Status

Forgiveness	N	Mean	Ss	F	p	Difference
None	13	83.692	19.542	1.670	0.157	
Literate	33	80.515	12.194	1.670	0.157	
Primary	114	86.904	17.472	1.670	0.157	

Secondary	113	88.195	13.711	1.670	0.157
University	27	87.667	18.017	1.670	0.157

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is conducted to specify whether the mean quality of life scores of the people with disabilities participating in the study differ significantly according to the variable of educational status. The results show that the difference between the group means is statistically significant ($F=25,664$; $p=0.000<0.05$). A complementary post-hoc analysis is performed to identify the sources of the differences. Quality of life scores of those whose educational status is "literate" (131.273 ± 29.550) are higher than the quality of life scores ($112,000 \pm 20,980$) of those whose educational status is "none". While the quality of life scores of those with "primary education" ($130,825 \pm 30,606$) are higher than those with "no" education level ($112,000 \pm 20,980$), those with "secondary education" have a higher quality of life scores ($161,089 \pm 23,691$) than those with "none" ($112,000 \pm 20,980$). The quality of life scores of those with "no" education ($112,000 \pm 20,980$) are lower than those with "university" education ($157,519 \pm 25,975$). The quality of life scores of those with "literate" education level ($131,273 \pm 29.550$) are lower than the quality of life scores of those with "secondary education" level ($161,089 \pm 23,691$). The quality of life scores of those whose educational status is "university" (157.519 ± 25.975) are higher than the quality of life scores of those whose educational status is "literate" (131.273 ± 29.550). The quality of life scores of those with "secondary education" ($161,089 \pm 23,691$) is found to be higher than those with "primary education" ($130,825 \pm 30,606$). Analysis of the data is presented in Table 9.

Table 9

The Results of The Analysis regarding "Quality of Life" Scores by Educational Status

Quality of Life	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Difference</i>
None	13	112.00	20.980	25.664	0.000	2>1,3>1,
Literate	33	131.273	29.550	25.664	0.000	4>1,5>1,
Primary	114	130.825	30.606	25.664	0.000	4>2,5>2
Secondary	113	161.089	23.691	25.664	0.000	
University	27	157.519	25.975	25.664	0.000	

The t-test conducted to determine whether the mean scores regarding forgiveness of the disabled people differ significantly according to the variable of employment status does

not present a statistically significant difference between the group mean scores ($p>0.05$). The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

The Results of The Analysis Regarding "Forgiveness" Scores by Employment Status

Study Variable	Yes					No				
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>
Forgiveness	80	87.650	14.999	0.681	0.496	220	86.241	16.147	0.681	0.496

The t-test performed to determine whether the mean quality of life score of the disabled changes significantly according to the variable of employment status displays statistically significant results among the group means ($t=4.351$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Quality of life scores of "Yes" ($x=156,588$) are higher than the quality of life scores of "No" ($x=139,232$).

Table 11

The Results of The Analysis Regarding "Quality of Life" Scores by Employment Status

Study Variable	Yes					No				
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Ss</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>
Quality of Life	80	156.588	23.687	4.351	0.000	220	139.232	32.678	4.351	0.000

4. RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Concerning the disabled, the quality of life increases as the education level improves. Education changes and develops people's awareness, perspectives on life, and self-perceptions. This indicates that when they approach social obstacles with a positive mental process regarding the disability they experience, they develop a positive perspective on life. Higher education levels raise the quality of life. This position is supported by the fact that students with disabilities who study at the university have the same scores in terms of quality of life as those without disabilities (Akçamete, Kargin 1998; Elibal 2001; and Şenel 1996).

In the study, it is noteworthy that there is no significant difference between forgiveness while the quality of life varies according to education level. The fact that forgiveness does not change despite the increase in education level suggests a lack of knowledge and awareness about "forgiveness". Educational status and "Forgiveness" and "Quality of

Life" results in our study also promote the understanding Akçemete and Kargin held (1998). According to them, although forgiveness can be perceived as a positive personality trait, it also includes variables such as empathic disposition, romantic jealousy levels, attachment, and self-esteem (Alpay, 2009).

This study concludes that there is no significant difference between the degree of disability and forgiveness and quality of life. This emphasizes that we need to consider how the disability prevents the individual rather than how much it affects him. Disability is not just a medical disability. Disability is an intellectual, ideological, and political issue that has become a political human rights issue and requires social change (Çağlayan, 2006).

In terms of disability, which has many dimensions, the obstacles that people experience due to their disability rather than the degree of disability are essential to consider. The fact that severely disabled people have similar quality of life and forgiveness scores signifies that they are in close mental and psychological processes. Therefore, it is related to the existence of the disability rather than its degree.

It is found that according to the working status of the disabled, there is a significant difference between the "Forgiveness" and "Quality of Life" scores and their working status. The high scores regarding the quality of life of the disabled who work can be associated with the concepts of self-confidence and acceptance due to the economic gain they have. According to Diener and Diener (1996), socio-economic status is perhaps the most fundamental determinant of quality of life (Myers and Diener, 1995). Participation in working life has been found to increase the quality of life of people with disabilities. However, the lack of relationship between the level of forgiveness and quality of life supports the argument that it is related to the individual's awareness and internal process. In this regard, as we have mentioned before, it is meaningful to conduct therapeutic processes on forgiveness. Ultimately, forgiveness is an individual process and improves the psycho-social well-being.

On the one hand this study contributes to the recognition of the disabled, on the other, it will have positive implications for the state policies to be created for the disabled, the studies planned by the local governments, and the private institutions and organizations. Information about "Quality of Life" and "Forgiveness" levels of the disabled will primarily contribute to scientific studies on the disabled. Moreover, it can be ensured that their relatives with whom they live get to know the disabled better. This will increase the psychological well-being of the disabled, which will contribute to their social well-being. This study aims that it will support future research regarding the disabled and benefit the relevant professionals in the field.

Supportive studies on legislation and policies that will ensure integration of the disabled in life should be carried out and implemented. Because coping with the obstacles to integrating into social life is discouraging and challenging it will be meaningful to support the disabled with positive discrimination and equalize their living conditions.

Accordingly, interdisciplinary studies should be carried out to remove the barriers to integration in social life.

Non-governmental organizations supporting the disabled should be supported and the active participation of these institutions in solving the challenges of the disabled should be ensured. In addition, the disabled who want to improve themselves should be supported in "Forgiveness", which is an emotional and mental process, training. The training should be initiated from the preschool and values education should be carried out covering all segments of the society that develop "Psychological Well-Being" and "Forgiveness".

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