

Original Article

Factors Influencing the Marital Adjustment and Life Satisfaction of Parents who Have Children with Disabilities

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Abstract

Background/aim: In the conducted studies, it was stated that disabled children cause breakdowns and uneasiness in family structure and dynamics. The number of the studies concerned with the marriage relationship of parents is quite few in our country. The aim of this study is to assess marital status and life satisfaction of parents those have children with and without disabilities and determine affecting factors.

Materials and methods: The study was conducted with parents with 6-12 year-old children in special education and rehabilitation centers. The universe of the study was parents of disabled children. 286 parents, willing for the study and selected by simple random sampling, participated in the study. The data was collected through a questionnaire determining characteristics of parents, Marital Adjustment and Life Satisfaction Scale. The collected data was analyzed through percentage distribution, mean, variance analysis, t test, chi square, and reliability coefficient test.

Results: This study adhered to ethic principles. The study revealed no significant difference between parents that have disabled children and without disabilities in terms of marital adjustment and life satisfaction while a positively strong relationship between marital adjustment and life satisfaction was observed in this study ($p < .001$).

Conclusions: Findings indicated that unemployed and illiterate parents with disabled children had a higher level of marital adjustment when compared to others ($p < .05$). It is necessary to strengthen marital adjustment and life satisfaction of parents with disabled children. Reinforcement of marital adjustment results in increase of life satisfaction.

Keywords: Disabled child, Parents, Life Satisfaction, Marital Adjustment, Nursing

Introduction

Family is the most important environment where the children grow up and develop in a healthy way. Family is a universal foundation for all the children. Thus, all children basically need a family no matter they are disabled or not, problematic or not (Dereli & Okur, 2008).

The birth of a child occupies an important place in the family life and the family needs to make changes in its routine life style. These changes that a child without disabilities creates in a family become more complicated and difficult with a disabled child (Softa, 2013). The fact that a child

is diagnosed with disabilities, chronic disease traumatize families. It is not easy for a family to accept the disabled child and cope with the situation (Uguz, et al. 2004). The reaction of each family to a child with chronic problems and its intensity can differ (Er, 2006). Instead of a child with expected features, a child with different features enters their life and that means for the family to experience differences in all aspects (Akandere, Acar & Bastug, 2009). This situation creates problems such as the family feels guilty themselves and sees each other as responsible, family dislocation, the society's perspective about the disabled and his/her family.

It was stated that in these families, marital satisfaction is lower (Crinic, Friderick & Greenberg, 1983; Gath, 1977), divorce rate is threefold higher (Ozekes, et al. 1998), there is a negative relation between stress and marital adjustment (Kersh, et al. 2006; Koksakal & Kabasakal, 2012; Stoneman, Payne & Floyd, 2006), social and spouse support is important (Simmerman, Blacher & Baker, 2001; Waieand & Baker, 2010;), it is though that having a disabled kid cause a negative effect on marriage, however, the research findings suggesting this are not adequate (Ozekes et al. 1998). In the conducted studies, it was stated that disabled children cause breakdowns and uneasiness in family structure and dynamics (Crinic, Friderick & Greenberg, 1983; Gath, 1977; Ozekes et al. 1998; Yildirim, Asilar & Karakurt, 2012). The number of the studies concerned with the marriage relationship of parents is quite few in our country.

This study was conducted in the aim of assessing, comparing marital status and life satisfaction of parents that have children with and without disabilities and determining affecting factors

Method

To conduct the study, approval from Ethic Committee of Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ataturk (08.07.2013) and necessary permissions from the related institutions were granted. As the participants should give responses voluntarily in all the studies through which information is obtained, it was paid attention that the participants of this study are willing to participate in the study. Besides, the verbal consents of the parents were granted after they had been informed about the aim of the study and where to use the results of the study (informed consent principle). It was explained to the individuals participating in the study that the information about themselves is not going to be explained to others and "privacy policy" was followed.

The study was conducted as descriptively and comparatively. The study was conducted in three special education and rehabilitation centers and three primary schools under Directorate of National Education of Agri, in July-2013-May 2015.

The population of the study consists of the parents of the children with and without disabilities at the ages of 6-12 registered to three

special education and rehabilitation centers and three primary schools. All the parents of the children registered to special education and rehabilitation center agreed to participate in the study. The parents of the primary school students without disabilities were selected with random sampling method. One primary school from each level was selected by lot among the primary schools grouped according to their socioeconomic levels (low, medium, high) and one grade from each grade was selected by lot and they were included in the study. Among these children, those who have siblings with disabilities were excluded from the study. The study was conducted on 286 parents.

In data collection, questions forms to determine the characteristics of the parents and children, Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were used.

The questions forms prepared by the researcher by reviewing the literature (Coskun & Akkas, 2009; Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Okanlı & Ekici 2008) consist of 14 questions including the gender, age, educational background, occupation, family type, perception about income and expense of the parents, the number of the children they have, whether they have another child with disabilities, if so the gender, age, diagnosis of the child, the age, gender, diagnosis of the child disabilities who made the parents to participate in the study. A second, familiar form consisting of 9 questions was used for the parents with children without disabilities.

Marital adjustment test was developed by Locke and Wallace (Locke & Wallace, 1959). The adaptation of marital adjustment test into Turkish was done by Kislak (Kislak & Goztepe, 2012) and Cronbach alpha of the scale for women is .85.

MAT is a 15-item scale. MAT consists of a general adjustment question, eight questions which measure agreement fields, six questions which measure commitment and communication, and the scores that can be got from the scale increase from maladjustment to adjustment. It was stated that the scores between 43 and below in the assessment indicate maladjustment problems in marriage. The highest score that can be getting from the scale is 60. The internal consistency of the scale was found as .84 (Kislak & Goztepe 2012; Okanlı & Ekici 2008). The scale can not only be applied on both of the couples but one of the couples as well and it

reflects general marital adjustment. In the reliability-validity study, no difference among the couples was determined. In this study, the Cronbach alpha of the scale is .87.

Satisfaction with life scale was developed by Diener et al. in 1985 and it assesses the level of general satisfaction with life (Diener, et al. 1985). The reliability and validity studies of the scale was done by Koker in 1991 (Koker, 1991). The scale is a self-assessing 7-degree likert type scale consisting of five items. Each item is scored between 1-7. The lowest score that can be got from the scale is 5, and the highest one is 35. The highest scores indicate high levels of satisfaction with life. The consistency of the scale is .85 (Okanlı & Ekici 2008). In this study, the reliability co-efficient of the scale was determined as .83.

The data of the study was collected from the parents of the disabled children at the age 6-12 at their available times they accepted during their presence in the rehabilitation center, and from the parents of the primary school children without disabilities through face-to-face interview technique by going to their houses during their available times within working hours.

The data was assessed in computer environment.

- Average and percentage distribution in the determination of introductory characteristics of the parents and the children,
- Chi-square in the comparison of the introductory characteristics of the parents and the children,
- Average in the determination of MA and SWL levels of the parents,
- Correlation in the determination of the relation between MA and SWL,
- t test and variance analysis in the determination of the effect of introductory characteristics of the parents and children on MA and SWL,
- Cronbach Alpha coefficient in the determination of the reliability coefficient of the MA and LWS scales were used.

Results

The findings below were obtained in the study which determined the affecting factors and assessed MA and SWL of the parents who have children with and without disabilities.

It was determined that half of the parents having disabled children are female at the age of 46 or more (49.3 %), more than half of them are illiterate, half of them are housewives, unemployed, 50.5 % of them have core family, the income of 60 % is less than their expenses, 53.5 % of them have 2 and/or 3 children, the disabled children of 67.4 % are at the age of 6, the percentage of the boys and girls are equal. It was determined that 55 % of the parents who have children without disabilities are at the age of 25-30, 61 % of them are male, 73.3 % of them are postgraduates, 84.2 % of them are civil servants, 61.5 % of them have extended family and the income of 77.4 % is higher than their expense, the rate of male and female children is equal. It was determined that the parents who have children with and without disabilities are familiar in terms of age, gender, family type and the number of children ($p>.05$) (Table 1).

It was determined that MA level of the parents having disabled children is 46.42 ± 70.40 SWL level of them is 20.18 ± 60.38 ; MA level of the parents who have children without disabilities is 46.37 ± 8.08 and SWL level of them is 21.00 ± 8.15 . It was determined that there is significant difference between the parents who have children with and without disabilities in terms of MA and SWL (Table 2).

In the parents who have disabled children, a positive and medium level relation was determined between MA and SWL ($p<.001$) (Table 3).

In the parents who have children without disabilities, a positive and medium level relation was determined between MA and SWL ($p<.001$) (Table 3).

The level of MA of the parents who have disabled children and are illiterate ($p<.001$) and of the parents who have children without disabilities and are undergraduates ($p<.01$) was found to be importantly higher. The MA level of the unemployed parents who have disabled children ($p<.01$) and the MA level of the civil servant parents who have children without disabilities were determined to be importantly higher. Among the parents who have disabled children, it was determined that only educational background affects MA, MA level of the illiterate parents is importantly higher compared to others ($p<.05$) (Table 4).

Among the parents who have children without disabilities, the MA level of male ($p < .01$), undergraduate ($p < .001$), civil servant ($p < .001$) and those with higher income than expense ($p < .05$) was determined to be importantly higher (Table 4).

The SWL level of illiterate parents having disabled children ($p < .001$) and the SWL level of undergraduate parents having children without disabilities ($p < .05$) determined to be importantly higher (Table 5). It was determined that the SWL level of the parents who have disabled children ($p < .01$) among the unemployed parents and the SWL level of the parents who have children

without disabilities among the parents whose income is higher than their expense was importantly higher (Table 5). It was found that the SWL level of the parents who are at the age of 25-35 ($p < .05$) and who have one child with disabilities ($p < .05$) among the parents who have disabled children was importantly higher compared to others (Table 5). It was determined that the SWL level of the undergraduate parents ($p < .01$) and the parents whose income is higher than their expense ($p < .001$) among the parent who have children without disabilities was importantly higher (Table 5).

Table 1. Comparing the Characteristics of the Parents and Children

Characteristics	Disabled (S=135)		Not Disabled (S=151)		Test and p
	S	%	S	%	
Age group	35.55±7.61		35.19±6.87		
25-35	75	44.9	92	55.1	$X^2 = .848$ $p = .654$
36-45	49	49.5	48	50.5	
46 and more	11	50.0	11	50.0	
Gender					
Female	112	49.3	115	50.7	$X^2 = .015$ $p = .188$
Male	23	39.0	36	61.0	
Level of Education					
Illiterate	57	64.8	31	35.2	$X^2 = .246$ $p = .000$
Primary School	53	46.5	61	53.5	
Secondary-High School	21	30.4	48	69.6	
University	4	26.7	11	73.3	
Occupation					
Housewife	109	51.2	104	48.8	$X^2 = .865$ $p = .012$
Unemployed	7	58.3	5	41.7	
Self-Employed	16	38.1	26	61.9	
Civil Servant	3	15.8	16	84.2	
Family Type					
Core Family	105	50.5	103	49.5	$X^2 = .288$ $p = .084$
Extended Family	30	38.5	48	61.5	
Monthly Income					
Income less than expense	84	60.0	56	40.0	$X^2 = .431$ $p = .000$
Income equal to expense	44	38.3	71	61.7	

Income higher than expense	7	22.6	24	77.4	
The Number of Children					
1	7	33.3	14	66.7	X ² =.931 p=.052
2-3	84	53.5	73	46.5	
4 and more	44	40.7	64	59.3	
Gender of the Child					
Female	67	47.2	75	52.8	X ² =.000 p=.000
Male	68	47.2	76	52.8	

Table 2. Comparing the Average Scores of MA and SWL of the Parents

Groups	MA		SWL	
	Min.-Max.	X±SD	Min.-Max.	X±SD
Disabled	16-57	46.42±70.40	5-34	20.18±60.38
Not Disabled	20-57	46.37± 8.08	5-35	21.00±8.15
T and p	t=.056 p=.956		t=.941 p=.348	

Table 3. The Relation Between MA and SWL of the Parents who Children with and without Disabilities

Measurements	Parents who have children with disabilities		Parents who have children without disabilities	
	MA		MA	
	r	p	r	p
SWL	.508**	.000	.546**	.000

*Important at .05 level **Important at .01 level

Table 4. Comparing MA and the Characteristics of Children and Parents who Children with and without Disabilities

Characteristics	MA		Test and p
	Disabled (S=135)	Not Disabled (S=151)	
	X±SD	X±SD	
Age Group			
25-35	47.78±6.35	46.32±8.40	t=1.242, =.216
36-45	45.38±7.64	46.06±7.39	t=.442, p=.660
46 and over	41.72±10.58	48.09±8.73	t=1.538, =.140
Test and p	KW=5.759 p=.056		KW=1.713, p=.425
Gender			
Female	46.37±7.59	45.33±8.45	t=.056, p=.956
Male	46.65±6.54	49.66±5.69	t=1.870, p=.067
Test and p	MU=1275.500 p=.941		MU=2.870 p=.005

Level of Education			
Illiterate	48.24±6.60	41.77±8.28	t=4.008,p=.000
Primary School	44.98±7.37	45.70±8.66	t=.476 p=.635
Secondary-High School	46.95±5.06	48.68±6.00	t=1.155, p=.252
University	36.75±17.17	52.90±3.72	t=3.119,p=.008
Test and p	KW=9.724 p=.021	KW=25.144 P=.000	
Occupation			
Housewife	46.83±6.95	45.28±8.41	t=1.465, p=.144
Unemployed	50.00±2.08	41.00±7.10	t=3.219, p=.009
Self-employed	43.25±7.97	47.84±6.85	t=1.983, p=0.54
Civil Servant	40.00±19.46	52.68±3.38	t=2.727, p=.014
Test and p	KW=4.517 p=.211	KW=19.698 p=.000	
Family Type			
Core Family	46.31±7.18	46.84±7.58	t=.518, p=.605
Extended family	46.80±8.26	45.35±9.07	t=.708, p=.481
Test and p	t=.316, p=.753	t=1.055, p=.293	
Monthly Income			
Income less than expense	45.71±7.60	43.60±9.30	t=1.467, p=.145
Income equal to expense	48.38±5.67	47.76±6.80	t=.510, p=.611
Income higher than expense	42.57±11.94	48.70±6.92	t=1.738, p=.093
Test and p	KW=4.916,p=.086	KW=9.049, p=.011	
The Number of Children			
1	47.00±9.07	44.92±10.05	t=.459, p=.652
2-3	47.14±7.47	47.89±7.19	t=.636, p=.526
4 and more	44.95±6.94	44.95±8.38	t=.001, p=.999
Test and p	KW=5.189 p=.075	KW=4.443 p=.108	
Gender of the Child			
Female	47.55±6.56	46.49±8.20	t=.843, p=.401
Male	45.30±8.04	46.25±8.02	t=.702, p=.484
Test and p	t=1.774, p=0.78	t=.184, p=.854	

Table 5. Comparing SWL and the Characteristics of Children and Parents who Children with and without Disabilities

Characteristics	YD		Test and p
	Disabled (S=135) X±SD	Not Disabled (S=151) X±SD	
Age Group (±)			
25-35	21.38±5.57	21.04±7.99	t=.314, p=.754
36-45	19.55±6.69	20.89±8.59	t=.860, p=.392
46 and over	14.81±7.52	21.18±8.21	t=1.894, p=0.73

Test and p	KW=8.956p=.011	KW=.016 p=.992	
Gender			
Female	20.16±6.27	21.08±8.25	t=.950, p=.343
Male	20.30±7.04	20.75±7.91	t=.220, p=.827
Test and p	MU=1244.000 p=.796	MU=.216,p=.830	
Level of Education			
Illiterate	21.40±5.42	16.54±6.95	t=3.624, p=.000
Primary School	18.66±7.01	21.52±8.93	t=1.882, p=0.62
Secondary-High School	21.04±6.28	21.95±7.24	t=.499, p=.619
University	18.50±8.69	26.54±4.98	t=2.278, p=.040
Test and p	KW=6.172 p=.104	KW=16.607, p=.001	
Occupation			
Housewife	20.11±6.17	20.95±8.35	t=.830, p=.408
Unemployed	24.00±2.88	15.60±5.12	t=3.641, p=.005
Self-employed	19.37±7.94	19.92±8.63	t=.206, p=.838
Civil Servant	18.00±10.58	24.81±5.16	t=1.787, p=0.92
Test and p	KW=3.704 p=.295	KW=6.366 p=.095	
Family Type			
Core Family	19.64±6.07	20.70±7.78	t=1.097, p=.274
Extended family	22.06±7.15	21.64±8.94	t=.218, p=.828
Test and p	t=1.847, p=.067	t=.656, p=.513	
Monthly Income			
Income less than expense	19.55±6.49	17.23±8.74	t=1.806, p=.073
Income equal to expense	21.56±5.76	22.53±7.40	t=.739, p=.462
Income higher than expense	19.00±8.24	25.29±4.80	t=2.574, p=.015
Test and p	KW=3.278,p=.194	KW=21.571, p=.000	
The Number of Children			
1	23.14±4.37	21.85±9.18	t=.348, p=.732
2-3	21.20±5.80	21.64±7.63	t=.411, p=.682
4 and more	17.77±7.06	20.09±8.53	t=1.487, p=.140
Test and p	KW=8.440 p=.015	KW=1.500 p=.472	
Gender of the Child			
Female	20.50±6.69	21.28±8.22	t=.609, p=.543
Male	19.86±6.09	20.73±8.12	t=.719, p=.473
Test and p	t=.581, p=.562	t=.408, p=.684	

Discussion

In the study, in which MA and SWL level of the parents having children with and without disabilities were analyzed and the affecting factors were determined, the results of the study can be generalized on the research group. The fact that the educational background, occupation, income status of the parents having children with and without disabilities and the gender of the students are not equal constitutes the limitedness of the study.

In the study, the obtained data was discussed according to the related literature or specific findings. Marital adjustment is the adaptation of the partners for the daily life and the conditions changing within the daily life, and changing consentaneously within certain time (Spanier, 1976). Temporary or perpetual illness of one or more family members, inability to see, hear, mental or physical deficiency of them affect the adjustment of all members, even those with the strongest family structure (Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Yorukoglu, 1998). In the study, it was determined that the MA level of the parents who have disabled children is 46.42 ± 70.40 and MA level of the parents who have children without disabilities is 46.37 ± 8.08 , and there is no significant difference between them. Similarly, in a similar study conducted in Malatya in which the MA and SWL levels of the parents who have disabled children were evaluated and the affecting factors were determined, MA of the parents (39.53 ± 8.59) was determined to be at lower levels (Ende & Tufekci, 2015). In a study in which anxiety, depression, marital adjustment and perception of the child of mothers who have mentally and/or physically challenged children, it was determined that MA of all the mothers with mentally and/or physically challenged children was 42.18 ± 10.8 , and the MA of the mothers in control group was 40.8 ± 7.9 (Toros, 2002). In the same study, it was determined that MA of the mothers who have children with autistic disorder and down's syndrome was lower (Toros, 2002) and intimacy of the mothers who have children with autism disorder with their spouses was found to be weaker compared to those of mother who have children with normal development

(Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Fisman, et al. 1989). However, sometimes having a child with autism disorder can make the partners closer (Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Wing, 2005) and the perceptions of the parents about MA can be positive. (Ende &

Tufekci, 2015; Ozekes et al. 1998;) Some studies show that the perceptions of the parents who have children with autism disorder about MA are more positive than those of the parents who have children without disabilities (Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Karpat & Girli 2012; Ozekes et al. 1998; Top, 2008). In this study, it was determined that SWL level of the parents with disabled children is 20.18 ± 60.38 and SWL level of the parents with children without disabilities is 21.00 ± 8.15 , and there is no significant difference between them and both groups are satisfied with their lives. According to our results, in a study conducted in Malatya about the same subject it was determined that the parents are less satisfied with their lives (19.52 ± 7.36) (Ende & Tufekci, 2015). Similarly, in a study in which the relation between quality of life, satisfaction with life and level of hopelessness of the mothers who have children with and without autistic disorder were examined, SWL of the mothers who have children with autistic disorder was determined as 17.95 ± 7.02 , SWL of the mothers who have children without autistic disorder was determined as 20.29 ± 6.63 , and it was determined that the mothers who have children with autistic disorder are less satisfied with their lives (Balkanlı, 2008). In a study titles as the burden of the parents who have children with mental disorders, self-care skills, the satisfaction with life of the mothers and the affecting factors, SWL of the mothers were found as 17.22 ± 6.92 (Akarsu, 2014). In a study in which the variables related to quality of lives of the parents were analyzed, SWL of the mothers who have a child with disabilities were determined as YD 14.11 ± 12.05 , and SWL of the mothers who have a child without disabilities was determined as 15.72 ± 3.69 . In the same study, it was determined that SWL of the fathers who have a child with disabilities is 13.56 ± 8.90 and SWL of the fathers who have children without disabilities is YD 15.82 ± 3.39 (Aysan & Ozben, 2007). In accordance with these results, there are studies in which SWL of the parents who have children with chronic diseases was found to be quite low (Baykan, Baykan & Nacar, 2010; Ende & Tufekci, 2015) while SWL of the parents who have children without chronic diseases was found to be higher (Altay & Adın 2009; Baykan, et al., 2010; Deniz, Dimaç & Arıcak 2009; Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Erdem, et al. 2009). On evaluating the research finding and the results of the conducted studies, it can be said that SWL of the parents who have disabled children is lower. The contradictory results show that SWL levels of the

parents who have disabled children can decrease within the process. Among the determinants of SWL are changes in the life, course of events in life and experiences (Akandere et al., 2009).

In the study, it was determined that there is a positive and medium level relationship between MA and SWL of the parents who have disabled children ($p < .001$). Similarly in a conducted study, it was determined that there is a positive and medium level relationship between marital adjustment and satisfaction with life of the parents ($p < .001$). These results show that how better is MA then SWL can be that better (Ende & Tufekci, 2015).

It was determined in the study that there is a positive and medium level relationship between MA and SWL of the parents who have children without disabilities ($p < .001$). It was stated that the perception of the parents about happiness in marriage is higher and being satisfied from both the marriage and each other brings marital adjustment along with it (Ende & Tufekci, 2015; Sinha & Mukerjee 1989).

It was found in the study that MA of the parents who have disabled children among the illiterate parents is importantly higher ($p < .001$). In a similar study conducted in Malatya, on the contrary, it was determined that MA was the lowest in the primary school graduate parents who have disabled children (Ende & Tufekci, 2015).

In the study, MA of the parents who have disabled children among the unemployed parents was importantly higher ($p < .01$). Differently, higher MA was determined in the civil servant parents who have disabled children in the study conducted in Malatya (Ende & Tufekci, 2015).

It was determined in the study that MA of the civil servant parents who have children without disabilities was importantly higher compared to EU of those who have children without disabilities ($p < .05$). In a study conducted in Ankara in which the relations between expressed emotion, empathy, depression and marital adjustment were analyzed, significant relations between being employed or unemployed status and marital adjustment were not determined (Kıslak & Goztepe, 2012). The result of the study can be explained with the expectation that the stress of having a child with disabilities or having no caring burden can ease MA. In the study, it was determined that MA of the males among the

parents who have children without disabilities was importantly higher compared to MA of the females ($p < .01$). In a study conducted in Ankara, no significant relationship between gender and MA was determined (Kıslak & Goztepe, 2012). The result of the study can be explained with the fact that the males are culturally prominent and they don't experience many problems in meeting their desires.

MA of the undergraduate ($p < .001$), civil servant ($p < .001$) parents and parents whose income is higher than their expense among the parents who have children without disabilities was found to be importantly higher compared to MA of others. In a study, no significant relationship between educational background, occupation and profit-loss statement and MA was determined (Kıslak & Goztepe, 2012).

SWL is the emotional reaction or attitude of a person towards his/her life during work time, leisure time and other time periods (Akandere et al. 2009; Ende & Tufekci, 2015). As it is a general satisfaction with life attitude, it can be gained through evaluating specific fields of life (Akandere et al. 2009). The fact that the parents have children with chronic diseases while expecting a child with normal characteristics, this disease cannot be cured completely and it requires long-term treatments restrict the social life and daily activities of the parents (Baykan et al. 2010). It was stated that the fact that the child has a chronic disease changes the physical, emotional and economic balance of the family, in addition to that, the situations which directs their lives into a positive course provide positive attitudes and behaviors and can increase SWL of the parents (Baykan et al. 2010; Deniz et al. 2009). In the study, SWL of the illiterate parents who have disabled children was found to be importantly higher ($p < .001$). In a similar study, the lowest SWL was determined in the primary school graduate parents who have disabled children (Ende & Tufekci, 2015). In another study, no significant difference was determined between educational background and SWL of the mothers of the disabled children, SWL of the undergraduate and high school graduate fathers were found to be importantly higher compared to those of primary and secondary school fathers (Akandere et al. 2009) Similarly, in the studies conducted on the fathers of disabled children, a significant difference was determined between SWL and educational background (Baykan et al. 2010). It was stated that SWL of educated

individuals who can overcome the problems and create effective solutions was also higher (Akandere et al. 2009; Stein & Book, 2003). In another study, it was similarly found that SWL of those whose educational background is more than 8 years was higher (Baykan et al. 2010).

In the study, SWL of the undergraduate parents who have children without disabilities was found to be higher ($p < .05$). It was determined that satisfaction with life is related to educational background (Akandere et al. 2009; Koker, 1991).

In the study, it was determined that SWL of the unemployed parents who have disabled children was importantly higher ($p < .01$). Differently in a study, higher SWL was determined in the civil servant parents who have disabled children (Ende & Tufekci, 2015). In a study in which the relation between stress level and satisfaction with life was analyzed on mothers whose children have autistic disorder and cerebral palsy, no statistically significant difference was found in terms of SWL according to whether the mothers work (Gulaldi, 2010)

It was determined in the study that SWL of the parents who have children without disabilities among the parents whose income is higher than their expense was importantly higher ($p < .05$). It was determined that satisfaction with life is related to level of income (Akandere et al. 2009; Koker, 1991).

In the study, among the parents who have disabled children, SWL of those who are at the age of 25-35 was importantly higher compared to others ($p < .05$). In a similar study, the lowest satisfaction with life was determined in those who are at the age of 21-29 (Ende & Tufekci, 2015). In a study, it wasn't determined that there was statistically significant difference between SWL and the ages of the mothers. In the same study, SWL of the fathers who are 51 years old or more was importantly higher than those of the fathers who are at the age of 36-50 (Akandere et al. 2009). In a study in which the hopelessness levels of the parents who have children with mental and physical disabilities, it was determined that there was no significant difference in SWL in terms of the ages of the mothers. In the same study, SWL of the fathers who are 51 years old or more was importantly higher than those of fathers who are at the age of 36-50 (Acar, 2009). Seltzer and Krauss stated that satisfaction with life of the old mothers are at the age of 19-51 who have disabled children

showed similarities to those of the mothers who have children without disabilities, moreover, these mothers did not have any health problems and their stress levels were also lower (Kaner, 2004; Seltzer & Krauss, 1989).

In the study, it was determined that among the parents who have disabled children, SWL of those who have one child was importantly higher than others ($p < .05$). Similarly, SWL of the parents who have 1 or 2 children was determined to be higher. It was determined that there is no statistically significant difference between the number of the children of the mothers who have mentally disabled children and SWL (Akarsu, 2014; Gulaldi, 2010).

In the study, it was determined that among the parents who have children without disabilities, SWL of the undergraduate parents ($p < .01$) and parents whose income is higher than their expense ($p < .001$) was importantly higher than the others. It was stated that SWL is related to work and labor conditions and educational background (Akandere et al. 2009; Koker, 1991).

Conclusion: MA and SWL of the parents who have disabled children should be improved. Improving MA will increase SWL. Within the rehabilitation applications of the children, parental rehabilitation programs can be applied on the parents who are illiterate, educated and have any jobs to support the MA of these parents who have disabled children. In addition, it can be recommended to develop assistant support programs in the diffusion of responsibility within the family and organize daily activities to improve SWL of the parents of the disabled children who are 35 years old or more and have more than one children.

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