

Determination of the perceptions of individuals engaged in regular physical activity on the concept of wellness: A metaphor analysis study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of individuals engaged in regular physical activity on the concept of wellness with the help of metaphors. In the study, phenomenological method was used, which is one of the qualitative research approaches. The study included 88 individuals who regularly engaged in physical activity. In order to collect data in the study, a "metaphor form" was prepared to determine the participants' perceptions on wellness concept. The research data were collected with the metaphor form sentence is written "Wellness is like...; because...". The four forms were not included in the analysis because incomplete explanations. In the analysis of the data, content analysis technique was used. When the data were evaluated, it was observed that the participants produced 49 types of metaphors for the concept of "Wellness" and stated 84 opinions for this. Metaphors; health (13), healthy lifestyle (5), life (3) and breathing (3) are concentrated on metaphors. Other metaphors are indicated two or one times. The metaphors developed by the participants about the wellness were grouped under five categories. These are *Quality and Healthy Lifestyle*, *Positive Benefit to Psychology*, *Indispensable Requirement*, *Conceptual Knowledge* and *Indifference*. At the end of this research, metaphors and explanations of participants' perceptions about wellness were determined and 49 types of metaphor were obtained and these metaphors were evaluated under 5 categories. Most of the mentioned metaphor of "health" is observed that while the majority of participants were found to develop positive metaphors.

Keywords: Wellness, metaphor, content analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a more important and powerful mental production than individuals simply explaining one concept with another, because it expresses the depth and experiences possessed by the relevant insight (Eraslan, 2011). Metaphors help us explain to others how we think and perceive ourselves and our social world. For this reason, metaphors have been used as a powerful way to convey meaning and understanding among people throughout history (Spandler et al., 2014). Metaphors are used for the embodiment of thoughts, with abstract and

ambiguous emotions in the mind (Kısa, 2013). It has a creative characteristic in that it can direct our minds beyond existing similarities, relationships, and views to new similarities, relationships, and views of its own creation (Lakoff and Johnson, 2015).

Wellness is briefly referred to as "well-being" in Turkish. The term wellness was used for the first time in the book "High Level Wellness" published in 1961 by Dr. Halbert Dunn. He regarded wellness as a life process for the effort to develop and maintain physical and psychological

well-being. Wellness has been an alternative to dependence on doctors and medicines in cases of self-sufficiency, ordinary state and self-compassion, distress and laziness. Wellness can be formed by the combination of physical, emotional, social, intellectual, occupational, environmental and spiritual well-being. It has a wide range of activities that we just cannot find at some point. It aims to balance all these concepts within the lifetime. (Sports For All Federation, <http://www.his.gov.tr/wellness>). Bill Hettler has defined wellness as an active process in which people will gain awareness for a more successful existence and strive to get there. The National Wellness Institute likewise cites it as an active process that allows people to be aware of a more successful existence and make their choices. The model (emotional, occupational, physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual) that constitutes the six dimensions of wellness that Hettler developed is one of the most widely used and accepted models. Addressing the six aspects of wellness in our lives creates a holistic sense of wellness and satisfaction (National Wellness Institute, https://www.nationalwellness.org/page/Six_Dimensions).

In this context, the purpose of our research is to determine the perceptions of the individuals who regularly perform physical activity through metaphors, based on the fact that doing physical activity contributes to the development and maintenance of both physical and psychological well-being. Metaphorical studies in the field are examined and it is observed that there are more sports and different sports branches. (Segrave, 2000; Cudd, 2007; Radic-Bojanic and Slaski, 2012; PirsI and PirsI, 2012; Şirin et al., 2012; Spandler et al., 2013; Kesic and Muhic, 2013; Karaşahinoglu and İlhan, 2015; Koç et al., 2015; Bergh, 2016; Sevinç and Ergenç, 2017; Yılmaz et al., 2017; Kurtipek and Sönmezoğlu, 2018; Jansen and Sabo, 1994; Heil et al., 1998; Offstein and Neck, 2003; Edsall, 2005; Bulger and Housner, 2009; Lindsay et al., 2010; Triggs et al., 2011; Stewart et al., 2011; Pierre and Smith, 2012; Kesic and Muhic, 2013; Lakhwanı and Clair, 2014; Dervent, 2015; Dervent and İnan, 2015; Güler, 2017). This study differs from others in that it seeks to determine the perceptions of individuals engaged in regular physical activity towards the concept of wellness. Therefore, this study is important for individuals who regularly engage in physical activity to try to explain the concept of wellness by analogy and to offer a different perspective on future studies in the field.

METHODS

In this study, which was prepared according to the qualitative research model, the phenomenology pattern was used. The purpose of the phenomenology pattern is to examine and explain events, situations, experiences, concepts (Sönmez and Alacapınar, 2011). The sample of the study consisted of 88 individuals who were enrolled in

the gym for at least 3 months and regularly engaged in physical activity at least 2 days a week. Data collection took into account criteria such as participants' willingness to participate voluntarily in the study.

To each of the participants in the study to reveal their perceptions of the concept of wellness "*Wellness is like ... Because; ...*" a semi-structured questionnaire was used in which they were asked to complete their statement.

Content analysis, commonly used in qualitative research models, has been used in the analysis of data. To begin the analysis of the data, firstly the participants' forms were numbered from P1 to P88. The evaluation and interpretation of the metaphors stated by the participants in the study was done in the form of elimination, compilation, ensuring validity and reliability, calculating and categorizing the frequencies of the metaphors. P35, P41, P49, and P71 were removed because there was not enough explanation. There are 84 vision forms left. In order to ensure the reliability of the research, the data were analyzed by 3 field experts and the results of the analysis were compared. The reliability of the findings was calculated with the formula of concordance [$\text{Agreement} / (\text{Agreement} + \text{disagreement}) \times 100$] proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). A total of 50 metaphors were produced in the research and 3 metaphors (doping, part of life and medicine) were identified, with 84 disagreement. The average reliability among encoders was found to be 95% [$66 / (66 + 3) \times 100 = 95\%$]. This result shows that the desired level of reliability has been achieved in the research.

FINDINGS

In this section, the types and categories of metaphors that emerged as a result of the analyses are presented.

Table 1 shows the metaphors and metaphor frequencies indicated by the research participants. Accordingly, a total of 50 kinds of metaphors for the concept of wellness have been developed by the participants. The metaphor with the highest frequency has been the metaphor of *health* (13). Apart from this, the frequencies of the metaphors of *healthy life*(5), *life* (5), *water* (5) are higher than the others. Table 2 shows the classification of the individuals engaged in regular physical activity as five categories when their views on the concept of wellness are evaluated together with their explanations.

Table 2 contains a categorical analysis of the metaphors stated by the participants. Metaphors accordingly on "quality and healthy life-style" (f = 40, 47.63%), "positive benefit to psychology" (f = 18, 21.42%), "indispensable necessity" (F = 18, 21.42%), "conceptual knowledge" (f = 6, 7.14%) and "apathy" (f = 2, 2.39%) are grouped under 5 categories in total.

A total of 24 metaphors and explanations stated in Table 3 in the "*quality and healthy lifestyle*" category are

Table 1. The metaphors developed by individuals engaged in regular physical activity towards the concept of wellness.

Participant	Metaphor	f	Participant	Metaphor	f
P7, P18, P23, P27, P31, P48, P53, P54, P56, P59, P67, P70, P83	Health	13	P16	Good Life	1
P1, P19, P20, P45, P69	Healthy Life	5	P17	Something Ordinary	1
P2, P6, P86	Breath	3	P21	Balance	1
P3, P24, P33, P42, P77	Life	5	P22	Way of Life	1
P4	Well-being	1	P25	Sun	1
P5, P64	Achievement	2	P26	Endless Forest	1
P8	Motivation	1	P29	Peace	1
P9	Life-style	1	P30, P50	Quality Life	2
P10, P65	Fitness	2	P32	Life-long Sports	1
P11	Rehabilitation	1	P34	Sports for All	1
P12, P43	Happiness	2	P36	Eating	1
P13, P76	Oxygen	2	P37, P57	Sports	2
P14, P28, P52, P72, P81	Water	5	P38	Gluten-free Bread	1
P15, P73	Tree	2	P39	Lifetime	1
P40	Regular Life	1	P66	Healthy and Quality Life	1
P44	Welfare	1	P68, P82	Exercise	2
P46	Entertainment	1	P74	Nature	1
P47	Life Itself	1	P75	Rainbow	1
P51	Drinking Water	1	P78	Sea	1
P55	Doping	1	P79	Beauty	1
P58	Part of Life	1	P80	Music	1
P60	No idea	1	P84	Passion	1
P61	Quality of Life	1	P85	Cure	1
P62	Orderly Life	1	P87	Energy	1
P63	Movement	1	P88	Fenerbahce	1

Total metaphors = 84.

Table 2. Distribution of the metaphors of individuals engaged in regular physical activity on the concept of wellness by the category.

Category	Metaphor (f)	%
Quality and healthy lifestyle	40	47.63
Positive benefit to psychology	18	21.42
Indispensable necessity	18	21.42
Conceptual knowledge	6	7.14
Apathy	2	2.39
Total	84	100.0

examined; they emphasize that wellness is an element of balance in all aspects and that health and well-being improve the quality of life by providing a combination of multiple dimensions. A total of 15 metaphors and explanation phrases mentioned in the “*positive benefit to psychology*” category are examined.; the participants stated that wellness was a calming and relaxing element. When a total of 12 metaphors and explanation phrases mentioned in the “*indispensable necessity*” category are examined, it is understood that the

participants emphasized that wellness is an indispensable part of life, just like our basic needs in our lives. A total of 5 metaphors are mentioned in the “*conceptual knowledge*” category. As can be understood from the statement statements, participants explain wellness with concepts that include sports, fitness, and the like. In the category “*apathy*”, 2 metaphors are mentioned. As can be understood from the statements, participants emphasized that they had no idea about wellness and were not interested.

Table 3. Metaphors and explanation examples by category.

Category	Metaphor (f)	Participants' explanation examples	
1. Quality and Healthy Lifestyle	Healthy Life (3)	<i>Healthy Life</i> ; a lifestyle that you designed to achieve your highest potential for well-being (P1).	
	Breath (1)		
	Well-being (1)		
	Health (9)		
	Rehabilitation (1)		
	Oxygen (1)		
	Good Life (1)		
	Sun (1)		
	Quality Life (2)		
	Sports (1)		
	Gluten-free Bread (1)		<i>Balance</i> ; it balances health, stress, nutrition, in short, lifestyle (P21).
	Regular Life (1)		
	Life Itself (1)		<i>Sun</i> ; because just as the sun is composed of many layers and radiates heat and light in its combination, wellness also consists of many dimensions such as physical, spiritual, social, emotional and environmental and offers a quality life in its combination. (P25).
	Quality Life (1)		
	Orderly Life (1)		
	Healthy and Quality Life (1)		
	Rainbow (1)		
	Beauty (1)		
	Tree (2)		
Exercise (2)			
Life-style (1)			
Balance (1)			
Way of Life (1)			
Life (4)			
2. Positive Benefit to Psychology	Motivation(1)	<i>Endless Forest</i> ; it allows me to discover freedom and feel limitlessness (P26).	
	Happiness (2)		
	Endless Forest (1)		
	Peace (1)		
	Health (3)		
	Lifetime (1)		
	Welfare(1)		
	Happiness (1)		<i>Peace</i> ; because it includes activities that make me feel fit and happy except for the exhausting work I do, it increases my peace of mind and my quality of life (P29).
	Doping (1)		
	Healthy Life (1)		
	Nature (1)		<i>Nature</i> ; it relieves (P74).
	Sea (1)		
	Music (1)		
Passion (1)			
Enegy (1)			
3. Indispensable Necessity	Achievement (2)	<i>Water</i> ; it is necessary for life, it gives life (P72, P81).	
	Breath (2)		
	Water (5)		
	Healthy Life (1)		
	Health (1)		<i>Eating</i> ; necessity of life (P36).
	Eating (1)		
	Drinking Water (1)		<i>Oxygen</i> ; it is not possible to live without it (P76).
	Part of Life (1)		
	Oxygen (1)		
Life (1)			

Table 3. Continues.

	Medicine (1) Fenerbahce (1)	
4. Conceptual Knowledge	Fitness (2) Lifelong Sports (1) Sports (1) Movement (1)	<i>Fitness</i> ; similar in words and content, containing similar terms (P10, P65). <i>Movement</i> ; it's everything that involves sports(P63).
	Sports for All (1)	<i>Sports</i> ; it means sports (P57).
		<i>Something Ordinary</i> ; to increase the frequency of gym sports (P17)
	5. Apathy	Something Ordinary (1) <i>No idea</i> ; I'm interested in a lot of sports I don't have time for others (P60).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of individuals who regularly perform physical activity towards the concept of wellness through metaphors. In the study, metaphors and explanations produced by individuals engaged in regular physical activity for the concept of wellness were determined and a total of 50 kinds of metaphors were obtained and these metaphors were evaluated under 5 categories. Individuals who regularly engaged in physical activity indicated the most *health, healthy life, life, water* and *breath* metaphors according to frequencies related to the concept of wellness. Participants were found to develop mostly positive metaphors. 50 kinds of metaphors for the concept of Wellness have been mentioned 84 times. These metaphors developed in terms of the maximum scope of metaphors “quality and healthy lifestyle” “positive benefit to psychology, “indispensable necessity” “conceptual knowledge” and “apathy” as a total of 5 categories were collected under.

Participants determined that the concept of wellness often developed metaphors of being healthy (*health, healthy life, life*) and, in parallel, the basic needs needed to live (*water, breath, oxygen, sun*). In this context, it is observed that individuals who regularly perform physical activity view the concept of wellness as a essential part of life and explain similar aspects in different terms. In SRI International's survey of 1077 consumers and 319 businesses, the majority of whom are North Americans, the question asked about what the term “wellness” implies was the most emphasized “quality of life” in both groups. Then, they included analogies such as balance, happiness, holistic health (SRI, 2010).

When the metaphors are examined by category, it becomes more clear that the participants' view of the concept of wellness:

Individuals performing regular physical activity in the

“quality and healthy lifestyle” category have mentioned a total of 24 metaphors. This metaphors are *“health, life, healthy life, quality life, tree, exercise, healthy and quality life, breath, well-being, rehabilitation, oxygen, good life, sun, sports, gluten-free bread, regular life, life itself, quality of life, orderly life, rainbow, beauty, lifestyle, balance”*. Based on determined metaphors, the concept of wellness (Zorba, 2014), defined in the literature as the combination of the words quality and life, the existence of excellence and superiority, best describes the metaphors mentioned.

Individuals engaged in regular physical activity in the category of “positive benefit to psychology” have mentioned a total of 15 metaphors. These metaphors are *“health, happiness, motivation, endless forest, peace, lifetime, welfare, fun, doping, nature, sea, music, passion, energy, healthy life”*. Based on these statements, it is stated by the participants that wellness is a comforting and peaceful concept.

In the category of “indispensable necessity”, it is observed that individuals engaged in regular physical activity have mentioned 12 metaphors. These metaphors are *“water, breath, achievement, drinking water, healthy life, health, eating, part of life, oxygen, life, medicine, Fenerbahce”*. These statements emphasize that wellness contains all the parameters necessary for our survival, and that it is, in fact, life itself. The concept of Wellness is one of the positive triggers of the concept of optimal health, which is formed by the coming together of many different phenomena that increase the potential of the individual for quality of life, reflecting the ability of the individual to live more effectively “state of well-being” (Zorba, 2014).

In the “conceptual knowledge” category, it is observed that individuals engaged in regular physical activity produce 5 metaphors. These metaphors are in *“fitness, lifelong sports, sports, movement, sports for all”*. The fact that participants state these metaphors can be related to

the fact that they closely associate the concept of wellness with sports and that this concept is included within the Sports Federation For All.

In the category of "apathy", individuals engaged in regular physical activity stated 2 metaphors. These metaphors are "something ordinary and no idea". These metaphors show that participants lack knowledge about the concept of wellness.

As a result, when the findings of the research were evaluated as a whole, it was determined that the individuals engaged in regular physical activity had positive perceptions of the concept of wellness in the metaphors they stated about the concept of wellness.

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Citation: Kozak, M., Bayraktar, A., Karaman, M., and Zorba, E. (2020). Determination of the perceptions of individuals engaged in regular physical activity on the concept of wellness: A metaphor analysis study. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(1): S43-S48.
