

## Does Fear of Happiness Exist? Exploring Fear of Happiness Through the Five Factors Dimensions of Personality

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### Abstract

In this research, the relationship between fear of happiness among university students and their types of personality was investigated through analyzing various factors, such as relationships, gender, perceived parental attitudes and locations of upbringing. The subjects of study in this research consisted of the students at Balıkesir Necatibey Faculty of Education in Balıkesir city center in the spring term of the 2020-2021 academic year. The sample of the research included 252 students, selected with the random sampling method from the population, 160 of whom were female (63.5%) and 62 male (36.5%). For the data collection tools, the Big Five 50 Personality Questionnaire, Fear of Happiness Scale, and Personal Information Form were used. The independent samples t-test, correlation, multiple regression analysis and one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were applied in the analysis of the applied data. According to the findings gathered from the research, a negative low level of relationship exists between the students' fear of happiness levels and extraversion and neuroticism, which are specific personality traits. No significant relationship was found between fear of happiness and other traits. It was observed that personality traits predicted the students' fear of happiness levels significantly, explaining 8% of the change in the scores of the fear of happiness. While there was a significant result in favor of females in the dimensions of conscientiousness and agreeableness, a significant result was determined in favor of males in the dimension of neuroticism. Finally, it was noticed that there was no significant difference between the students' fear of happiness and their personality traits in terms of the perceived parental attitude.

**Keywords:** Fear of Happiness, Personality, Five Factor Personality.

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## Introduction

Positive psychology is essentially defined by its focus on increasing positive emotion when dealing with psychological issues. The primary aim of most human behaviors is to increase positive emotions and thoughts and suppress emotions and thoughts that induce negativity. However, recent studies have shown that people are not only escaping from negative feelings such as sadness, and fear, but they are also working to avoid positive emotions such as happiness, kindness, compassion and joy. This situation causes psychological problems in individuals and prevents individuals experiencing psychological problems from getting rid of their problems (Gilbert et al., 2012).

While happiness is defined by emotions like joy and humor, some people avoid it because of the thoughts it produces. This is known as "fear of happiness". Fear of happiness, in general, entails staying away from happiness and the pursuit of happiness for many reasons. In another definition, fear of happiness is defined as a status in which the individual rejects the desire to seek pleasure, which is one of the main sources of motivation, and a fear of experiencing pleasure, a condition called chemophobia (Sheldon et al., 2010). There are many personal and social reasons that trigger this fear. Positive and negative sensations, a culture which does not value happiness, the belief that evil will follow happiness, the belief that happiness will lead people to be evil and the belief that desiring happiness will make the individual insensitive, and selfishness are among the factors that may lead to a fear of happiness (Joshani and Weijers, 2014). Those experiencing fear of happiness may have a thought that the emotion of happiness will not last long, that negative experiences will follow the events that give them joy and pleasure. Therefore, the individual consciously works to avoid happiness (Gilbert et al., 2012; Joshani, 2014; Lambrou, 2014). Consequently, fear of happiness can be regarded as a cognitive structure which does not wish for happiness (Şar et al., 2019). Exaggerating this cognitive structure may lead one to reject happiness and take on actions that make one unhappy in order to alleviate the effects of negativities that may follow happiness (Erber et al., 2000). Cautionary attitudes towards happiness are even reflected in everyday language. For instance, "don't say this (success, happy news, etc.) everywhere because of the evil eye" or "one who smiles a lot, cries a lot" show the prevalence of this thinking. Different cultures create their own discourses on this phenomenon (Joshani, Lepshokova, et al., 2014).

Personality is regarded as one of the basic factors present in the fear of happiness, and is certainly integral to this research. Some definitions of personality assert that it is formed with a coherent structure explaining the behavior of the person in different situations, based on individual differences in the sense of the trio of emotions, thoughts and behaviors (McCrae et al., 1987). In another definition, personality is understood as a set of features that have unique characteristics and qualities that distinguish an individual from other people, and that show stability and permanence against time and situations (Ayas et al., 2017). Norman (1963) tried to determine the personality of

characters with adjectives and came up with the five-factor structure to explain this. In addition, Costa and McCrae (1985) are thought to have given the greatest contribution to this cause by conducting comprehensive research related to the five-factor personality model and creating a scale. The five-factor personality model is an understanding that hierarchically classifies personality. Today, many psychologists agree that this model is based on studies with proven reliability, validity and objectivity conducted in different cultures, genders, ethnicities and ages. According to the five-factor model, personality constitutes have five main dimensions that are thought to be the basic traits of one's personality. These are known to be neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience (McCrae et al., 2006; McCrae et al., 1992; Mount et al., 2006).

*Extraversion:* This dimension consists of characteristics such as being friendly and talkative along with traits that include sociability and assertiveness. It is also worth noting that being social is not one of the basic characteristics of this dimension (McCrae et al., 1987). The negative axis of this trait is defined as introversion. In the dimension of introversion, some traits such as being shy and distant, but being quieter and introverted (Ayas et al., 2017). *Agreeableness:* The dimension of agreeableness evaluates how well individuals are able to be reliable and good-tempered. These individuals demonstrate behave kindly and tend to be open to cooperation. They are social, tolerant and prefer interaction (Somer et al., 2002). On the other hand, the individuals with a low level of this trait demonstrate characteristics such as being suspicious, pretentious, sympathetic, stubborn and demanding (John et al., 1999). *Conscientiousness:* This defines the individual's capability of being planned, competent and self-controlled (Ayas et al., 2017). Conscientious people are task-conscious, achievement-oriented and notably cautious (Somer et al., 2002). Getting a low score in this dimension insinuates that one may be negligent, undisciplined, and likely non-competitive (John et al., 1999). *Neuroticism:* This dimension assesses the tendency of people to be aggressive and anxious. Their negative moods are more evident and they are restless (Ayas et al., 2017). According to McCrae et al. (2005), emotional balance indicates the intensity of people interacting in social situations. Individuals with high neuroticism have illogical thoughts and, therefore, struggle with problem-solving (Somer et al., 2002). Individuals with high emotional balance, however, are those who tend to be more social, to be the center of attention, and who like adventure and action (John et al., 1999). *Openness to Experience:* this dimension of personality is characterized by open-mindedness and a high level of imagination. In addition, an individual with these characteristics is likely to be interested in academic issues, may prefer freedom to routine, is constantly seeking change and has a strong sense of curiosity. In the case of the lack of openness to experience, the opposite of these traits is experienced (John et al., 1999; McCrae et al., 2005; Somer et al., 2002).

When the studies related to fear of happiness and personality traits are reviewed, many studies can be reached. However, since fear of happiness is a new concept in the field of positive psychology,

a limited number of researches can be encountered. In addition, there appears to be an increasing interest in studies on fear of happiness, which explore the negative relationships between positive emotions such as psychological well-being, subjective well-being, hope, life satisfaction, psychological resilience, happiness, well-being and emotional intelligence (Baş et al., 2021; Elmas, 2021; Joshanloo, 2013; Muhtar, 2016; Özkan, 2020; Sarı et al., 2016; Tekke et al., 2019; Togo et al., 2019; Yıldırım, 2019). There are also studies on the positive relationship between fear of happiness as a type of phobia and negative psychological characteristics such as stress, depression, anxiety, obsessive beliefs, cognitive distortions, negative mood and alexithymia (Elmas, 2021; Gilbert et al., 2012; Lyvers et al., 2022; Özen, 2019).

The personality traits concept is a comprehensive topic that has been studied with many variables and in different research for years. However, when the literature is examined within the scope of this research, studies even exist on the relationship between personality traits and fear of happiness and positive emotions. Some research results suggest that there are negative relationships between fear of happiness and the positive sides of the personality traits, and that the personality traits have a significant effect on fear of happiness (Agbo et al., 2017; Elmas, 2021; Özkan, 2020). There are even studies related to the relationship between personality and different psychological traits (Bulut, 2017; Doğan, 2013; McCrae et al., 1987; Pervin et al., 1999; Yam, 2018). Finally, there are various findings demonstrating that both the personality traits according to gender among the demographic variables differ and not (Bilgin, 2017; Güvenç, 2019; Merdan, 2013).

Fear of positive emotions has emerged as one of the new fields of interest in positive psychology. It is observed that there is a limited number of studies on the fear of happiness, one of the important topics related to the fear of positive emotions. However, the number of studies on fear of happiness has gradually increased in the last few years. As it is considered in this scope, it is thought that the study is significant in terms of shedding light on some questions related to this concept. The main purpose of this research is to explore the effect of the five-factor personality traits on the fear of happiness. The study also aims to investigate fear of happiness and personality traits in terms of gender and perceived parental attitude.

## **Method**

### **Study Group**

The sample group of the research consisted of the students studying at the faculty of education of a state university in the spring term of the 2020-2021 academic year. A total of 252 students from this population were selected with the random sampling method. Ages ranged between 18 and 27 ( $M = 20,83$   $Sd = 1.88$ ). There were 160 (63.5%) female and 92 (36.5%) male participants.

## **Research Model**

The study is a correlational study which aims to determine the relationship between fear of happiness and the five-factor personality traits among the students.

## **Data Collection Tools**

Three different measurement tools were used in the research to collect the data which would be statistically analyzed. The Fear of Happiness Scale, the first of these scales, was developed by Joshanloo (2013) and translated into Turkish by Türk et al., (2017). The second scale is the Big Five-50 Traits Test (B5KT-50-Tr), developed by Goldberg (1992) and adapted into Turkish by Tatar (2017). And the third tool is the Personal Information Form, which was shaped by the researcher.

### ***Fear of Happiness Scale (FHS)***

The Fear of Happiness Scale was developed to determine how prone the subjects were to fearing a state of happiness. The scale consists of expressions based on the thought that something bad or unhappy would follow the state of being happy and cheerful. The scale has five items and a single dimension, and it was scored with a 7-point Likert type from "Never suits me" to "Totally suits me". Within the scope of the validity of the scale, both exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis results demonstrated that the single-factor structure of the scale was compatible (RMSEA=0.068, NFI= .98, CFI=0.99). In the reliability studies, the inner consistency level of the scale was determined as .89. The Cronbach Alpha reliability was found to be .82 for the entire scale.

### ***Big Five-50 Personality Test (B5KT-50-Tr)***

The reliability and validity study for the Big Five-50 Personality Test was performed by Tatar (2017). The scale consists of 50 items and five sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions of the scale are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness. Each sub-dimension consists of ten items. The scoring in the scale is in 5-point Likert type from "1 = Never suits" to "5 = Totally suits". The inner consistency coefficient of the sub-dimensions of the scale is between .70 and .81. In this research, the Cronbach Alpha reliability of the entire scale was observed to be .85.

### ***Personal Information Form***

This form was composed by the researchers. Questions related to determining the demographic features of the students such as age, gender, and perceived parental status are.

## **Implementation**

The sample of the scale consisted of the voluntary students at a faculty of education of a state university in the 2020-2021 education year. Before the implementation process, the ethics committee

permissions were obtained from the authorized institutions. The participating students filled out the Personal Information Form, the Fear of Happiness Scale and Big Five-50 Personality Test. The implementation was carried out with voluntary students and the data collection tools were applied in a 30-minute duration. A total of 289 students participated in the research, and the data of 27 students, who were determined not to give reliable valid answers to the forms as a result of the necessary controls, were not included in the analysis.

### Analysis of the Data

After the data was collected, the statistical analyses were carried out by the researchers. The SPSS 24 data analysis program was used in this process. In line with the hypotheses, the techniques such as percentage, frequency, independent samples t-test, correlation, multiple linear regression analysis and one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were applied in the analysis of the data. The  $p < 0.01$  and  $p < 0.05$  significance levels were used in determining the significance of the results.

### Findings

The descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and correlation results) related to the study after the analysis in the research are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Mean, standard deviation and correlation results related to the study (N= 252)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fear of Happiness	1,000					
Extraversion	-.183**	1,000				
Agreeableness	-.105	.317**	1,000			
Conscientiousness	-.025	.135	.341**	1,000		
Neuroticism	-.268**	.373**	.078	.033	1,000	
Openness to Experience	-.026	.331**	.408**	.307**	.011	1,000
	16,47	30,33	37,64	36,17	28,61	37,28
Ss	8,13	7,27	6,14	6,11	6,85	5,27

\*\* $p < .01$

When Table 1 is analyzed, it is seen that the highest correlation was determined between fear of happiness and neuroticism in the personality traits ( $r = -.268$ ,  $p < .01$ ). On the other hand, the lowest correlation is in the dimension of conscientiousness ( $r = -.025$ ,  $p > .01$ ). To determine whether the personality traits explained fear of happiness or not, a multiple linear regression analysis was used. The suitability of the data set for the analysis was examined beforehand, and it was determined to be appropriate. The findings obtained as a result of the analysis are provided in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Multiple linear regression analysis findings related to predicting fear of happiness (N= 252)

Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	t	p	Bivariate r	Partial r
Constant	5,725	.930	-	6,153	.000	-	-
Extraversion	-.190	.160	-.085	-1,187	.236	-.183	-.075
Agreeableness	-.205	.187	-.078	-1,100	.273	-.105	-.070
Conscientiousness	.027	.176	.010	.155	.877	-.025	.010
Neuroticism	-.547	.157	-.231	-3,475	.001	-.268	-.216
Openness to Experience	.104	.218	.034	.476	.635	-.026	.030
R= .29							
R <sup>2</sup> = .08							
F= 4,532							

A multiple regression analysis was applied to determine the extent by which the personality dimension variables explained students' levels of happiness. The results showed that the personality traits together had a significant relationship ( $R = .29$ ,  $R^2 = .08$ ) between fear of happiness level ( $F_{(5, 246)} = 4,532$ ,  $p < .01$ ). It was observed that the five personality traits together predicted 8% of the difference in the scores of the fear of happiness. According to the regression analysis results, the significance level of the predictor variables on fear of happiness is as follows: neuroticism ( $\beta = -.231$ ), extraversion ( $\beta = -.085$ ), agreeableness ( $\beta = -.078$ ), openness to experience ( $\beta = .034$ ) and conscientiousness ( $\beta = .01$ ). From the significance levels in the regression coefficients, it can be claimed that only the variable of neuroticism ( $p < .01$ ), among the predictive variables, significantly predicts the fear of happiness. Other variables did not affect fear of happiness significantly. The regression equation that predicted fear of happiness is given below.

$$\text{Fear of happiness score} = (-0.19 \times \text{extraversion score}) + (-0.205 \times \text{agreeableness score}) + (0.027 \times \text{conscientiousness score}) + (-0.547 \times \text{neuroticism score}) + (0.104 \times \text{openness to experience score}) + (5,725).$$

To determine whether there was a difference in terms of fear of happiness and personality traits according to gender in the research, a t-test was applied. The findings are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The t-test findings related to the differentiation between fear of happiness and personality traits according to gender (N= 252)

	Groups	N	Ss	sd	t	p
Feat of Happiness	Female	160	16,33	8,14	250	-.378
	Male	92	16,73	8,15		
Extraversion	Female	160	30,05	7,49	250	-.815
	Male	92	30,83	6,89		
Agreeableness	Female	160	38,85	5,76	250	4,271
	Male	92	35,53	6,24		
Conscientiousness	Female	160	37,24	6,10	250	3,787
	Male	92	34,29	5,70		
Neuroticism	Female	160	27,74	6,54	250	2,683
	Male	92	30,12	7,15		
Openness to Experience	Female	160	37,21	5,72	229	-,320
	Male	92	37,41	4,42		

An independent samples t-test was applied to determine whether there was a difference between fear of happiness and personality dimensions scores according to gender, and as a result it was observed that fear of happiness score means did not differ significantly from female ( $M_{female} = 16,33$ ) to male ( $M_{male} = 16,73$ ) participants [ $t(250) = -.378, p > .05$ ]. It was determined that there was not significant difference between the scores of the genders in terms of the extraversion score means among the personality traits ( $M_{female} = 30,05, M_{male} = 30,83$ ) [ $t(250) = -.815, p > .05$ ]. In terms of the agreeableness mean scores, female mean scores ( $M_{female} = 38,85$ ) were found to be significantly higher than male mean scores ( $M_{male} = 35,53$ ) [ $t(250) = 4,271, p < .05$ ]. For the conscientiousness score averages, a significant difference was found in favor of females ( $M_{female} = 37,24$ ) versus the male ( $M_{male} = 34,29$ ) counterparts [ $t(250) = 3,787, p < .05$ ]. In addition, neuroticism score averages were skewed more towards the males ( $M_{female} = 27,74, M_{male} = 30,12$ ) [ $t(250) = -2,683, p > .05$ ]. No significant difference was encountered between the average scores of females ( $M_{female} = 37,21$ ) and average scores of males ( $M_{male} = 37,41$ ) in terms of openness to experience score averages among the personality dimensions [ $t(250) = -.320, p > .05$ ].

In another hypothesis of the research, fear of happiness and personality traits levels of the university students according to the perceived parental attitude were examined. The MANOVA analysis was used and the findings are given in Table 4.

**Table 4.** The MANOVA findings related to the university students' fear of happiness and personality traits in terms of the perceived parental attitudes (N= 252)

Variables	Perceived Parental Attitude	n	M	SD	F	p	Significance (Tukey)
Fear of Happiness	Over-protective	7	6,58	,52	4-247	1,265	.284
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	9	9,58	,64			
	Neglectful	1	4,27	,05			
	Extremely Permissive	6	4,86	,61			
	Democratic	19	6,61	,67			
Extraversion	Over-protective	7	0,45	,91	-247	970	.425
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	9	9,32	,94			
	Neglectful	1	6,45	,70			
	Extremely Permissive	6	0,61	,24			
	Democratic	19	0,71	,27			
Agreeableness	Over-protective	7	7,67	,74	4-247	.165	.327
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	9	8,26	,51			
	Neglectful	1	33,82	,24			
	Extremely Permissive	6	7,61	,32			
	Democratic	19	7,88	,68			



Conscientiousness	Over-protective	67	36,04	6,45	4-247	.458	.766	-
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	19	35,68	6,74				
	Neglectful	11	34,64	5,90				
	Extremely Permissive	36	35,58	6,14				
	Democratic	119	36,63	5,87				
Neuroticism	Over-protective	67	27,51	6,86	4-247	1,705	.149	-
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	19	27,21	6,57				
	Neglectful	11	25,82	7,59				
	Extremely Permissive	36	29,58	7,78				
	Democratic	119	29,42	6,44				
Openness to Experience	Over-protective	67	37,10	5,90	4-247	.614	.653	-
	Extremely Repressive-Authoritarian	19	36,79	6,42				
	Neglectful	11	35,18	5,40				
	Extremely Permissive	36	37,69	5,34				
	Democratic	119	37,53	4,68				

Before the one-way multivariate (MANOVA) analysis, the normality of the data were tested and it was observed that the data demonstrated normal distribution. The results obtained from the Box test indicated that the difference between the covariance matrices were not significant ( $p = .077$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Among the Levene test results, it was found that the error variances were equal in terms of fear of happiness ( $p = .368$ ,  $p > .05$ ), extraversion ( $p = .777$ ,  $p > .05$ ), agreeableness ( $p = .014$ ,  $p < .05$ ), conscientiousness ( $p = .871$ ,  $p > .05$ ), neuroticism ( $p = .298$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and openness to experience ( $p = .089$ ,  $p > .05$ ) scores.

As a result of the one-way MANOVA result, it was concluded that no significant difference was encountered in terms of the perceived parental attitude when the variables were studied jointly [ $F_{(24-845)} = .860$ ,  $p = .05$ , Wilks'  $\lambda = .659$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .021$ ]. Even when the variables were examined one by one, students' fear of happiness levels in terms of the perceived parental attitudes did not differ [ $F_{(4-247)} = 1,265$ ,  $p > .05$ ]. In addition, no significant difference was found between the extraversion [ $F_{(4-247)} = .970$ ,  $p > .05$ ], agreeableness [ $F_{(4-247)} = 1,165$ ,  $p > .05$ ], conscientiousness [ $F_{(4-247)} = .458$ ,  $p > .05$ ], neuroticism [ $F_{(4-247)} = 1,705$ ,  $p > .05$ ] and openness to experience [ $F_{(4-247)} = .614$ ,  $p > .05$ ] dimensions as far as the perceived parental attitude was concerned.

### Discussion and Result

This study aimed to explore the predicting level of the university students' personality traits on the fear of happiness. The research was meant to investigate whether there was a difference in fear

of happiness and personality traits according to gender, perceived parental attitude, and the location of upbringing.

The first major finding indicated that personality traits of the students predicted fear of happiness significantly; the difference in the students' personality traits explained 8% of fear of happiness difference levels. As to be expected, positive sides of the personality traits negatively predicted fear of happiness (Nall et al., 2017), which is considered a fear-phobia type. When this result is read from a different perspective, it can be assumed that even the negative sides of the personality have positive relationships with the psychological situations. Supporting this claim, there are other findings in the literature related to the relationship that the negative sides of the personality have a positive relationship with the psychological situations, and that the positive sides have a negative relationship with the negative emotions. Bulut (2017) determined a positive, medium level correlation between depression level and neuroticism which is among the five-factor personality traits. In another study on personality traits of the psychological guides, Yam (2018) found a positive, moderate level significant relationship between neuroticism and anxiety. In addition, Doğan (2013) explored the correlation between the five-factor personality model and subjective well-being, and stated at the end of the research that there was a positive significant relationship between the personality dimensions such as extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience and subjective well-being.

Furthermore, it was determined that neuroticism predicted subjective well-being negatively and extraversion predicted subjective well-being positively. In another study, Özkan (2020) investigated the relationship between the personality traits and the fear of happiness, and determined a significant relationship between self-actualization, emotional stability, neurotic tendency, psychotic symptom, family relations, social relations, social norms and anti-social tendencies and fear of happiness. Elmas (2021) deduced that fear of happiness was predicted by cognitive distortions in relationships, life satisfaction and psychological fragility variables. And as a result of the analysis, the mentioned variables predicted fear of happiness by a rate of 20.9%. These research findings supported the results from the current study.

While there was a significant result in favor of females in the conscientiousness and agreeableness dimensions in terms of the personality traits of the students according to gender, a significant result was determined in favor of males in the neuroticism dimension. This finding may help explain why females tend to be more sensitive. There are a number of studies in the literature suggesting that females have higher neuroticism scores, and results of this study supported those conclusions. In addition, in psychopathology studies, it was found that women are twice as likely to experience mood problems (depression, stress, and anxiety) than men (Goodwin et al., 2004; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2001). Anxiety disorders are, in fact, more common among women than men

(Yonkers et al., 2003). South, Jarnecke and Vize (2018); 973 found that females had higher neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness scores than males. Other research determined that the probability of recurrence of the disease in patients with panic disorder was higher among women than men (Yonkers et al., 1998). Bilgin (2017) found that the neuroticism personality trait was significantly higher among adolescent females compared to males. Kajonius and Johnson (2018) also found that agreeableness and neuroticism among females were higher when compared with males. In another study, Açıkel (2013) investigated the relationship between the university students' love styles and their personality traits and found that the neuroticism level among females was higher than in males. Finally, Güvenç (2019) conducted research on university students and determined that only in neuroticism did females have significantly higher scores than males. These study results in the literature support the hypothesis in this research.

Another finding of the research suggests that there is no significant difference between fear of happiness and personality traits in terms of students' perceived parental attitude. No previous research comparing fear of happiness and parental attitudes could be uncovered. However, contrary to the research results, there are many studies on the significant differentiation of variables such as phobia, stress and anxiety, which can be associated with personality traits and fear of happiness, with parental attitudes. The family is the first and basic pillar of the personality development for an individual. The quality of the relationship between the child and parents in the family is the fundamental factor determining the psychological and behavioral structure of the individual. Parental attitudes are an issue related to how parents react to their children's behavior, and this certainly plays an important role in the developmental process. Individuals who grow up with democratic parental attitudes demonstrate positive traits such as self-confidence, self-esteem, strong social skills and a refined autonomy, according to a number of different studies. Consequently, parents who are overly oppressive, authoritarian, negligent and protective invite negative psychological characteristics such as anxiety, fear, stress, depression, lack of self-confidence, anti-social behavior and addiction into the lives of their children. Depending on these results, negative parental attitudes are expected to show positive and significant relationships with negative emotional characteristics and negative personality traits, including fear of happiness. These research results reflect that found in the literature. In fact, Yavuz et al. (2015) found that depression scores were significantly higher in adolescents who had overprotective mothers. Milne et al. (2001) observed a significant relationship between overprotective and indifferent maternal attitudes and depression. In another study, the adolescents who grew up in an environment with overprotective parents were more anxious (Mousavi et al., 2016). Raboteg-Saric et al. (2014) have concluded that the students whose parents have democratic attitudes are happier and have higher life satisfaction. In a study on 100 female students, Yousaf (2015) concluded that authoritarian parents' kids have lower self-esteem, and İnanç et al. (2017) determined that the authoritarian parental attitude demonstrated significant positive correlations with extraversion,

hostility, disorganization, neuroticism and being closed to innovations; overprotective attitude with conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience; the permissive attitude with hostility, disorganization, and neuroticism. In short, the disapproved parental attitudes (authoritarian, over permissive, and protective) are among the positive and significant relationships between negative emotional states and features on the negative axis of personality, and are consistent with the literature and supported theoretically. Such a result may be attributed to age and other variables from this particular sample. This is why it is important that the hypothesis be evaluated with different sample groups in future studies.

The study highlighted how students' personality traits significantly predicted fear of happiness negatively, explaining 8% of the difference in fear of happiness level. While there was a significant result in favor of females in the conscientiousness and agreeableness dimensions in terms of the students' personality traits according to gender, a significant result was determined in favor of males in the neuroticism dimension. Another result obtained from the research was that there was no significant difference between fear of happiness and personality traits in terms of students' perceived parental attitude. Further research is needed to show the relationships regarding positive personality traits both at school and in the family, environment to decrease anxiety, phobia and fear of positive emotion in individuals considering the prediction of personality traits' predicting fear of happiness negatively. More research can be planned with different samples and variables related to the fear of happiness. The curricula that can be applied in class or with the group can decrease the fear of happiness for the individuals who experience the fear of happiness. Activities can be conducted to inform families and educators about strategies to cope with fears of positive emotions.

### **Ethical Statement**

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### **Conflict of Interest**

No potential conflict of interest was declared by the author.

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