



The Effects of the Bibliotherapy-Based Psycho-Education Program on the Depression and Happiness Levels of Teachers¹

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Abstract

Although bibliotherapy was defined as “healing through reading” in the past, when the developing technology and diversity of information resources in our present day are considered, it may be preferred to define it as “healing with knowledge” to make the definition more meaningful and comprehensive. The purpose of the present study was to inform the participants, increase their well-being, and protect them from potential problems when psychotherapy sessions were formed, and also to contribute to the development of the understanding of the participants that other people may have similar problems to some extent. In the context of these purposes, readings were made to ensure that the individuals reached peace and happiness, despite all the negations, losses, and problems in their lives, and to increase their strength and resistance. The pre-test, post-test, follow-up test, and repeated measurement experimental design was used in the study. According to the results of this study, it was found that the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program applied in the bibliotherapy group was significantly effective in reducing the depression levels, and this effect was permanent in the follow-up tests performed afterward. It was also seen that the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program was effective in increasing the happiness levels of the experimental group participants at significant levels, and this effect was permanent in the follow-up tests.

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Introduction

Books have been used for psychological relaxation since ancient times. Sturm (2003) argued that books are powerful sources for healing, and contribute to the facilitation of the process of self-discovery at different levels. As well as these, stories educate, convey values, discipline, provide experience, facilitate problem-solving, change, and recovery (Burns, 2004).

The “bibliotherapy” term originated from the Greek Language and is derived from the combination of the words “biblion” (book) and “therapeo” (healing). It means “healing through the book”. The ancient Greeks first recognized the potential of books to heal people. An inscription found in the library in the ancient Greek city of Thebes said “healing place of the soul”. Rubin (1978), who is considered one of the pioneers of bibliotherapy, defined bibliotherapy as the inclusion of a program of activities based on the interactive processes of the use of printed or non-printed materials with predetermined fictional or informative contents and with the help of librarians or other professionals to affect the changes in behavioral disorders positively and to contribute to the normal development of the individual.

Marrs (1995), who made one of the broadest definitions, defined bibliotherapy as “the use of written materials or computer programs for the development of a person or the solution or understanding of their problems, watching video images, and listening to audio materials.”

As it can be understood from the above-mentioned definitions on bibliotherapy, although it used to be defined as “healing through reading”, it may be preferred to define it as “healing with knowledge” to make the definition more meaningful and comprehensive considering the developing technology and diversity of information resources today (Sturm, 2003).

Bibliotherapy processes are divided into three main parts as identification, catharsis (purification), and insight (Gauntz, 2007; Shrodes, 1949). According to Aiex (1993), bibliotherapy can contribute to many areas e.g. help the individuals develop themselves, ensuring a healthy self-evaluation, developing an empathic understanding, identifying and contributing to problem-solving skills.

Studies conducted on bibliotherapy, which is used in the treatment of depression, come to the forefront mainly in the form of self-help materials. It is reported in the literature that a book is usually given for the client to read, and the parts that need to be read for certain weeks during the counseling are determined and asked to be read for the client to help himself for the treatment of depression (Aiex, 1993). The therapy is continued in the form of dealing with these parts read.

When the psychotherapy sessions of this study were created, the purpose was to inform people in general terms in developmental bibliotherapy, increase their well-being and protecting them from possible problems, contribute to the development of the understanding of the individual in creative bibliotherapy that other people may have similar problems to some extent. In the context of these purposes, readings were made to ensure that the individuals reached peace and happiness, despite all the negations, losses, and problems in life, and to increase their strength and resistance.

When the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program was prepared in this study, some books were used during the implementation stage. When these books were determined, the works of people who contributed to the world of thought and psychology literature, who had discourses on happiness and were taken into consideration. Since a psychoeducational program has a limited study design, it is not possible to process all the happiness literature data, and the works considered to contribute to the participants were selected from the literature suitable for the needs of the participants and the purpose of the study. As a result of these, the following works were used in the study.

- Seneca’s book “Gladiators Make Their Decisions in the Arena: A Guide to 2000 Years of Wisdom”, (Seneca, 2019).
- Epictetus’ book “No One Is Free Without If They are not Their Own Master: 2000 Years of Peaceful Living”.
- Frederic Lenoir’s book “A Philosophical Journey to Happiness” (Lenoir, 2018) (two sessions).

- Viktor E. Frankl's book "Man's Search for Meaning" (Frankl, 2009).
- The chapter on happiness and virtue in Aristotle's "Ethics to Nicomachus" (Aristotle, 2019).
- Reading the text titled "Words about happiness in world history on thought and psychology literature" that was prepared by the researcher.

When the complex relations network in today's world is considered, it is obvious that the high emotional density and the negative effects of relations on individuals, recognizing the problems arising from this situation, and planning prevention studies are important. For this reason, it is extremely important to conduct preventive studies to overcome the negations for individuals.

The teaching profession is risky because it affects teachers' mental health negatively because of being under intense stress at school (Baysal, 2005; Işıkhhan, 2004). Depression and unhappiness have individual and organizational outcomes (Khan et al., 2006). Unfortunately, problems stemming as a result of a teacher's mental health disorder or unhappiness not only concern the teacher, but also are reflected on students, school, parents, and their immediate environments. If the situation is not intervened, some deteriorations can occur in the quality and quantity of the educational services provided by teachers (Girgin & Baysal, 2005). For this reason, a study or intervention for the mental health of teachers will contribute not only to the teachers but also to the educational system of the country (Kırılmaz et al., 2003).

An accurate understanding of problems has an important place in solving the problems faced in the lives of people. Following a path based on the cause-effect relation and properly understood with the sources can facilitate the solution of problems significantly. Developing a literature-based psychoeducation program and evaluating its experimental results can be considered one of these effective methods (Büyüköztürk, 2017). This method was followed in this study, and the 8-week Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program was developed by considering the above-mentioned basic philosophy of bibliotherapy and the needs of the people.

The present study included the findings related to the results of the psychoeducation program prepared according to the principles of bibliotherapy in the framework of the general purposes stated above. According to the applied method of this study, there were 2 hypotheses on depression and happiness.

Hypothesis 1- Subjects participating in the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program will have a significant decrease in depression levels, and this decrease will be long-term.

Hypothesis 2- There will be a significant increase in the happiness levels of the subjects participating in the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program, and this increase will be long-term.

The purpose of the study was to raise awareness, skills, and attitudes to aid participants in decreasing the negative consequences of depression and unhappiness. The purpose of the psychoeducation program that was developed in this study was to provide experiences to raise awareness and skills to decrease the effects of depression and unhappiness. The theoretical background of the psychoeducational program that was developed by the researcher and the target behaviors and processes in each session were discussed in detail in the study.

Method

Information on the model of this study, the creation of study groups, the selection of the participants, the measurement tools used, and the techniques used in the analyses of the data are given in this part.

In the present study, pre-test, post-test, a follow-up test, and repeated measurement experimental design (i.e. single-group repeated measurements) were used to determine the effects of the psychoeducation program that was prepared in line with the bibliotherapy principles on the depression and happiness level of teachers. This pattern had a 1x3 factorial design. It was tested in this model whether the mean scores of two or more related measurement sets differed from each other at significant levels (Büyüköztürk, 2017).

The measurements that were made in the study and the symbolic notation of the processes are given in Table 1. The equivalents of the letters in Table 1 in the experimental process and the symbolic image of the model are as follows (Karasar, 2016):

G- Group
 R- Randomness in the creation of the group
 X- The tried level of the independent variable
 O- Measurement (follow-up) 1-Beck Depression Inventory, 2-
 Oxford Happiness Inventory

Table 1. Symbolic Notation of the Study Design

Creating the Group	Group	Pre-test	Procedure	Post-test	Follow-up test
R	Bibliotherapy Group	O 1-2	X1 (Method 1)	O1-2	O1-2

As seen in Table 1, there was only one experimental group in the study design, the psychoeducation program, which was the independent variable of the study, was applied after the pre-test was applied to the experimental group. Then, the post-test and follow-up tests were administered to the group, and the effectiveness of the psychoeducation program was examined.

The Study Group

The Study Group consisted of teachers who worked in the city of Batman. Approximately one thousand teachers were contacted with the random method throughout the city to determine the participants of the group, and as a result of the pre-test application, they were informed that they would receive an 8-week training after certain criteria and evaluation were applied. After this information was provided, 342 people volunteered to fill the pre-test forms. The application was made voluntarily. A total of 148 (44%) were female and 194 (56%) were male among the 342 participants who participated in the pre-test.

The mean of the total scores of all teachers who participated in the pre-test application in the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) was determined before the study group was formed. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Total Mean Score of All Participants in BDI and OME

	n	Minimum	Maximum	\bar{x}	SD
BDI Total Score	342	0.00	44.00	11.277	8.702
OHI Total Score	342	47.00	160.00	109.324	21.213

As seen in Table 2, the mean score that all participants had in the BDI pre-test application was $\bar{x} = 11.277$. The mean score the participants had in OHI was $\bar{x}=109.324$.

Separate analyzes were made for both the Beck Depression Inventory and the Oxford Happiness Inventory before the experimental groups of the study were determined.

The developer of the Beck Depression Inventory stated that higher scores in the inventory meant higher indicators of depressive symptoms. For many practitioners who used the inventory, "0-9 points" refer to minimal depression symptoms in the normal range, "10-16 points" refer to mild depression symptoms, "17-29 points" refer to moderate depression symptoms, and "30-63 points" refer to severe depression. According to Şahin (1988), who conducted the Turkish adaptation study of the inventory, a score of 17 or higher from the inventory could distinguish depression with a probability of over 90%.

When the total score received in the Beck Depression Inventory was examined; 167 people had "0-9 points" with minimal depression symptoms in the normal range, 74 people had "10-16 points" with mild depression symptoms, 89 people had "17-29 points" with moderate depression symptoms, 12 people had "30-63 points" with severe depression symptoms. The criterion of experiencing at least moderate depression was determined as the first condition for participation in the experimental group. At least 89 people who were in the moderate-level depression score range in the Beck Depression Inventory met the first condition for participation in the experimental group.

For the inventory scoring, the developer-defined high happiness as a high total score, low happiness as a low score, and did not specify any extreme values for the Oxford Happiness Inventory. For this reason, in the present study, the total score obtained in the inventory was subjected to Cluster Analysis. Two-Step Cluster Analysis is among the multivariate statistical methods that divide a heterogeneous sampling into homogeneous subgroups calculating the descriptive measures of the homogeneous groups separately (Kayri, 2007).

Three categories were created after the Cluster Analysis for the total happiness score, low, moderate, and high. Participants in the category of low happiness were accepted as candidates for the experimental groups. However, the condition was sought for the same individual to have both at least a moderate level of depression and a low level of happiness at this stage.

The Cluster Analysis revealed that the total score obtained in the Oxford Happiness Inventory was low-level with an average of 83 points (93 people, 27.2%), moderate happiness with an average of 107 points (141 people 41.2%), and high-level happiness with an average of 133 points (108 people, 31.6%).

As the third condition, it was determined that these two conditions (i.e. depression-unhappiness) were to be experienced simultaneously. When the inventory scores of the volunteering participants were examined, it was found that there were a total of 31 people who met this third condition. A total of 8 men and 7 women were randomly selected from a total of 31 people who met the third condition by examining the inventory scores, and the group was formed with 15 people.

Data Collection Tools

Two different Inventories were used to determine the effects of the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program, which was the independent variable of the study, on depression and happiness levels.

The “Beck Depression Inventory”, which was created by Beck et al. (1961) to evaluate the emotional, cognitive, and motivational components of depression and whose validity and reliability studies were conducted by Şahin (1988, 1989), was used to determine the level of depression.

The Oxford Happiness Inventory, which was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) to measure the happiness of individuals, and its Turkish adaptation was made by Doğan and Sıpmaz (2012), was used to determine the level of happiness.

Procedures Applied to the Study Groups

A psychoeducation program was developed and implemented by the researcher in the present study, which aimed to intervene in the depression and low happiness levels experienced by the participants. The psychoeducation program that was prepared in the study was designed to be applied with a group because reaching each individual with high depression and low happiness level was not suitable in terms of time and other opportunities.

The basic purpose of the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducational sessions that were developed in the present study was to reduce the depression levels of individuals and make them happier by realizing this change. The psychological infrastructure of the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program that was prepared by the researcher, the creation of its goals, the training process, and the evaluation of the functionality of the training program at the end of the process was discussed in detail in the study.

A meeting was organized with the teachers selected for the Experimental Group based on the total score obtained from the Beck Depression Inventory and the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OSQ) after the pre-test application, and before the psychoeducation sessions, and the teachers were informed on the study process. General information about psychoeducational programs was given in the sessions. Then, the experimental group participants met once a week for 8 weeks. The mean duration of these sessions varied between 80-100 minutes. The final session was planned as an evaluation session of the psychoeducation process.

Findings

The findings on the results of the psychoeducation program that was prepared according to the principles of bibliotherapy applied to the participants are given in this part. According to the method of this study, there are 2 hypotheses on depression and happiness.

Hypothesis 1- There will be a significant increase in the depression levels of the subjects participating in the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program, and this decrease will be long-term.

Hypothesis 2- There will be a significant increase in the happiness levels of the subjects participating in the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program, and this increase will be long-term.

The findings on the effectiveness of the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program are given under two headings, findings on depression and findings on happiness.

The Effects of Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program on Depression Levels

The mean and standard deviation values of the pre-test, post-test, and follow-up test scores of the experimental group in the Beck Depression Inventory are given in Table 3.

Table 3. The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of the Pre-Test, Post-Test, and Follow-Up Tests of the Experimental Group in the Beck Depression Inventory

Groups	Pre-test			Post-test			Follow-up test		
	N	\bar{X}	SD	n	\bar{x}	SD	N	\bar{x}	SD
Experimental Group	15	20,466	2,669	13	13,692	2,015	12	15,250	2,832

As seen in Table 3, there were 16 participants in the experimental group in the Beck Depression Inventory pre-test application. However, the scores of 13 participants were included in the analyses in the post-test and follow-up applications because of the loss of participants in the experimental group.

When the table is evaluated, it is seen that the mean score of the experimental group participants in the Beck Depression Inventory pre-test application before the psychoeducation program was $\bar{X}=20.466$, and the mean score in the same test after the psychoeducation program was $\bar{X}=13.692$, and $\bar{X}=15.250$ in the follow-up test. In this respect, it was observed that the depression levels of the experimental group participants decreased after the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program was applied to the experimental group. The One-Way ANOVA results in repeated measures that were applied to determine the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in the Beck Depression Inventory are given in Table 4.

Table 4. The One-Way ANOVA Results of the Experimental Group in Pre-test, Post-test, and Follow-up Tests in Beck Depression Inventory

Source of variation	Sum of squares	SD	Sum of squares mean	F	P	Significant difference
Inter group	70,889	11	6,444			
Measurement	317,722	2	158,861	23,893	,000	1-2,1-3
Error	146,278	22	6,649			
Total	534,889	35				
	1 Pre-test		2 Post-test			3 Follow-up test

Significant differences were found between the pre-test, post-test, and follow-up test scores of the experimental group participants ($F(2,22)=23.893$, $p<.01$). The mean post-test score ($\bar{X}=13.692$) and the mean follow-up test score ($\bar{X}=15.250$) were significantly lower than the mean pre-test score ($\bar{X}=20.466$). However, the difference between the post-test and follow-up test scores was not significant, which shows that the

Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program was significantly effective in reducing the depression levels of the experimental group participants, and this effect was permanent in the follow-up tests.

The Effects of Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program on Happiness Levels

The mean and standard deviation values in the pre-test, post-test, and follow-up tests of the experimental group in the Oxford Happiness Inventory are given in Table 5.

Table 5. The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of the Pre-Test, Post-Test, and Follow-Up Test Scores of the Group in the Oxford Happiness Inventory

Groups	Pre-test			Post-test			Follow-up test		
	N	\bar{X}	SD	n	\bar{x}	SD	n	\bar{x}	SD
Experimental Group	15	86.400	5.961	13	99.769	6.905	12	98.333	5.087

As seen in Table 5, there were 16 participants in the experimental group in the Oxford Happiness Inventory pre-test application. However, the scores of 13 participants were included in the analyses in the post-test and follow-up because of the loss of participants in the experimental group.

When the table is examined, it is seen that although the mean score of the experimental group participants in the Oxford Happiness Inventory pre-test application before the psychoeducation program was $\bar{X}=86.400$, the mean score in the same test after the psychoeducation program was $\bar{X}=99.769$, and $\bar{X}=98.333$ in the follow-up test.

In this respect, it was observed that the happiness levels of the experimental group participants increased after the bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program that was applied to the experimental group.

The One-Way ANOVA results in repeated measurements that were made to determine the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the experimental group from the Oxford Happiness Inventory are given in Table 6.

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Results of the Experimental Group in the Oxford Happiness Inventory Pre-test, Post-test, and Follow-up Test Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	SD	Sum of squares mean	F	P	Significant difference
Inter group	560,083	11	50,917			
Measurement	1258,167	2	629,083	18,640	,000	1-2,1-3
Error	742,500	22	33,750			
Total	2560,750	35				
	1 Pre-test		2 Post-test			3 Follow-up test

It was found that there were significant differences between the pre-test, post-test, and follow-up test scores of the experimental group participants ($F(2,22)=18.640$, $p<.01$). The mean post-test score ($\bar{X}=99.769$) and the mean follow-up test score ($\bar{X}=98.333$) were higher than the pretest mean score ($\bar{X}=86.400$) at significant levels. However, the difference between the post-test and follow-up test scores was not significant, which shows that the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program was effective at significant levels in increasing the happiness levels of the experimental group participants, and this was permanent in the follow-up tests.

Discussion and Conclusion

A bibliotherapy-based psychoeducation program was prepared and implemented in the scope of this study to intervene in teachers' depression and unhappy moods. According to the findings of the study, it was found that the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program decreased the depression and increased happiness levels of the participants.

In the literature review, no studies were detected that examined the direct effects of psychoeducational programs that were prepared in line with the principles of bibliotherapy on teachers' depression and happiness levels. For this reason, the results of this study were discussed in line with the findings of similar or different intervention studies that were conducted on different study groups.

The literature was reviewed, and it was found that bibliotherapy is effective as a "stand-alone" treatment for depression. Many therapists recommend self-aid books in addition to therapy. In a study that was conducted by Jamison and Scogin (1995), the effectiveness of cognitive bibliotherapy was examined with 80 depressed adults who were selected from among the community. The cognitive bibliotherapy group results were found to be superior to those of the control group. The results were statistically and clinically significant, and the efficacy of bibliotherapy was permanent on depression since the treatment group maintained improvement at a 3-month follow-up. The data reported by Jamison and Scogin comply with the data of this study.

Seung-Chae (2013) conducted a study and investigated the effects of the bibliotherapy program on the happiness indices of university students. As a result of the study, it was reported that the happiness indices could be increased with the bibliotherapy program. More specifically, life satisfaction could be increased greatly, and positive emotions could be increased to some extent with bibliotherapy.

Floyd et al. (2004) examined 16 sessions of individual cognitive psychotherapy or bibliotherapy with thirty-one elderly community residents. Burns's book *Feeling Good* was read for bibliotherapy. Post-treatment comparisons revealed that both treatments were superior to delayed treatment control, which suggest that bibliotherapy and individual psychotherapy are appropriate treatments for depression in elderly adults. Similar results were obtained in this study. In other words, the bibliotherapy significantly decreased the depression levels of the teachers increasing their happiness levels depending on the time.

Also, depression and happiness are inversely proportional. As the depression levels decrease, the happiness levels increase, and as the levels of depression increases, the levels of happiness decreases (Taşçı, 2014; Yalçın et al., 2018). In the present study, the decreased depression levels of the teachers and increased happiness levels were observed in a reverse proportion.

When the data were analyzed, it was found that the experimental group follow-up test scores tended to decrease, which can be partially explained by the fixed point theory, which is one of the happiness theories in the psychology literature. According to this theory, our genetic codes define our happiness levels. After individuals face a life experience that will make them unhappy, although there is a decrease in the level of happiness, they will return to the constant level of happiness found in the genetic predisposition after some time (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). This is also true vice versa. In other words, although a situation or an event, which makes people happy, increases happiness levels, the level of happiness may tend to return to the level before the situation or event after some time. It is considered that the tendency of the happiness of the group test scores to decrease in the data in this study may be related to the fixed point theory.

Recommendations

The number of studies conducted on bibliotherapy is very limited in our country. However, when the studies that are few in number were considered, it was seen that the economic nature of bibliotherapy made it a very practical application for both clients and counselors. When the results of previous studies are evaluated, just like in the present study, using the books in the therapy process for certain purposes, and the educators and counselors conducting studies on bibliotherapy will enhance the therapy process.

In the present study, 5 different books were selected and used in the Bibliotherapy-Based Psychoeducation Program. The books served the purpose of this study. In the bibliotherapy practice that will be prepared for another purpose, the book or text that will be suitable for the purpose of the study must be chosen. Care must be

taken to ensure that the book that will be chosen in the bibliotherapy will be appropriate for the age and educational levels of participants, its language is understandable, topics in the chapters of the book are suitable for the purpose, and non-scientific sources are not used.

Many of the studies in bibliotherapy are under the headings e.g. therapy with books, healing through reading, the importance of reading, benefits of reading, and difference reading makes. Grouping these studies under the concept of bibliotherapy must be taken into account by the field workers because these scattered definitions hinder the systematic progress in this field.

The young generation must be targeted first and it should be discussed how bibliotherapy should be applied especially in primary, secondary, and high school education for the newly-developing bibliotherapy to find more widespread use in our country.

It is considered that the generations who will acquire the love of books, critical reading, and bibliotherapy awareness at an early age will continue their lives more productively with better equipment in the future. To provide a suggestion for the implementation of this understanding in a faster and more practical way, the media literacy course, which is provided as an elective course in primary schools, can be used. By adding bibliotherapy to the curricula, this awareness can be created in the students and can be turned into a separate elective course.

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