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Examining the Relationship between Sensation Seeking, Positive and Negative Experiences, Emotional Autonomy and Coping Strategies in Adolescents

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Abstract

The research aims to examine the relationships between sensation seeking and positive and negative experience, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies in adolescents. The study group consisted of 371 adolescents who attended middle and high schools; the ages ranged from 11 to 17. 55.7 % of participants were female (N=137), and 44.3% were male (N=109). Data were collected via Adolescent Coping Scale (KIDCOPE), Emotional Autonomy Scale, Adolescent Positive and Negative Experiences Scale, and Short Sensation Seeking Scale. The relationships between the study variables were analyzed via correlational analysis and regression analysis. The correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant negative correlation among sensation seeking, emotional autonomy, active coping, and positive experience. On the other hand, a statistically significant positive correlation among sensation seeking, avoidant coping, negative coping, and negative experience. The regression analysis results showed that emotional autonomy, avoidant coping, negative coping, and negative experience predict sensation seeking, yet active coping and positive experience variables did not predict.

Keywords: Adolescence, sensation seeking, positive-negative experiences, emotional autonomy, coping.

Examinando la Relación entre Búsqueda de Sensaciones, Experiencias Positivas y Negativas, Autonomía Emocional y Estrategias de Afrontamiento en Adolescentes

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Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es examinar las relaciones entre la búsqueda de sensaciones y la experiencia positiva y negativa, la autonomía emocional y las estrategias de afrontamiento en adolescentes. El grupo de estudio consistió en 371 adolescentes que asistieron a las escuelas intermedias y secundarias, las edades oscilaron entre 11 y 17. El 55,7% de los participantes eran mujeres (N = 137), y el 44,3% eran hombres (N = 109). Los datos se recopilaron a través de la Escala de Afrontamiento Adolescente (KIDCOPE), la Escala de Autonomía Emocional, la Escala de Experiencias Positivas y Negativas de los Adolescentes y la Escala de Búsqueda de Sensaciones Cortas. Las relaciones entre las variables de estudio se analizaron mediante análisis correlacional y análisis de regresión. El resultado del análisis de correlación reveló que existe una correlación negativa estadísticamente significativa entre la búsqueda de sensaciones, la autonomía emocional, el afrontamiento activo y la experiencia positiva. Por otro lado, una correlación positiva estadísticamente significativa entre búsqueda de sensaciones, afrontamiento evitativo, afrontamiento negativo y experiencia negativa. Los resultados del análisis de regresión mostraron que la autonomía emocional, el afrontamiento evitativo, el enfrentamiento negativo y la experiencia negativa predicen la búsqueda de sensaciones, pero las variables de afrontamiento activo y experiencia positiva no predicen.

Palabras clave: Adolescencia, búsqueda de sensaciones, experiencias positivas-negativas, autonomía emocional, afrontamiento.

It is possible to conclude that if the period of adolescence, which is a crucial developmental stage in human beings' lives, is mentally experienced healthily, the following developmental stages are more likely to be influenced positively as an outcome. This period is characterized explicitly as the time when a person starts developing a more profound identity and independence and experiencing changes in various aspects of life: physical, emotional, sexual, and psychosocial (Derman, 2008). Individuals give some risky behaviors a go throughout adolescence as well. Additionally, it is stated that negative experiences from adolescence affect adulthood adversely (Eneçcan et al., 2011). Overall, when the underlining traits of the adolescence period are studied throughout the related literature, it becomes evident that this period is the time of identity discovery as well as performing risky behaviors the most due to sensation seeking behaviors.

Lightfoot (1997) defines risk-taking behaviors as "volitional, purposive, goal-oriented and carrying the potential for harm" (as cited in Çok et al., 2006). When a closer look is taken, there seems to be many reasons for taking risks (e.g. the feeling of not belonging to a group, resistance against family pressure, willing to control one's life, efforts to cope with negative emotions) (Karahan et al., 2006). Similarly, Ponton (1997) claims that adolescents search for various experiences. While doing so, risk-taking behaviors help them get to know themselves, prove themselves, and participate in groups (as cited in Uysal & Bingöl, 2014). Furthermore, when the related literature is examined, sensation seeking emerges as a variable of risk-taking behavior (Arnett & Jensen, 1993, as cited in Morsünbül, 2013).

Sensation Seeking

Sensation seeking is defined as "seeking varied, novel, complex, and *intense* sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience" (Zuckerman, 1994, as cited in Beyens et al., 2015). The tendency to sensation seeking is described as an individual's physical and social risk of themselves to achieve complex and new experiences in which the individual cannot define their feelings. It is also stated that a large proportion of this tendency originates from our genes (Beyaz, 2004, as cited in Özdemir et al., 2010). According to Steinberg (2008), the main reason for increasing sensation seeking behavior during adolescence is altered dopaminergic activity patterns.

It is expressed that the educated individuals with a high level of the tendency to sensation seeking to evaluate new situations as having little risk and feel less anxious about them, therefore avoiding new risky experiences less than others (Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2000). However, individuals' desire for new experiences and behaviors with the high level of risk caused by a high level of sensation seeking tendency does not necessarily lead to negative results, and they may be positive as well.

An example of how to get a positive outcome out of a high level of sensation seeking tendency among adolescents is to help them channel it towards functional activities (e.g. social activities). When a further look is taken at the positive outcomes of sensation seeking, several studies become present. For instance, Gullone et al. (2000) define sensation seeking behaviors as more socially accepted and relatively preventing a person from taking risks. In a supportive manner to their ideas, Çelik (2015) claims that sensation seeking, and life satisfaction are positively correlated, and sensation seeking stands out as a variable between life satisfaction and self-concealment. In fact, it may be at most importance to help adolescents prove themselves psychosocially and gain identity.

Despite the positive aspects, it is indeed possible for teenagers to be affected by the negative aspects of sensation seeking. In this notion, Kelley et al. (2004) claim that the behavior of sensation seeking may harm adolescents both physically and mentally. For example, individuals of that age group are prone to drive vehicles under the influence of alcoholic drinks (Reyes-Pulliza, 2014). Similarly, the study conducted by Martin et al. (2006) revealed that adolescents, who use drugs due to sensation seeking drive, harm themselves and their social sphere. Correspondingly, it is stated that such tendency is a leading cause for an increase in displaying aggressive behavior. Considering the facts stated above, it is possible to conclude that sensation seeking behavior carries a great potential of risk, leading to a combination of behavioral disorders and many other problems that may be hard to heal. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the reasons which cause the tendency to increase. For this purpose, the relationship between sensation seeking, positive and negative experiences, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies in adolescents is investigated in this study.

Positive and Negative Experiences

Positive experiences that individuals go through, or the experiences perceived as positive may affect their mental health and personal development assertively. Nevertheless, negative experiences that individuals go through, or the experiences perceived as negative may adversely affect their mental health and personal development. The scope of these two concepts includes a person's attention towards the situations which satisfy them and do not satisfy them, positive responsibility, and physical satisfaction. Telef (2013) suggests that these concepts are used to explain positive and negative feelings as well as one's well-being. Consequently, it is possible to describe and evaluate the idea of an individual well-with the concepts of positive and negative experiences along with positive and negative feelings. Positive emotions can be thought of as feelings of satisfaction, whereas negative emotions can be considered as unpleasant feelings such as shame, anxiety, sadness, anger (Diener et al., 1997). In addition to the emotions, subjective well-being, which is the other source for evaluating our experiences, is described as an individual's ability to make evaluations about themselves in an original way (Mürtezoğlu, 2015). One of the signs of subjective well-being is defined as a human being's way of living in which affection for life is present and positive emotions are experienced intensely. In contrast, negative emotions are more in the background (Eryılmaz, 2011).

There are many studies conducted on positive-negative experiences and subjective well-being in the related literature. For example, the research of Telef (2014) suggests that adolescents with a high level of positive experiences are prone to display risky behaviors less. Moreover, the items of the following studies were found to predict subjective well-being: extraversion, being responsible, emotional instability personality traits (Eryılmaz & Ercan, 2011), and self-control and social support (Ronen et al., 2016). In addition to these data, it was found subjective well-being is positively related to self-esteem and optimism (Eryılmaz & Atak, 2011), and subjective well-being was not affected by gender, grade, parents' education level yet influenced by perceived academic success and perceived financial situation (Özen, 2005) and there are both direct and indirect effects of secure attachment to parents and autonomy on subjective well-being (Özdemir, 2016). Lastly, the study of Sari and Özkan (2016) suggests that adolescents who define their parents as democratic and tolerant were found to have a

higher level of subjective well-being than those who express their parents as authoritarian and irrelevant.

Emotional Autonomy

To better understand what emotional autonomy is, the concept of autonomy should be investigated. Autonomy is the differentiation of a person from others (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005) and it is a task that each adolescent must achieve along with identity development (Çoban, 2013).

Noom et al. (2001) state that for adolescents, gaining autonomy is as vital as developing an identity during the transition period of becoming an adult. The changes in the physical and cognitive domains throughout adolescence, the interactions with the social environment, and the new responsibilities of the individual contribute greatly to the development of someone's autonomy (Deniz et al., 2013; Özdemir & Çok, 2011). Emotional autonomy is defined as the ability of individuals to make their decisions independently by considering the ideas of others (Musaağaoğlu, 2014). Another definition is a person's detachment from his/her parents emotionally (Tung & Dhillon, 2006, p. 201). Also, Steinberg and Silverberg (1986) explain emotional autonomy when an adolescent discovers they are independent from their parents. These two researchers also elaborate on emotional autonomy and explain it in a detailed way as follows: during pre-adolescence, individuals idealize their parents and tend to see them as figures who know everything and from whom anything can be learned. However, the situation turns upside down when they reach adolescence. Once they realize that it is not the case, they choose autonomy with a broader perception they now have.

Dhillon (2004) states that emotional autonomy is associated with depression, psychological disorders, and internalized problem behaviors. According to the same study, if adolescents who are less dependent on their parents and are not supported or not allowed to individualize by their parents, then, they are at a great amount of risk suffering from anxiety, depression as well as a low level of self-worth. Consequently, it is essential to understand the variables which are related to emotional autonomy; also, it is necessary to provide what it takes to help it develop.

When the literature is investigated, no research examining the relationship between autonomy and sensation seeking for a sample of adolescents is reached. On the other hand, there are some studies related to emotional

autonomy. Specifically, the study of Erçevik (2014) concludes that there is a positive relationship between emotional autonomy and perceived social support. Additionally, the age factor was found to predict emotional autonomy significantly (Çoban 2013; Musaağaoğlu, 2014; Sesli, 2014). Furthermore, Musaağaoğlu's (2014) study revealed that the late adolescence period leads to more emotional autonomy than the early and middle stages. Also, fathers' attitude and adolescents' ages were found to predict emotional autonomy at a significant level. Çoban (2013) found that emotional autonomy was influenced by age, gender, and whether parents live together or apart. In addition to the results above, the findings also presented that deidealization level was higher among male adolescents, whereas non dependency level was higher among female adolescents. Parra et al. (2015) concluded that family commitment and life satisfaction were negatively related to emotional autonomy and that this relationship became more evident from adolescence to adulthood. Lastly, Sesli (2014) concluded that the mean scores of behavioral and emotional autonomy of secondary school students were high, and their emotional autonomy scores varied in terms of gender, grade, and maternal education level.

Coping Strategies in Adolescents

Although it is natural for an individual to face difficult and novel experiences in his/her life, what matters is how one copes with those situations (Kulaksızoğlu, 2009). In fact, it would not be a fault to claim that the behavior of coping, especially for adolescents, is a crucial psychosocial skill to successfully survive the developmental stage which individuals are experiencing (Öngen, 2002). There are healthy and unhealthy types of coping strategies which adolescents use. The former includes active coping, seeking social support, receiving professional support. On the other hand, the latter contains excessive use of cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs and insufficient nutrition or extreme food (Türküm et al., 2004).

Among the experts' essential advice to prevent harmful behavior among adolescents is helping them gain skills that they can use to cope with suicide, cigarette and alcohol use, and displaying aggressive behavior (Kulaksızoğlu, 2009). Therefore, an adolescent's ability to handle stress and the behavior he/she uses carries a high level of concern for individual and societal advancement (Tan & Aldemir, 2012). Nevertheless, since the coping behavior

is durable and changing, each new decision must be reviewed again. In doing so, new cognitive structures matching the purpose can be created while the basic rules remain constant. By following this pattern, individuals can learn to use the appropriate coping strategy in every new challenge they face without rethinking the whole process all over again (Basut, 2006).

The study of Eryılmaz (2009) provided three results on how coping approaches affected adolescents' subjective well-being. The first is that emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies together have got direct and significant effects. The second is that the emotion-focused approach on its own has got low-level adverse outcomes. Lastly, problem-focused coping has got a low-level positive influence. Aside from Eryılmaz's work, Adıgüzel (2016) found a positive correlation between seeking social support, avoidant coping styles, and optimism and self-actualization, which is a sub-dimension of the Personal Orientation Inventory. Adıgüzel (2016) concluded that there was a positive correlation between seeking help and emotional determination. Additionally, Çetinkaya (2016) put three coping strategies that predict constant anger in an order from most to least. The results were negative coping strategies, active coping strategies, and avoidance coping. The same study also claimed negative coping predicted the tendency towards violence more than active coping strategies. Furthermore, the results obtained from the study of Markova and Nikitskaya (2017) revealed that adolescents performing problem behaviors were using avoidance coping strategies more. Last but not least, another study proved that resilient adolescents utilized not only problem-focused but also the emotion-focused coping strategies, yet the vulnerable adolescents were observed to apply neither problem-focused nor emotion-focused strategies. Practical implications of the results were discussed to guide professionals (Lee et al., 2017).

Present study

When the literature on sensation seeking is evaluated in general, it is seen that this variable is associated with variables that affect people both positively and negatively (e.g. Çelik, 2015; Çelik, Turan, 2016; Çelik & Koçak, 2018; Kelley et al., 2004; Martin et al., 2006). Since sensation seeking is associated with a variable that negatively affects human mental and physical health, such as substance use, examining its relationship with different variables is very

important in terms of discovering the nature and adverse effects of this variable. In addition, it can be said that mostly correlative studies on sensation seeking were conducted, and studies carried out with experimental and structural equation modeling could not be reached. In this context, this study will provide a basis for both experimental studies that can contribute to human mental health at a higher level and studies to be carried out within the scope of the structural equation model, by understanding the nature of the sensation seeking, which increases especially during adolescence and affects adolescents, and by exploring the variables it is related to. In addition, it is striking that there are not enough preventive studies in the related literature to reduce excitement seeking in adolescents. The reason for this may be that it is not known enough which variables predict excitement seeking. As a result, examining the relationships between excitement seeking and positive and negative experience, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies can provide important contributions.

Methods

This study is a quantitative study conducted with a correlational survey model. In this context, in this study, adolescents' sensation seeking level is examined in terms of positive and negative experience, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies.

Sample

The study sample consists of 371 adolescents studying in 2 different schools in Pamukova District of Sakarya Province and whose ages range from 11 to 17. Female adolescents form 55,7% (N= 137) of the overall sample, and male adolescents form 44,3% (N= 109). The data was collected during school hours with the permission of school administrators, and all participants were granted about confidentiality and informed about the tools.

Data Collection Tools

Brief Sensation Seeking Scale. The scale was developed by Stephenson et al. (2003) and adapted to Turkish by Çelik (2015). The scale gives a total

score, and every item of the scale is scored on a scale ranging from 1 to 4. The overall score to get is between 4 and 16.

Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE). The scale was developed by Diener (2010) and adapted to Turkish by Telef (2013). It assesses positive and negative feelings and affective well-being. Every item of the scale is scored on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. 1 stands for never, whereas 5 for always. The overall score to get is between 6 and 30. There are 2 sub-dimensions to the scale, specifically, positive feelings-negative feelings, and each subscale is scored separately.

Emotional Autonomy Scale (EAS). The Emotional Autonomy Scale, adapted to Turkish by Deniz et al. (2013), was originally prepared by Steinberg and Silverberg (1986). EAS was designed to have 20 items and 4 point Likert-type options for each item. The items were specified as the following: deidealization (5 items), individuation (5 items), nondependency on parents (4 items), and perceived parents as people (6 items). The original scale of 1986 was later re-designed in 1993 by omitting the ‘perceive parents as people’ subscale and leaving it with 14 items and three subscales. The Turkish adaptation of the scale conformed to the revised scale, which had three subscales.

Coping Scale for Adolescents. The scale was developed by Spirito et al. (1988) and adapted to Turkish by Bedel et al. (2014). It consists of 3 subscales (i.e., active coping, avoidance coping, and negative coping. The score to get from the active and avoidance coping subscales may range from 0 to 12, whereas it is between 0 and 9 for the negative coping subscale.

Data Analysis

The study’s data were examined by using the Pearson coefficient of correlation. Additionally, multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether independent variables statistically predicted the dependent variable.

Findings

The relationships between the dependent variable (i.e., sensation seeking) and independent variables (i.e., emotional autonomy, active coping, avoidance coping, negative coping, positive experiences, negative experiences) were

measured with correlation analysis. The results are presented below in [Table 1](#).

Table 1.

Findings of Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5		
Sensation Seeking	1						
Emotional Autonomy	-.42**	1					
Active Coping	-.25**	.43**	1				
Avoidance Coping	.27**	-.22**	.05	1			
Negative Coping	.33**	-.30**	-.23**	.36**	1		
Positive Experiences	-.23**	.40**	.43**	-.14**	-.23**	1	
Negative Experiences	.42**	-.43**	-.34**	.21**	.41**	-.47**	1
\bar{X}	9.15	39.63	7.32	5.95	2.29	22.64	13.63
SS	3.32	5.97	2.49	2.27	1.81	4.52	4.01

The results of the correlation analysis illustrate that there is a statistically significant negative relation between sensation seeking ($r = -.42$) and independent variables of active coping ($r = -.25$) and positive experiences ($r = -.23$). On the other hand, a statistically significant positive relationship between sensation seeking variable and avoidance coping ($r = .27$), negative coping ($r = .33$), and negative experiences ($r = .42$)

Table 2.

Findings of Regression Analysis Assumptions

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis	VIF
Sensation Seeking	.16	-.74	
Emotional Autonomy	-.32	-.18	1.48
Active Coping	-.29	-.20	1.45
Avoidance Coping	-.07	-.15	1.24
Negative Coping	.75	.10	1.37
Positive Experiences	-.63	.23	1.49
Negative Experiences	.46	.20	1.56

The independent variables of the study, which are emotional autonomy, active coping, avoidance coping, negative coping, positive experiences, and negative experiences, were also analyzed through regression analysis to determine whether or not they predict the dependent variable of sensation seeking in a statistically significant way.

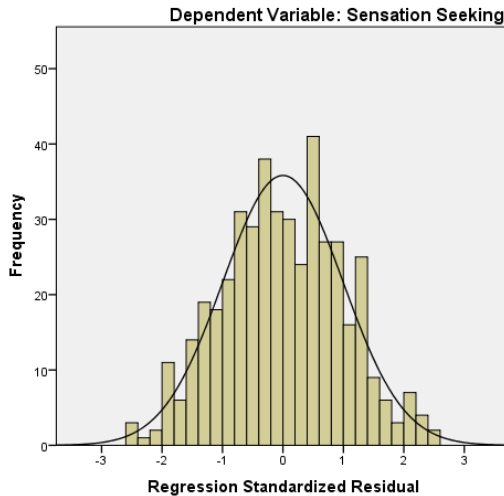


Figure 1. Normal Distribution Curve

The results of the regression analysis are demonstrated in [Table 3](#). Furthermore, regression assumptions of the data were examined respectively in terms of their Mahalanobis distance, kurtosis and skewness parameters, VIF (Variance Inflation Factor), and normal distribution curve parameters before regression analysis to see if regression analysis would be applicable; the findings are as in [Table 2](#) and [Figure 1](#).

Table 3.
Findings of Regression Analysis

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>SS</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	Correlation		<i>R</i> ²
						<i>Part.</i>	<i>Semi-Part.</i>	
Constant	9.86	1.56		6.32	.000			
Emotional Autonomy	-.13	.03	-.24	-4.87	.000	-.226	-.198	
Active Coping	-.10	.07	-.07	-1.50	.136	-.072	-.061	
Avoidance Coping	.20	.07	.14	3.01	.003	.142	.122	.275
Negative Coping	.19	.09	.10	2.16	.031	.103	.088	
Positive Experiences	.04	.04	.06	1.17	.244	.056	.047	
Negative Experiences	.20	.04	.24	4.79	.000	.223	.195	

First and foremost, Mahalanobis distance parameters were obtained to check whether there were any multivariate extreme values in the data set. Later, these values were evaluated according to $p < .001$ significance level, and 9 data were deleted from the data set to provide “normality” and “linearity” assumptions. Secondly, normal distribution indicators (i.e., kurtosis and skewness parameters, VIF (Variance Inflation Factor), and normal distribution curve) were checked for appropriateness for regression analysis. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), VIF parameters must be less than 10 and not multicollinearity problems. So, such information was obtained that there is no multicollinearity problems among the variables of this study. Lastly, kurtosis and skewness parameters along with the normal distribution curve displayed no abnormal values, either, proving that the data were normally distributed.

Based on the regression analysis results in Table 3, the independent variables of emotional autonomy ($\beta = -.24$), avoidance coping ($\beta = .14$), negative coping ($\beta = .10$), and negative experiences ($\beta = .24$) were found to

predict sensation seeking in a statistically significant way; yet neither of the independent variables of active coping ($\beta = -.07$) and positive experiences ($\beta = .06$) was found to have the same outcome. Furthermore, predictive values were calculated to predict sensation seeking variable by 27,5%. However, it is obvious that in the correlation matrix presented in Table 1, although the active coping ($r = -.25$) and positive experience ($r = -.23$) variables are related to sensation seeking, there is no significant contribution to the regression presented in Table 3. Logically, although the bivariate correlations between active coping and positive experience and sensation seeking are reliably different from zero, it can be concluded that the relationship between active coping and positive experience and the other variables in the data set is mediating or repeating the relationship between these two variables and the sensation seeking variable. In addition to these findings, the semi-partial correlation results indicate that sensation seeking is explained as following: 3,92% by emotional autonomy, 1,48% by avoidance coping, 0,77% by negative coping, and 3,80% by negative experiences. Lastly, the regression model suggests that 17,53% percent of sensation seeking is explained by overlapping of emotional autonomy, avoidance coping, negative coping, and negative experiences variables.

Discussion

As a result of the research, it was seen that excitement seeking was predicted by emotional autonomy, avoidance coping, negative coping, and negative experiences. Furthermore, the regression model showed that sensation seeking was significantly explained by overlapping of these variables. In this context, the results of this study show the importance of controlling emotional autonomy, avoidance coping, negative coping, and negative experiences variables in intervention studies aimed at controlling sensation seeking, which is effective on risky behaviors in adolescents.

The period of adolescence may be assumed as one of the most crucial periods in terms of sensation seeking. The reason behind is that the possibility to try risky behaviors may reach high levels due to sensation seeking tendency. Concordantly, performing such risky acts may leave adolescents in serious hazards (Esen, 2003). One reason behind what leads an adolescent to

/ or prevents an adolescent from sensation seeking may be positive or negative experiences in which friends and/or families are involved considering they spend most of their time with these two groups. Similarly, Esen (2003) claims that the drives for sensation seeking is closely related to the inner social circle that consists of friends and family. Therefore, an adolescent's positive or negative experiences including family and/or friends may be a significant determiner for sensation seeking as it was evident as a result of this study, too. Specifically, it means that those who seek sensation must be considered in terms of whatever they have experienced and still going through. If an individual comes from a destructive environment and have negative experiences, it might mean he/she is more tend to perform risky actions. On the other hand, a supportive environment and positive experiences may lead to less willingness to take risky actions. Especially, those who came from a protective family structure, (Fisher & Feldman, 1998, as cited in [Uludağlı & Sayıl, 2009](#)) along with positive experiences and surrounded by supportive people were found to think of their actions and take less risks by addressing their social sphere resulting in less sensation seeking behaviors.

Another concept which may be related to sensation seeking of adolescents may be coping strategies. The reason why sensation seeking harms individuals physically and mentally during puberty may be assumed because of their negative coping strategies. Reasons for sensation seeking can be thought as parallel to one's need for chance and desire for taking risks (Zuckerman, 1994, p. 27, as cited in [Beyens et al., 2015](#)) and also parallel to individuals' coping strategies when confronting difficult or novel situations to isolate themselves or to feel better. For example, individuals who have embraced active coping strategies are people of high capacity who can overcome their problems meaning they involve in sensation seeking activities, which can make them forget their problems for a while, less. Nevertheless, since people who use negative and avoidance coping strategies for their problems already deal with them in an unhealthy manner; considering that they can think of avoiding the issues completely to feel safe by adding sensation seeking factor to their lives. Based on this logic, it would be appropriate to conclude that these concepts are related to each other at a high level.

Lastly, the concept of emotional autonomy may be a predictor of sensation seeking, too. Tung and Dhillon (2006) explain emotional autonomy as an

individual's emotional detachment from parents. A failure of such detachment may result in risky behaviors if not handled in a healthy way. Subscales of emotional autonomy (i.e. perceive parents as individuals, deidealization, individuation, and non-dependency) (Deniz et al., 2013) also provide a clear vision about how important it is for an individual to gain autonomy. Consequently, it is safe to assume a person would avoid engaging in situations with a high level of risk less when he/she does so. All in all, this study was aimed to investigate the correlation between sensation seeking, positive and negative experiences, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies in adolescents.

The adolescence stage can be thought of as the most complicated stage and full of dilemmas, also, as the stage when parental detachment takes place. Bearing so many changes, this period carries great potential for many personal and social issues. One example is that during this stage individuals may perform risky actions due to peer pressure. If lack of attention is present from the parents the issue is even at risk more to deepen and end up in a harmful friend environment combined with adverse effects of sensation seeking. Additionally, seeking a supportive environment, efforts to gain emotional autonomy, and negative coping strategies may negatively affect the development process of adolescents. Therefore, it can be considered as crucial to examine the relationship between adolescents' sensation seeking and positive-negative experiences, emotional autonomy and coping behaviors.

This study has several limitations, too. First of all, the sample of this study consists of secondary and high school students. For instance, a new study whose sample consisted of university students would provide even more details for the correlation between sensation seeking, positive and negative experiences, emotional autonomy, and coping strategies in adolescents. Secondly, the use of correlational data analysis in this research is a factor that makes it difficult to make inferences about the cause-effect relationship.

Bearing the limitations in mind, many suggestions can be made to strengthen this study. Firstly, new researches that involve different psychological structures to study the relationship between sensation seeking, positive and negative experiences, emotional autonomy and coping strategies would make the findings of this study even more valid. Secondly, this study used Coping Scale for Adolescents. The use of different scales, such as the Coping Strategy Indicator of Aysan (2003) would shed a light on how

different dimensions of coping (e.g. problem solving, seeking for social support) are related to sensation seeking. Finally, it is a significant task for school counselors to develop intervention programs to prevent dangerous sensation seeking behaviors based on this particular research. Such intervention programs might include new cognitive structures strategies helping adolescents with how to use the appropriate coping strategy in every new challenge they face by not thinking in a fixed way (Basut, 2006) and some materials to promote emotional autonomy.

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