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***Research Article***

# Structural Relationships among Counselling Self-Efficacy, General Self-Efficacy and Positive-Negative Affect in Psychological Counsellor Candidates

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine the structural relationships between counselling self-efficacy, general self-efficacy and positive-negative emotions among a sample of psychological counsellor candidates, with the main variable of interest being counselling self-efficacy. Moreover, structural equation modelling was used to test the model in relation to the variables. The study group consisted of 250 psychological counsellor candidates (194 females, 56 males) in their final year of study in the psychological counselling and guidance departments of six different universities. All of the students in this study were selected through random sampling. The results show that the most important independent variable that affected counselling self-efficacy was positive affect, which was also the most important independent variable affecting general self-efficacy. Additionally, the mediating role of general self-efficacy in the relationship between positive affect and psychological self-efficacy was found to be statistically significant. The implication of the findings is that positive affect is a contributing factor to the self-efficacy of psychological counsellor candidates.

**Keywords**

Counselling self-efficacy • General self-efficacy • Positive-negative affect • Psychological counsellor candidates • Structural equation modelling

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Psychological counselling is a professional field that provides effective services in many areas of society, ranging from education and health to industrial and social services (Güven, 2015; Kaya, 2014). According to Gibson and Mitchell (2003), psychological counselling has been shown to be highly effective in helping the counselee overcome certain difficulties in his/her life. Thus, the development of qualified professionals is an important variable for both the effectiveness and status of the profession as a whole (Yeşilyaprak, 2011). However, self-efficacy, which is based on the psychological counsellor's professional studies, experiences and related perspectives, is also regarded as an important aspect. In fact, the commonality of these arguments is the strong relationship between achieving the expected outcome in the counselling work and having positive self-efficacy (Aksoy & Diken, 2009; Cormier & Nurious; 2003, İkiz & Karaca; 2011; Lepkowski, 2009; Pamukçu & Demir, 2013). In light of this background, it is necessary to examine the concept of self-efficacy in greater detail.

The concept of self-efficacy came into prominence through the work of Albert Bandura, a pioneer of social learning theory, which is well known in the fields of education and psychology. According to Bandura (1982), self-efficacy is the perception that an individual develops when he/she begins or is about to begin a task. In other words, it is how one plans, maintains and deals with any difficulties during the process, and completes it in a desirable manner. According to social learning theory, human behaviours and motivations are regulated by common sense, and consequently, self-efficacy is the primary factor that regulates such behaviours (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005). According to Yıldırım and İlhan (2010), there are various elements in self-efficacy, such as planning an action, being aware of the necessary skills, combining such skills and examining the benefits to be gained through certain difficulties. In addition, self-efficacy is not a product of the functions of such skills, but the judgments of one's skills; that is, it is not a passive aspect of the self, but a dynamic one (Vardarlı, 2005). Bandura (1994) suggested that self-efficacy consists of four sources that interact with one another: 1) *Previous successes,* defined as the effect from directly experiencing the achievement/mastery of a goal; 2) *Indirect experiences*, described as the effect of observing the successful efforts of others; 3) *Verbal conviction*, expressed as the verbal feedback that can strengthen one's belief in success; and 4) *Emotional state*, defined as one's positive emotional state in a given situation.

Although some individuals that lack self-efficacy may attempt to appear in control of their lives, they may also exhibit ineffective behaviours, since they do not necessarily trust the results of their efforts. From this perspective, self-efficacy can have a positive influence an individual's motivation and achievement (Alcı, 2007; Pajares, 2002). Moreover, self-efficacy can determine an individual's ability

to initiate a behaviour, make the necessary efforts to achieve this behaviour and overcome any obstacles during the behaviour. In other words, having a string of successful experiences can positively affect the feeling of competence, which, in turn, results in additional successes.

Whereas successful results tend to form high self-efficacy, unsuccessful outcomes may cause low self-efficacy (Demirel, 2013; Sharpley & Ridgway, 1993; Türk, 2008). More specifically, individuals with high self-efficacy generally attempt to manage potential dangers, while individuals with low self-efficacy tend to feel inadequate in dealing with potential dangers, after which they either avoid them or tentatively face them. As indicated by Bandura (1988), since individuals with low self-efficacy believe that their capacity is limited, they become entirely incapable of overcoming precarious situations.

According to Bandura (1997), competence belief has a significant influence on the thinking, emotions and behaviours of individuals. This is especially apparent in the achievements of psychological counsellors (Demirel, 2013). Psychological counselling self-efficacy is defined as the judgment of a counsellor about him/herself and his/her counselling activities, based on previous outcomes. In other words, psychological counselling self-efficacy can be described as the belief in a counsellor's own capacity to determine whether he/she will effectively assist a counselee in the near future (Daniels & Larson 2001; Larson & Daniel, 1998). According to Curry (2007), effective counselling not only includes knowledge and skills, but also the belief in one's counselling capabilities. As shown in Daniels and Larson (2001), psychological counselling self-efficacy is as important as education and it is based on three assumptions: 1) Psychological counselling is one of the most basic conditions of the counselling process; 2) Counsellors with high self-efficacy are more effective in dealing with certain challenges; and 3) Counsellors with high self-efficacy are more efficient in evaluating positive and negative feedback. When these three assumptions and Bandura's (1989) self-efficacy concept are considered altogether, psychological counsellors are more effective in managing their counselees, due to their self-confidence in overcoming various issues (Yam & İlhan, 2016).

As mentioned earlier, one of the most important determinants of self-efficacy perception is the emotional state of an individual. In other words, when an individual begins to perform an activity, having a positive emotional state can enhance his/her self-perception (Bandura, 1994). Luthans (2002) emphasised that positive emotional stimulation is one of the key sources of self-efficacy development, while Larsen and Ketelaar (1989) stated that happy individuals have a sense of control over their lives and surroundings, which strengthens their self-efficacy. In light of this information, it is important to examine the scientific explanations in the literature regarding the positive

and negative emotions that people generally experience. One of the most popular explanations is the positive and negative affect concept proposed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). Positive affect is an individual's tendency to feel enthusiastic, alert and lively, and this dimension generally reflects one's conformity and satisfaction with the environment. While high positive affect is defined by high energy, complete focus and the ability to enjoy life, low positive affect is defined by subjective distress and an inability to enjoy life. Moreover, high negative affect is a condition in which negative moods, such as anger, disgust, fear and guilt, are more frequently seen, whereas low negative affect is expressed by a certain a sense of calmness.

Positive and negative emotions have also been regarded as personality traits or transient mood states associated with individuals' emotional states (Cropanzano, James, & Konovsky, 1993). A positive mood state, as a personality trait, is defined by effectiveness in interpersonal relationships, self-confidence and feelings of well-being. Conversely, a negative mood state is defined by a negative outlook regarding the self-perception of one's life and surroundings. Previous studies have shown that individuals with a high negative mood state have low self-esteem and thus, they have difficulties adapting to their environment (Şirvanlı-Özen & Temizsu, 2010; Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson et al., 1988). In general, even though negative and positive emotions appear to be in contrast to one another, they are still independent, since they lack a strong negative correlation between them (Diener, 1984; Larsen, McGraw, & Cacioppo, 2001; Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999). In addition, positive and negative emotions provide important information about an individual and his/her conditions. More specifically, it is possible to change the behaviour of an individual by examining his/her emotions and guiding him/her to think about certain situations in a positive light. Thus, emotions are important determinants of how individuals will behave in their daily lives, make decisions, frame their personal space and determine what level they will communicate with others (Weisinger, 1998). These explanations also indicate the role of emotions in the self-efficacy perceptions of individuals.

The variables that affect psychological counsellors' proficiency in the field should also be the subjects of focus for scholars who train such counsellors. Moreover, previous studies have emphasised the positive relationship between self-efficacy and professional skills. For example, Sharpley and Ridgway (1993) reported that there was a positive relationship between psychological counselling self-efficacy and psychological counselling skills. Similarly, in a study conducted by Çapri and Demiröz (2016) in Turkey, significant positive relationships were found between the self-efficacy of psychological counsellor candidates and the characteristics of effective counsellors. These findings indicate that self-efficacy should not be ignored in the development of future psychological counsellors. Conversely, in addition to Bandura's (1994) discourse on the relationship between positive affect and self-

efficacy, some studies have emphasised the relationship between positive emotions and coping behaviours (Luthans, 2002), psychological endurance (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2014), academic achievement (Yalnız, 2014) and coping with stressful situations (Topal, 2011). These findings indicate that there is, in fact, a relationship between psychological counselling self-efficacy, general self-efficacy and positive-negative affect.

Based on this information, the present study determines whether there is a relationship between positive-negative emotions and self-efficacy, between positive-negative emotions and psychological counselling self-efficacy, and between general self-efficacy and psychological counselling self-efficacy. The main purpose of this study is to examine the structural relationships between these three variables by conducting structural equation modelling (SEM). The findings are thought to bring a new perspective to the institutions and academicians that mentor and educate future psychological counsellors.

## Method

### Research Design

Since the purpose of this study was to determine the direct and indirect relationships between psychological counselling self-efficacy, general self-efficacy and positive-negative affect, a quantitative relational screening model was used and SEM was conducted. The former is effective for highlighting the relationships between relatively complex variables, while the latter is an efficient tool for testing theoretical models. In addition, previous studies have shown that SEM is effective for demonstrating whether pre-determined relationship patterns can be verified, based on the given data (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2014; Kline, 2005; Şimşek, 2007).

### Participants

The study group consisted of 250 (194 females, 77.6%; 56 males, 22.4%) psychological counsellor candidates in their final year of study in the psychological counselling and guidance departments of six different universities: Marmara University (n = 65); Hacettepe University (n = 42); Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University (n= 33); Yeditepe University (n = 30); Ahi Evran University (n = 44); and Erciyes University (n = 36). Overall, there were two reasons for selecting the students from these universities. The first reason was to include both public and private universities, while the second was based on the author's direct access to these universities. The students, selected through random sampling, ranged in age from 21 to 27 years (X = 23.25). It is important to note that all of the students successfully completed the Individual Psychological Counselling Practices course in order to

measure their psychological counselling self-efficacy. The data collection tools were converted into online forms that were sent (along with instructions on how to complete the forms) to the students' e-mail addresses. The students were then asked to complete the forms on a voluntary basis. In addition, they were asked to refrain from sharing any personal information that could reveal their identities.

## Instruments and Variables

For this study, three instruments were used for data collection: 1) the Counselling Self-Efficacy Scale; 2) the General Self-Efficacy Scale; and 3) the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The descriptive statistics regarding the data are shown in Tables A and H in the Appendix.

**Counselling Self-Efficacy Scale.** The original form of this scale was developed by Lent et al. (2003) to measure the psychological counselling self-efficacy levels of candidates. The scale consisted of three factors and 41 items. The first factor, Helping Skill Self-Efficacy, included 15 items and three sub-dimensions: Insight, Discovery and Action Skills. The second factor, Session Management Self-efficacy, consisted of 10 items, while the third factor was Counselling Challenges Self-Efficacy, which included 16 items and two sub-dimensions: Conflicts in Relationship and Counselee Problems. The responses were based on a 10-point scale ranging from 0 (no confidence) to 10 (complete confidence). The lowest score that could be obtained from the scale was 0, while the highest possible score was 369. In this regard, the higher scores indicated greater psychological counselling self-efficacy. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .97 in the original scale, while the coefficients for the subscales ranged from .79 to .94. This scale was adapted by Pamukçu and Demir (2013) into a Turkish version, which includes three latent variables as first-order factors: Helping Skills, Session Management and Difficulties in Counselling. This study also confirmed the same structure through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with high factor loadings. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three factors were .892 for Helping Skills, .944 for Session Management and .944 for Difficulties in Counselling. For the second-order factor, i.e. Counselling Psychology, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .854.

**General Self-Efficacy Scale.** The original form of this scale, developed by Sherer et al. (1982), consisted of two sub-dimensions, i.e. General Self-Efficacy and Social Self-Efficacy, and 23 items. Since the General Self-Efficacy sub-dimension was a separate scale that measured general self-efficacy, the Turkish version carried out by Yıldırım and Ozgur-İlhan (2010) also used this sub-dimension as a separate scale. After examining the factor structure of the scale through exploratory factor analysis and principal component analysis, it was found that there were three factors whose eigenvalues were greater than 1: 1) The first factor, called "Starting," with an eigenvalue of 4.150 and an explained variance of 20.2%; 2) The second factor,

referred to as "Resilience," with an eigenvalue of 1.786 and an explained variance was 11.9%; and 3) The third factor, called "Persistence," with an eigenvalue of 1.114 and an explained variance of 9.5%. Accordingly, this three-factor structure totalled 41.47% of the explained variance. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total of scale was .80. In addition, the total score of the 17-item scale ranged from 17 to 85, with the higher scores indicating higher self-efficacy. Finally, the CFA confirmed that the data for the present study also produced the same three-factor solution with high factor loadings. In this case, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .871.

**Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS).** Developed by Watson et al. (1988), the original form of this scale consisted of 10 positive and 10 negative affect items. The Turkish adaptation of this scale was conducted by Gençöz (2000). As a result of the factor analysis, it was determined that (as in the original scale) there were two sub-dimensions: Positive Affect and Negative Affect. While the factor loadings in the Negative Affect sub-dimension ranged from .46 to .76, they ranged from .22 to .63 in the Positive Affect sub-dimension. In the reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Negative Affect sub-dimension was .83, while that for the Positive Affect sub-dimension was .86. The scores from the subscales ranged from 10 to 50, with each of them consisting of 10 items. Overall, the higher scores indicated higher levels of emotion. In the validity study of PANAS by Gençöz (2000), positive and negative affect were presented as two observed indices, each of which included a unidimensional construct. For the present study, similar to the aforementioned study, the two indices were reported to be negatively related, and high factor loadings were observed in each index. Finally, the reliability coefficients for positive and negative affect were estimated as .792 and .795, respectively.

Table 1
*Descriptive Statistics of the Data*

| *Variables* | Minimum Score | Maximum Score | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Discovery | 17.00 | 50.00 | 36.5040 | 5.97199 |
| Insight | 13.00 | 59.00 | 40.2200 | 8.37114 |
| Action | 11.00 | 40.00 | 27.3880 | 5.50843 |
| Session management + | 33.00 | 100.00 | 68.6920 | 13.81944 |
| Conflict | 6.00 | 58.00 | 29.8240 | 10.09717 |
| Client problem | 11.00 | 100.00 | 58.7160 | 14.73417 |
| Starting | 20.00 | 45.00 | 32.4640 | 5.57396 |
| Resilience | 8.00 | 25.00 | 17.6720 | 3.24941 |
| Persistence | 5.00 | 15.00 | 10.5440 | 1.92220 |
| Positive affect | 19.00 | 48.00 | 35.7040 | 5.07300 |
| Negative affect | 12.00 | 50.00 | 25.6440 | 4.89624 |

N = 250
*Note.* Only the observed scores are provided. + These values are the averages of session management, which is a latent variable that includes 10 items. The factor scores corresponding to the five latent variables are omitted from this descriptive analysis.

### Analytical Procedure

Consistent with the purpose of this study, SEM was used to investigate the relationship between counselling self-efficacy, general self-efficacy and positive-negative affect. After controlling for the counsellors' gender and university variables, the analysis was conducted. All of the CFA models for the latent variables were tested and the unidimensional structures were confirmed. Then, following Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a measurement model was tested through CFA. After a preliminary inspection of the acceptable measurement model, a structural model was fitted. In addition, the model fit evaluation criteria of Hu and Bentler (1999) were used (Tucker-Lewis Index, TLI > .95; Comparative Fit Index, CFI > .95; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual, SRMR <.08; Root Mean Square Error Approximation, RMSEA < .06) and the latent variables were scaled so that the first factor loading from each indicator was fixed at 1. Moreover, Likert-scale items were treated as continuous items, while robust maximum likelihood (RLM) was used to estimate the model's parameters through the Mplus 6.12 program (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). In order to test the indirect effects, Sobel's standard errors test (the Mplus default program) was incorporated. Finally, based on the theoretical and statistical considerations, two residuals were allowed to correlate within the same variable.

## Results

Using SEM, the structural model, which included one second-order factor, four first-order factors and two observed composites, was tested (see Figure 1). According to the results, the fit indices provided adequate fit for the model (CFI = .940, TLI = .930, SRMR = .051, RMSEA = .062, $\chi^2$ (189) = 2766.88, $p < .001$). After fitting the structural model, minor changes in the factor loadings and correlation coefficients were observed. The estimates corresponding to the main latent variables are shown in Table 2, while the factor loadings associated with the first-order factors, observed variables and correlation matrix of the observed variables are presented in the Appendix.

Table 2
*Standardised Factor Loadings, Standard Errors and Residual Variances*

| | Estimate (S.E.) | Residual variance |
|---|---|---|
| *Counselling self-efficacy* (28%) | | |
| Helping skills | .953 (.031) | .091 |
| Session management | .954 (.022) | .089 |
| Difficulties in counselling | .827 (.038) | .316 |
| *General self-efficacy* (55%) | | |
| Starting | .712 (.042) | .493 |
| Persistence | .892 (.025) | .655 |
| Resilience | .587 (.051) | .204 |

*Note.* S.E.: Standard errors. All of the estimates are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 2 shows that the factor loadings for the two main variables were high, which implies good convergent validity. These two variables also provided a sufficient amount of explained variance. Considering the structural model, positive affect, negative affect and general self-efficacy accounted for 28% of the variance in counselling self-efficacy. Similarly, positive affect and negative affect explained 55% of the variance in general self-efficacy.

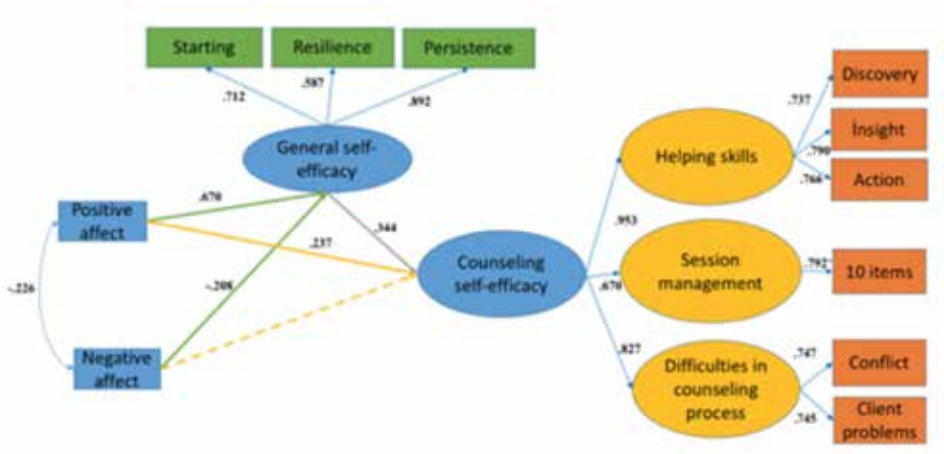


Figure 1. Graphical representation of the structural model.
Note. All of the regression coefficients in the model were standardised. The dashed line represents no statistically significant effect. The error terms were also omitted. + represents the average of the 10 factor loadings, with the individual estimates shown in the Appendix.

Table 3 presents all of the standardised effects estimated in the model. Overall, the tested model produced four statistically significant direct effects and one statistically significant indirect effect.

In order to interpret the results in Table 3, first, note that the direct effect of general self-efficacy on counselling self-efficacy was $\beta$ = .344 (.114), after controlling for negative and positive affect. The higher the general self-efficacy of a psychological counsellor candidate, the higher his/her counselling self-efficacy. Second, note that only positive affect in the PANAS had a statistically significant effect on counselling self-efficacy ($\beta$ = .237 (.102)). Since a psychological counsellor candidate has more positive affect, it is most likely that he/she would have higher counselling self-efficacy, after controlling for general self-efficacy and negative affect. However, negative affect did not have a statistically significant direct effect on counselling self-efficacy ($\beta$ = .054 (.073)). In addition, general self efficacy was affected by both positive affect and negative affect ($\beta$ = .670 (.045) and $\beta$ = -.208 (.062)). As positive affect increases, it is expected that a psychological counsellor candidate would have higher general self-efficacy. Conversely, as lower negative affect decreases, it is expected that such counsellors would also have higher general self-efficacy. Moreover, the two affect

Table 3
*Standardised Direct, İndirect and Total Effects with the Respective Standard Errors*

| From | Mediator | To | Direct effect (S.E.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Specific effects* | | | |
| General self-efficacy | - | Counselling self-efficacy | .344 (.114)*** |
| Negative affect | - | Counselling self-efficacy | .054 (.073) |
| Positive affect | - | Counselling self-efficacy | .237 (.102)* |
| Negative affect | - | General self-efficacy | -.208 (.062)** |
| Positive affect | - | General self-efficacy | .670 (.045)*** |
| *Indirect effects* | | | |
| Negative affect | General self-efficacy | Counselling self-efficacy | -.071 (.032)* |
| Positive affect | General self-efficacy | Counselling self-efficacy | .230 (.079)** |
| *Total effects* | | | |
| From | To | Total (S.E.) | |
| Negative affect | Counselling self-efficacy | -.018 (.075) | |
| Positive affect | Counselling self-efficacy | .467 (.060)*** | |
| *Covariations/Error correlations* | | | |
| | Estimate(S.E.) | | |
| *Session management* Item 16–Item 27 | .317 (.080)*** | | |
| Item 18–Item 24 | -.331 (.100)** | | |
| Positive-Negative affect | -.226 (.059)*** | | |

*Note.* Statistically significant effects ***$p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. S.E.: Standard errors

variables had an indirect effect on counselling self-efficacy (through general self-efficacy), and the indirect effect of positive affect was statistically significant, positive and strong ($\beta$ = .230 (.079)). This result can be interpreted as follows. First, every increase in positive affect contributes to an increase in general self-efficacy. Then, this increase in general self-efficacy explains the higher scores in counselling self-efficacy. Next, the indirect effect of negative affect was statistically significant, negative and relatively weak ($\beta = -.071$ (.032)). Thus, the same inference can be made for negative affect about the mediating role of general self-efficacy on counselling self-efficacy. It is important to note that the overall impact (both direct and indirect) of positive affect on counsellor self-efficacy was statistically significant ($\beta = .467$ (.060)). In terms of a comparative effect on counsellor self-efficacy, this indicates that the influence of positive affect is stronger on counsellor self-efficacy than on general self-efficacy.

Finally, there were two correlated residuals in the model that belonged to session management. The two errors were based on the theory that the omission of these correlations might lead to inaccurate results in the model, especially in regard to validating the latent variables. The magnitude of the covariation can be interpreted as the extent to which these two items share a unique aspect and do not belong to session management (Kline, 2015). Overall, the effects are generally due to relative answers (i.e. when a participant compares his/her answers) and method effects.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the structural relationships between positive-negative affect, general self-efficacy and psychological counselling self-efficacy among a sample of psychological counsellor candidates. For this purpose, the correlation values between the variables were first examined. It was found that there were significant positive relationships between the sub-dimensions of psychological counselling self-efficacy and positive affect. At the same time, there was a significant positive relationship between positive affect and the sub-dimension of general self-efficacy. In other words, positive affect has a significant impact on both general self-efficacy and psychological self-efficacy. It was also found that general self-efficacy strongly influenced psychological self-efficacy. These findings indicate the importance of both general self-efficacy and positive affect in psychological counselling self-efficacy. Moreover, when the effects of these two variables on psychological counselling self-efficacy and general self-efficacy were compared, positive affect had a greater effect on the former than the latter.

After conducting a review of the relevant literature, theoretical explanations and other research findings supported the findings of this study. The results obtained in this context are presented as follows. First, the findings showed that positive affect had a strong influence on general self-efficacy. Numerous studies have indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between positive affect and general self-efficacy, whereas there is a significant but less negative relationship between negative affect and general self-efficacy (Martinez-Mart & Ruch, 2017; Zhang, 2016). The common emphasis in these studies was that positive affect has a strong influence on general self-efficacy and this influence was higher than negative affect. In support of these studies, Kaimal and Ray (2017), in their experimental study on increasing positive affect among nurse candidates, found that self-efficacy also increased.

As stated in the introduction of the present study, one of the most important variables for determining general self-efficacy is the emotional state of an individual when performing an activity (Bandura, 1994). In addition, self-efficacy determines an individual's ability to initiate a behaviour, make necessary efforts to achieve this behaviour and overcome obstacles during the behaviour. It is well known that individuals with positive general affect have higher levels of general self-efficacy, which can be seen when initiating, maintaining and persisting on a task (Pajares, 1996). Positive affect also has a significant effect on resilience, one of the dimensions of self-efficacy. Moreover, previous studies have shown that positive affect can help broaden one's attention, improve his/her analytical thinking skills and see the 'big picture' by being aware of the surrounding environment (Frederikson, 2000; Hefferon & Boniwell, 2014; Worth & Mackie, 1987). These theoretical discourses also support the findings of the present study.

To date, there have been no direct studies on the relationship between counselling self-efficacy and the emotions of psychological counsellor candidates. However, there have been indirect studies that support the findings of the present study. For instance, Staw, Sutton, and Pelled (1996) emphasised the close relationship between positive affect and self-efficacy among employees in various fields. Similarly, in their study of psychological counsellors, Ekşi, İsmuk, and Parlak (2015) found positive relationships between job satisfaction, psychological counselling self-efficacy and active listening skills. Topal (2011) reported that there were significant relationships between the positive emotions of university students and their problem-oriented coping skills during stressful situations. This finding also supports the results of the present study in regard to maintaining positive emotions during stressful psychological counselling situations. Other supportive results include Mürtezaoğlu (2015), who found that school managers with high positive emotions have higher school management self-efficacy, and Doğan and Özdevecioğlu (2009), who indicated that there was a significant relationship between the positive emotions of nurses and their performance levels. Based on these findings, it can be stated that the positive emotions of psychological counsellors are important variables in counselling self-efficacy.

Another important finding is the different effects of positive and negative emotions on psychological self-efficacy. According to the results, even though there was a significant relationship between psychological self-efficacy and positive affect, there was no significant relationship between the former and negative affect. These different effects of positive and negative emotions on psychological self-efficacy are consistent with the findings in the literature. In addition, the related literature suggests that positive and negative affect, which seem to be the opposite of one another, are actually independent of one another. More specifically, an individual may have high values in both positive and negative emotions, low values in both or high values in one emotion and low values in the other (Diener, 1984; Jain, Malhotra, & Guan, 2012; Watson & Clark, 1984). Previous studies also support this finding. For example, Karataş and Uzun (2016) examined the relationship between university students' self-efficacy and anxiety. The findings indicated that, while there were significant relationships between self-efficacy and functional anxiety among the students, there were no significant relationships between their self-efficacy and negative anxiety. Similarly, Mürtezaoğlu (2015) found that the relationship between school management self-efficacy and positive affect among school administrators was higher than such self-efficacy and negative affect, while Yalnız (2014) found that 13% of the academic self-efficacy of university students could be explained by positive emotions, while 6% could be explained by negative emotions. Furthermore, after examining the correlation matrix in Özdemir's (2015) research, an insignificant relationship was found between negative emotions and positive emotions in the opposite direction. Although these studies were conducted with different groups, all of them indicated that positive emotions tend to

be more effective than negative emotions, and that these two emotional states are not exactly the opposite of one another.

Another important result is that general self-efficacy can have a strong influence on psychological counselling self-efficacy. This conclusion highlights the importance of general self-efficacy perceptions in counselling self-efficacy, which is an important variable in maintaining the effectiveness of psychological counsellors. As shown earlier, general self-efficacy includes the dimensions of starting, resilience, and persistence, whereas in counselling self-efficacy, there are the dimensions of initiating the counselling process, maintaining it efficiently and effectively coping with any problems. From this perspective, it is understandable that, if the general self-efficacy levels of individuals are high, then their counselling self-efficacy levels should also be high. According to Curry (2007), effective psychological counsellors utilize their professional knowledge and skills as well as their beliefs about counselling as a whole. In addition, psychological counsellors with high psychological counselling self-efficacy tend to have greater confidence and the ability to easily overcome any problems in the process. In other words, they perform their professional activities more effectively and efficiently (Beutler, Machado, & Neufeldt, 1994; Sharpley & Ridgway, 1993; Yam & Ilhan, 2016).

According to Daniels and Larson (2001), psychological counselling self-efficacy positively affects difficulties in the counseling process, session management and helping skills. Conversely, it has been suggested that psychological counsellor candidates should develop their self-competence before working as counsellors in order to increase their professional qualifications (İkiz & Totan, 2014). Ekşi et al. (2015) stated that active listening skills (one of the basic psychological counselling skills) is extremely effective when psychological counsellors' self-efficacy is high. As a supporting finding, Çapri and Demiröz (2016) found significant positive relationships between the self-efficacy of psychological counsellor candidates and the characteristics of effective counsellors. These discourses not only indicate the importance of general self-efficacy in psychological counselling, but they confirm the findings of the present study.

Finally, this study showed that SEM can be instrumental in determining the impact of general self-efficacy on the relationship between positive affect and psychological counselling self-efficacy. According to this finding, as positive affect increases, general self-efficacy also increases, and such increases have a positive and significant impact on the level of psychological counselling self-efficacy. All of these findings indicate that both positive affect and general self-efficacy among psychological counsellors will undoubtedly have a positive role in community healthcare. On the one hand, psychological counselling is a profession that requires considerable

professional knowledge and skills, while on the other hand, it is a field of study that is difficult to maintain in terms of its nature and traits. For this reason, it is important to consider other variables (e.g. higher education institutions) that play important roles in training future psychological counsellors. In this context, it is suggested that the academicians who educate these counsellors should focus on the emotions (both positive and negative) of their students in order to increase their overall self-efficacy.

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## Appendix

Table 4
*Correlation Coefficients among the Variables in this Study*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Discovery | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Insight | .568 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Action | .493 | .671 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4. Conflict | .340 | .431 | .438 | 1 | | | | | |
| 5. Client problem | .459 | .443 | .402 | .541 | 1 | | | | |
| 6. Starting | .324 | .169 | .144 | .202 | .396 | 1 | | | |
| 7. Resilience | .379 | .34 | .277 | .295 | .477 | .658 | 1 | | |
| 8. Persistence | .172 | .317 | .361 | .319 | .388 | .382 | .499 | 1 | |
| 9. Positive affect | .287 | .359 | .416 | .290 | .466 | .451 | .639 | .517 | 1 |
| 10. Negative affect | -.128 | -.148 | -.070 | -.135 | -.188 | -.336 | -.302 | -.168 | 0.226 |

Table 5
*Standardised Factor Loadings and Residual Variances of the First-Order Factors and Observed Variables*

| | Estimates | S.E. | Residual variance |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Helping skills* (91%) | | | |
| Discovery | .737 | .042 | .458 |
| Insight | .790 | .032 | .375 |
| Action | .766 | .037 | .413 |
| *Session management* (92%) | | | |
| Item 16 | .769 | .028 | .409 |
| Item 17 | .833 | .027 | .307 |
| Item 18 | .828 | .022 | .315 |
| Item 19 | .731 | .039 | .466 |
| Item 20 | .805 | .034 | .352 |
| Item 21 | .761 | .039 | .421 |
| Item 22 | .800 | .040 | .360 |
| Item 23 | .789 | .026 | .377 |
| Item 24 | .832 | .021 | .308 |
| Item 25 | .779 | .031 | .392 |
| *Difficulties in counselling* (69%) | | | |
| Conflict | .747 | .052 | .472 |
| Client problems | .745 | .045 | .445 |
| *Negative affect* (12%) | | | |
| Item 2 | .668 | .055 | .554 |
| Item 4 | .631 | .063 | .602 |
| Item 6 | .550 | .074 | .698 |
| Item 7 | .428 | .101 | .817 |
| Item 8 | .444 | .079 | .803 |
| Item 11 | .627 | .080 | .606 |
| Item 13 | .364 | .092 | .868 |
| Item 15 | .556 | .090 | .691 |
| Item 18 | .521 | .079 | .728 |
| Item 20 | .470 | .108 | .779 |
| *Positive affect* (26%) | | | |
| Item 1 | .463 | .059 | .785 |
| Item 3 | .297 | .066 | .912 |
| Item 5 | .701 | .047 | .509 |
| Item 9 | .582 | .055 | .661 |
| Item 10 | .482 | .063 | .768 |
| Item 12 | .541 | .050 | .708 |
| Item 14 | .456 | .069 | .792 |
| Item 16 | .643 | .066 | .587 |
| Item 17 | .361 | .069 | .870 |
| Item 19 | .742 | .052 | .450 |

*Note.* S.E.: Standard errors. The numbers in parentheses are the explained variances. All of the estimates are statistically significant at $p < .001$.