

Investigating the Relationship between Attachment and Marital Satisfaction in Couples' Marital Experiences

Büşra GİDER^{1*}  Hatice BUDAK² 

¹ Konya, Türkiye

² KTO Karatay University, The Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Sociology Department, Konya, Türkiye

Article Info

Received: 23.12.2023

Accepted: 28.09.2024

Published: 30.09.2024

Keywords:

Marriage Experience,
Attachment in
Marriage,
Marital Satisfaction.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the relationship between attachment and marital satisfaction in couples' marital experiences. The study included 601 married individuals selected by criterion sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, and fifteen married couples were interviewed separately. This research was designed using Creswell's simultaneous triangulation design, one of the mixed method designs. The data were collected using the Personal Information Form, Relationship Scales Questionnaire, Marital Life Scale, and Semi-structured Interview Form prepared by the researchers. The findings of the study revealed that the participants' gender, educational status, type of marriage, fearful attachment, and preoccupied attachment styles did not predict marital satisfaction. In contrast, secure attachment styles positively predicted marital satisfaction, whereas dismissing attachment styles negatively predicted marital satisfaction. In the study, it was concluded that the type of marriage has no effect on marital continuity and satisfaction and that the character traits of the spouses and the way they behave towards each other, the presence of understanding, love, interest, happiness, and peace between the spouses and having children are more determinant. The findings obtained from the study were discussed in line with the relevant literature, and suggestions were made for research and practice.



Çiftlerin Evlilik Deneyimlerinde Bağlanma ve Evlilik Doyumu İlişkisinin İncelenmesi

Makale Bilgisi

Geliş: 23.12.2023
Kabul: 28.09.2024
Yayın: 30.09.2024

Anahtar Kelimeler:
Evlilik Deneyimi,
Evlilikte Bağlanma,
Evlilikte Doyum.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada çiftlerin evlilik deneyimlerinde bağlanma ve evlilik doyumunun ilişkisinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmaya amaçlı örneklem yöntemlerinden ölçüt örneklem yöntemi ile seçilmiş 601 evli birey seçilmiş ve örneklem içinden on beş evli çift ile ayrıca görüşme yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma Creswell'in karma yöntem tasarımlarından biri olan eşzamanlı üçgenleme tasarımı ile desenlenmiştir. Araştırmadaki veriler araştırmanın alt amaçları doğrultusunda oluşturulan Kişisel Bilgi Formu, İlişki Ölçekleri Anketi, Evlilik Yaşam Ölçeği ve araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan Yarı Yapılandırılmış Görüşme Formu ile toplanmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre katılımcıların cinsiyet, eğitim durumu, evlenme şekli, korkulu bağlanma ve saplantılı bağlanma stillerinin evlilik doyum düzeylerini yordamadığı bulunurken, güvenli bağlanma stillerinin evlilik doyumunu pozitif yönde, kayıtsız bağlanma stillerinin ise negatif yönde yordadığı görülmüştür. Araştırmada evlenme şeklinin, evliliğin devamlılığına ve doyuma etkisinin olmadığı, eşlerin karakter özelliklerinin ve birbirlerine karşı davranış şekillerinin, eşler arasında anlayış, sevgi, ilgi, mutluluk, huzurun bulunması ile çocuk sahibi olmanın daha belirleyici olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular ilgili literatür doğrultusunda tartışılarak araştırma ve uygulamaya yönelik önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

To cite this article:

Gider, B., & Budak, H. (2024). Investigating the relationship between attachment and marital satisfaction in couples' marital experiences. *Ahmet Keleşoğlu Faculty of Education Journal (AKEF)*, 6(2), 312-334. <https://doi.org/10.38151/akef.2024.144>

*Corresponding Author: Büşra Gider, busraonge@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

There are steps in the biopsychosocial development process of an individual that cause some changes in his/her life, one of which is marriage. Marriage is an institutionalized system of relationships that binds couples together and unites them in a common life (Özdemir, 2023). The continuity of marriage, which has important functions for the individual and social system, depends on the mutual satisfaction of the biological, social, and psychological needs and motives of the couples (Zhungalbekov & Efilti, 2023; Dilmaç & Bakırcıoğlu, 2019). In addition, the characteristic features of individuals, upbringing conditions, the place where they grew up, the values they adopt (Dilmaç & Bakırcıoğlu, 2019), the mutual trust levels of spouses, and the reactions they give in their interactions (Kılıçaslan, 2007) are also important in the harmonious maintenance of marriages.

It has been determined that communication style, division of labor within the household, habits in household life, ways of spending money, and the balance they establish between family and career are the main issues in which married individuals differ in their marital relationship. The basis of these differentiations is how individuals describe their spouses, themselves, and their relationships (Yılmaz & Kağan, 2022).

Conflict is as normal as harmony and satisfaction between spouses. In case of conflict in marital life for any reason, spouses should focus on perceiving the conflict correctly and managing it effectively rather than focusing on the content of the conflict to ensure marital satisfaction (Yılmaz & Kağan, 2022). Even though conflictual areas do not always radically disrupt marital life, when the transition process is not completed healthily, adaptation to the next stage becomes difficult, and the negativities experienced by couples deepen (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988).

One of the factors that are effective in the healthy continuation of marriages is attachment. Attachment is a lifelong model that starts with the individual's birth, develops at an early age, is transferred to advanced ages, and includes the feedback and attachment styles that the individual creates towards the individuals he/she considers important for himself/herself (Bowlby, 1969). In line with this definition, it can be said that attachment has a broad content covering emotional bonds with parents, siblings, friends, and romantic relationships (Colin, 1996).

Attachment theory is primarily concerned with the infant and childhood years. John Bowlby's studies are pivotal in the categorisation of childhood attachment styles. The literature identifies Mary Ainsworth as the second pioneer of attachment theory (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Ainsworth mentioned three types of attachment styles which are secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant (Ainsworth, et al., 1978). Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1989) posit that the physiological and emotional needs of the infant are met by the mother or caregiver. The early attachment style, which develops and is internalised at the heart of the relationship between the infant and the caregiver, is a determining factor in interpersonal relationships in both childhood and adulthood (Bartholomew, 1990; Şahin & Hamarta, 2022). Furthermore, Bartholomew (1990) posits that an individual's initial attachment experience during childhood is also associated with the challenges they may encounter in their marital relationships, the manifestation of neurotic symptoms, and the prevalence of personality disorders.

In terms of adult attachment styles, the model developed by Bartholomew and Horowitz stands out. Bartholomew and Horowitz's model continues Bowlby's view that the attachment style developed in childhood influences the attachment tendencies observed in adulthood. In addition to this intellectual heritage, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) developed a novel model, the Quadruple Attachment Model, which incorporates a positive dimension into the original triple attachment model proposed by Hazan and Shaver (1987). In the quadruple attachment model, the positive and negative mental perceptions of the person towards himself/herself and others determine how the person will experience

his/her relationships and attachment styles differ as a result of the relationship. These different attachment styles are secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). In this study, Bartholomew's Quadruple Attachment Model was used to determine adult attachment styles.

Secure attachment is defined as the individual's ability to comfortably establish intimacy with other people, strong adaptation to new environments and coping skills to cope with stress, openness to receiving and giving support from the social environment, believing that the people with whom the relationship is established are trustworthy, positive personality perception and the ability to remain autonomous (Collins, 1996; Saraç, 2021; Balcı, 2011).

Preoccupied attachment refers to the individual's feeling that he/she is generally worthless and undeserving of love, experiencing fear of abandonment in close relationships and trying to prove himself/herself (Bakiler & Satan, 2020), having a negative perception in evaluating his/her self and a positive perception in evaluating his/her partner or close environment (İlhan & Özdemir, 2012).

The main characteristic of the fearful attachment style is that although the individual wants to establish intimacy with others, this situation often cannot go beyond desire. The possibility of being hurt and rejected by others prevents the person from taking steps towards a relationship (Bakiler & Satan, 2020). Individuals with fearful attachment styles think that other people do not want to get close to them because they do not consider themselves worthless, unlucky, and unworthy of being loved (Çetinkaya, 2017).

Lastly, dismissing attachment style is when the individual perceives others negatively while evaluating himself/herself positively. In this attachment style, individuals tend to give up close relationships and prefer independence to avoid rejection and disappointment. Those with an indifferent attachment style tend to perceive social relationships as superfluous and uninteresting. Furthermore, these individuals demonstrate a lack of trust in their partners and exhibit minimal investment in their relationships. By acting this way, they increase their level of being free and strong and their self-esteem (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Feeney, 2002; Terzi & Çankaya, 2009).

Individuals' attachment styles can affect their decisions to choose a spouse candidate, the type of relationship they establish with their spouse, the level of satisfaction obtained from marriage, and their ability to cope with problems that may be experienced in the relationship in different ways (Ertan, 2002). For example, Eryorulmaz (2010) stated that individuals with secure attachment styles evaluate their marriages as satisfying, while individuals with anxious/ambivalent attachment styles are preoccupied with questions such as what the marriage will give or take from them.

Another important issue that is closely related to attachment in individuals' marital experiences is satisfaction. Marital satisfaction includes the value that couples give to each other and the subjective feelings they perceive, and the psychological satisfaction obtained from variables such as love, respect, sexuality, material and spiritual cooperation, and sharing (Binici, 2000; Erbek et al., 2005; Sokolski & Hendrick, 1999).

Looking at the studies investigating the factors affecting marital satisfaction, it is seen that there is a relationship between the positive meanings that couples attribute to marriage and relationships (Özabacı, 2019), reinforced learned behaviors (Barker, 1998) spouses' achievement of personal goals (Burr, 1970), personality traits (Eskin, 2012), and marital satisfaction. Çelik (2018) states in his study that couples' investment in the relationship and the stability level of the relationship are related to marital satisfaction. Hinde (1997) stated that couples should be satisfied with their marriages to have high levels of happiness, while Muezzinoğlu (2014) concluded in his study that couples who evaluate relationship satisfaction as high also have high levels of commitment to the relationship. It is known that spouses who have problem-solving and conflict-management skills when encountering problems in their marital

experiences have high relationship satisfaction (Petch, 2006). In contrast, couples with low relationship satisfaction have difficulty staying calm in times of stress and remain dismissing to their spouses (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989).

It is thought that examining the attachment and satisfaction levels of married individuals is important for the healthy continuation of marriage, which is the first step in establishing the family, the central institution of the social system. In this regard, the study aims to examine the relationship between attachment and marital satisfaction in couples' marital experiences and to describe their perspectives on attachment and satisfaction processes.

Depending on the purpose of the research, the following questions were sought to be answered.

1. Is there a significant difference between couples' attachment styles and marital satisfaction levels depending on gender, educational level, and marriage type?
2. Is there a significant relationship between couples' attachment styles and marital satisfaction scores?
3. Do couples' sociodemographic characteristics and attachment styles predict their marital satisfaction levels?
4. What are the views of the couples on the bond between spouses and their marital satisfaction experiences?
5. What are the views of the couples on the factors affecting the continuity of marriage and marital satisfaction?

METHOD

Research Model

This study was modeled using a mixed method in which qualitative and quantitative research methods are applied together. The mixed method is defined as a method in which the limitations of both approaches can be minimized by combining quantitative and qualitative methods, and various aspects of the research subject can be comprehended with a holistic understanding (Creswell, 2014; Baki & Gökçek, 2012).

In the study, the mixed method was preferred for the purpose of complementarity, that is, to elaborate and exemplify the results obtained from the quantitative design with the results of the qualitative design (Alkan et al., 2019). The mixed method design used in the study is based on Creswell's (2009, p.213) "concurrent triangulation strategy". In this design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously. The data analysis is done separately, and the combination of the data is usually done at the interpretation stage with qualitative exemplifications that support or refute the quantitative results following the quantitative statistical results.

Study Group

The participants of the study is married couples in Turkey. Both the quantitative and qualitative samples of the study consisted of married couples residing in Konya, selected by the criterion sampling technique, one of the purposive sampling methods. The criterion determining the sample is that the marital experience is ten years or more. Data from 601 individuals constituting the quantitative study group were obtained through online methods. The qualitative study group was 15 married couples selected from the quantitative study group voluntarily, and data from 30 participants were obtained through face-to-face interviews.

Data Collection Tools and Processes

Personal Information Form

It consists of questions about the participants' gender, age, education level, duration of marriage, and type of marriage.

Relationship Scales Questionnaire

The Relationship Scales Questionnaire developed by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994: 435) was adapted into Turkish by Sümer and Güngör (1999). There are 17 items on the scale. Items 5, 7, and 17 are reverse coding. The scale has four sub-dimensions which are secure attachment style, fearful attachment style, preoccupied attachment style, and dismissing attachment style. Total scores reflecting the four attachment styles are obtained by summing the items that aim to measure these styles and dividing this sum by the number of items in each scale. The continuous scores obtained are also used to group the participants within attachment styles. The internal consistency coefficients of the subscales vary between 0.27 and 0.61, and the test-retest reliability of the scale varies between 0.54 and 0.78 (Sümer & Güngör, 1999). For this study, Cronbach's α coefficients were examined and it was found that the relationship scales survey had a value of .76.

Marital Life Scale

The "Marital Life Scale" developed by Tezer (1996) was used to determine the marital satisfaction levels of the participants. The scale consists of 10 items prepared in 5-point Likert type, numbered 2, 4, and 5, which are reverse scored. The highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 50, and the lowest score is 10. A high score on this scale indicates high marital satisfaction. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.85, and the internal consistency coefficient was 0.91 in the first application and 0.89 in the second application group. These findings indicate that the Marital Life scale is highly reliable (Tezer, 1996). In order to test the reliability of the marital life scale used within the scope of the research, Cronbach's α coefficients were examined and it was determined that the scale had a value of .88.

Semi-structured Interview Form

In the interview technique applied to collect the qualitative data of the study, a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers and consisting of a total of 15 questions was used. This form consists of questions that are directly related to understanding marital attachment, satisfaction, and marital experience.

Data Analysis

In the quantitative part of the study, the distribution of the married individuals who participated according to their sociodemographic characteristics was determined by frequency analysis, and descriptive statistics related to their scores from the Relationship Scales Questionnaire and the Marital Life Scale were shown. The normal distribution of the scale scores was examined by considering Kolmogorov-Smirnov, QQ graph kurtosis, and skewness values, and it was determined that they fit the normal distribution. Accordingly, parametric hypothesis tests were preferred in the study. Hierarchical linear regression analysis was applied to examine the effect of some sociodemographic characteristics of married individuals included in the study and the Relationship Scales Questionnaire on the Marital Life Scale. All tests were based on $\alpha=0.05$ significance level.

Since the participants were interviewed in pairs for the qualitative data of the study, the coding was done by taking this situation into account. For example, K1 and E1 are couples. Content analysis technique was used to analyze the interviews with fifteen married couples. The codes made separately

by the researchers and a co-coder, considered effective in the content analysis technique, were compared, and themes were formed based on the agreed codes.

Ethics

Ethics committee permission was obtained for this research with the decision number 2022/04/02 with the evaluation of KTO Karatay University Human Research Ethics Committee dated 29.04.2022.

RESULTS

A total of 601 people participated in the study; Of this population, 52.1% (313) were men and 47.9% (288) were women. While 10.6% (64) of the participants were primary school graduates, 20.5% (123) were secondary school graduates, 36.3% (218) were high school graduates, 23.1% (139) were university graduates, 9.5% (57) were higher education graduates, 53.7% (323) were arranged marriages, 43.4% (261) were dating marriages, and 2.8% (17) were eloped marriages. The lowest age of the participants was 27, and the highest was 60, with an average age of 41.16. The lowest duration of marital experience was ten years, the highest was 43 years, and the average duration of marriage was 17.32 years.

The findings obtained regarding the purpose and sub-purpose of the study are given below.

Table 1

Comparison of Participants' Scores from Relationship Scales Questionnaire and Marital Life Scale by Gender

	Sub-Dimensions	Gender	n	\bar{x}	Ss.	t	p
Relationship Scales Questionnaire	Secure Attachment	Female	313	4,26	1,488	-2,547	,011
		Male	288	4,57	1,521		
	Fearful Attachment	Female	313	3,60	1,701	2,258	,024
		Male	288	3,29	1,671		
	Preoccupied Attachment	Female	313	3,84	1,193	1,817	,070
		Male	288	3,66	1,184		
	Dismissing Attachment	Female	313	3,49	1,610	2,516	,012
		Male	288	3,17	1,533		
Marital Life Scale	Female	313	31,37	12,009	-1,453	,147	
	Male	288	32,85	13,026			

Independent sample t-test was used to compare the scores of married individuals by gender in the Relationship Scales Questionnaire. When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the scores of married individuals from the Relationship Scales Questionnaire and the secure attachment ($t_{599}=-2,54$, $p<0.05$), fearful attachment ($t_{599}=2,25$, $p<0.05$) and dismissing attachment ($t_{599}=2,51$, $p<0.05$) sub-dimensions, whereas there was no significant difference between the scores obtained from the preoccupied attachment ($t_{599}=1,81$, $p>0.05$) sub-dimension according to gender.

When the arithmetic averages were analyzed to determine the source of the difference, it was determined that the mean scores of men were significantly higher than women in the secure attachment sub-dimension, the mean scores of women were significantly higher than men in the fearful attachment sub-dimension, and the mean scores of women were significantly higher than men in the dismissing attachment sub-dimension. Table 1 shows no significant difference between the participants' mean marital life satisfaction scores regarding on gender ($t_{599}=-1,45$, $p>0.05$).

In line with the findings obtained, it can be said that secure attachment, fearful attachment, and dismissing attachment styles differ according to gender. Specifically, secure attachment scores are higher for males, while fearful and dismissing attachment scores are higher for females. However,

preoccupied attachment style and marital life satisfaction do not differ by gender.

Table 2

Comparison of Participants' Scores from Relationship Scales Questionnaire and Marital Life Scale by Educational Background

		Education Status	n	\bar{x}	Ss	f	p	Difference
Secure Attachment		Primary School	64	4,88	1,457	5,722	,000*	Secondary School>Higher Education
		Middle School	123	4,21	1,426			High School>Higher Education
		High School	218	4,33	1,566			University>Higher Education
		University	139	4,22	1,463			
		Higher Education	57	5,07	1,401			
Fearful Attachment		Primary School	64	2,94	1,399	6,534	,000*	Primary School>Middle School
		Middle School	123	3,80	1,659			Secondary School>Higher Education
		High School	218	3,53	1,724			High School>Higher Education
		University	139	3,58	1,744			University>Higher Education
		Higher Education	57	2,65	1,477			
Preoccupied Attachment		Primary School	64	3,81	1,306	3,901	,004*	High School>Higher Education
		Middle School	123	3,72	1,009			University>Higher Education
		High School	218	3,84	1,223			
		University	139	3,85	1,264			
		Higher Education	57	3,18	,971			
Dismissing Attachment		Primary School	64	2,76	1,321	3,812	,005*	Middle School>Primary School
		Middle School	123	3,64	1,625			
		High School	218	3,42	1,554			
		University	139	3,29	1,596			
		Higher Education	57	3,12	1,652			
Marital Life Scale		Primary School	64	36,20	13,337	3,900	,004*	Primary School>University
		Middle School	123	31,64	11,326			
		High School	218	31,44	12,744			
		University	139	30,16	12,413			
		Higher Education	57	35,54	12,149			

The ANOVA results for the comparison of the scores of married individuals according to their education level from the Relationship Scales Questionnaire and the Marital Life Scale are given in Table 2.

Table 2 presents that the secure attachment scores of the participants showed significant differentiation according to their educational status. Scheffe test was applied to determine the source of the difference between the mean scores of secure attachment, and it was found that higher education graduates were significantly higher than primary school, secondary school, high school, and university graduates ($F=5965,72, p<.05$).

The scores of fearful attachment styles, which is the second sub-dimension of attachment styles, showed significant differentiation according to educational status. The mean scores of the fearful attachment style revealed that secondary school graduates were significantly higher than primary school graduates, and higher education graduates were significantly higher than secondary school, high school, and university graduates ($F=596,53$, $p<.05$).

It was found that the mean scores of preoccupied attachment, another sub-dimension of attachment styles, differed significantly according to the educational level of the participants and that high school graduates had higher scores than university graduates and university graduates had higher scores than higher education graduates ($F=596,3,90$, $p<.05$).

It was observed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the last sub-dimension of attachment style, dismissing attachment, and the educational status of the participants and that the scores of secondary school graduates were significantly higher than those of primary school graduates ($F=596,3,81$, $p<.05$).

In Table 2, it was found that the mean scores of married individuals on the Marital Life Scale showed a significant difference according to their educational status. Accordingly, the scores of primary school graduates were significantly higher than those of university graduates ($F=596,3,90$, $p<.05$).

Table 3

Comparison of Participants' Scores from the Relationship Scales Survey and Married Life Scale, According to Marriage Type

	Type Of Marriage	n	\bar{x}	Ss	f	p	Difference
Secure Attachment	Arranged marriage	323	4,45	1,503	,240	,787	—
	Dating marriage	261	4,37	1,525			
	Eloped marriage	17	4,27	1,507			
	Total	601	4,41	1,511			
Fearful Attachment	Arranged marriage	323	3,37	1,616	1,710	,182	—
	Dating marriage	261	3,50	1,773			
	Eloped marriage	17	4,10	1,772			
	Total	601	3,45	1,692			
Preoccupied Attachment	Arranged marriage	323	3,77	1,176	,217	,805	—
	Dating marriage	261	3,72	1,216			
	Eloped marriage	17	3,87	1,153			
	Total	601	3,75	1,191			
Dismissing Attachment	Arranged marriage	323	3,30	1,568	,828	,437	—
	Dating marriage	261	3,36	1,587			
	Eloped marriage	17	3,79	1,720			
	Total	601	3,34	1,580			
Marital Life Scale	Arranged marriage	323	32,82	12,406	1,334	,264	—
	Dating marriage	261	31,13	12,665			
	Eloped marriage	17	32,71	12,103			
	Total	601	32,08	12,518			

As demonstrated in Table 3, the ANOVA test for the comparison of the participants' Relationship Scales Questionnaire and Marital Life Scale scores according to the type of marriage revealed that the type of marriage did not exert a significant influence on the level of attachment and marital satisfaction.

Table 4

Correlations Between Participants' Scores on the Relationship Scales Questionnaire and the Marital Life Scale

	1	2	3	4	5
Secure Attachment	-	-,685**	-,326**	-,444**	,548**
Fearful Attachment		-		,468**	-,376**
Preoccupied Attachment			-	-,121**	-,156**
Dismissing Attachment				-	-,326**
Marital Life Satisfaction					-

1=secure attachment, 2= fearful attachment, 3=preoccupied attachment, 4=dismissing attachment, 5=marital life satisfaction, **p<.01 level.

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that there is a negative and significant relationship between secure attachment and fearful attachment scores ($r=-.68$, $p<.01$), preoccupied attachment scores ($r=-.32$, $p<.01$), and dismissing attachment scores ($r=-.44$, $p<.01$) of married individuals, in addition to a positive and significant relationship between marital life satisfaction score ($r=.54$, $p<.01$).

It is seen that there is no significant relationship between the participants' fearful attachment and preoccupied attachment scores ($r=.07$, $p>.05$). However, there is a positive and significant relationship with the dismissing attachment score ($r=.46$, $p<.01$) and a negative and significant relationship with the marital life satisfaction score ($r=-.37$, $p<.01$).

There is a negative and significant relationship between preoccupied attachment and dismissing attachment scores ($r=-.12$, $p<.01$) and marital life satisfaction scores ($r=-.15$, $p<.01$). Also, a negative and significant relationship exists between the participants' dismissing attachment and marital life satisfaction scores ($r=-.32$, $p<.01$).

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis examining the effect of participants' sociodemographic characteristics and attachment styles on the level of Marital Life are presented in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5

The Effect of Some Sociodemographic Characteristics and Attachment Styles of the Participants on Marital Life Satisfaction

		B	Ss.	β	t	p
1	Participant's Gender	1,484	1,021	,059	1,453	,147
	Participant's Gender	1,707	1,034	,068	1,651	,099
2	Participant's Level of Education	-,364	,511	-,032	-,712	,477
	Participant's Method of Marriage	-1,047	1,018	-,046	-1,028	,304
	Participant's Gender	,119	,872	,005	,136	,892
3	Participant's Level of Education	-,424	,429	-,038	-,987	,324
	Participant's Method of Marriage	-,494	,855	-,022	-,578	,564
	Secure Attachment Subscale	4,306	,438	,520	9,839	,000*
	Fearful Attachment Subscale	,233	,364	,031	,640	,522
	Preoccupied Attachment Subscale	-,046	,405	-,004	-,114	,909
	Dismissing Attachment Subscale	-,859	,324	-,108	-2,648	,008*

Table 6

Summary Values for the Model

Model	R	R²	Flat. R²	ΔR²	F Difference	p
1	,059	,004	,002	,004	2,110	,147
2	,089	,008	,003	,004	1,323	,192
3	,559	,312	,304	,304	65,568	,000*

In Model 1, the effect of gender of individuals on marital life satisfaction was examined, and it was found that gender had no effect on marital life satisfaction. As evident in Model 2, gender, education level, and marriage type of married individuals had no effect on marital life satisfaction.

According to Model 3, it was determined that scores from the secure attachment sub-dimension in the relationship scales questionnaire positively influenced marital life satisfaction ($\beta=0.520$; $p<0.05$), while scores from the dismissing attachment sub-dimension had a negative effect ($\beta=-0.108$; $p<0.05$), both effects being statistically significant. The variance in marital life satisfaction is 30.4%. Thus, an increase in secure attachment scores enhances marital satisfaction, whereas an increase in dismissing attachment scores decreases marital satisfaction.

The results of the content analysis of the participant couples' answers to the question "What do you think about the relationship between spousal bonding and marital satisfaction?" are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Couples' Views on Spousal Bonding and Experiences of Marital Satisfaction

Theme	Category	Code
Communication between spouses	Positive Communication	Mutual interaction Meeting on common ground Problem-solving skills
	Negative Communication	One-way communication Using "you" language
Leisure activities	Spousal activity	Spending time together Not spending time together
	Activity with the social environment	Spending time with friends/family/children/grandchildren
Emotional bonding	Emotional attachment contributes to marital experience	Love Respect Trust Support
	Emotional attachment does not contribute to marital experience	Lack of emotional attachment

According to the results presented in Table 7, couples mostly stated that positive communication between spouses, which includes meeting on common ground, mutual interaction, and problem-solving skills; spending time together; and the emotional bond established with feelings of love, respect, trust, and support contribute to marital satisfaction. However, based on their own experiences, some couples indicated that negative communication style with their spouses, using accusatory language, not being able to spare time for each other, differences in interests, constant participation of family elders in the spouses' leisure time activities, and lack of emotional connection negatively affected their marital satisfaction.

Examples of statements regarding the participants' views are as follows:

"I think my husband and I have good communication. Of course, this has happened over time, but as we have gotten to know each other, some things have settled. For example, now, if I am angry, he understands immediately, if he is sad, I find the reason immediately. Sometimes, we communicate without even speaking." (K4)

"Our interaction is fluctuating. We actually think the same things, but we do not talk about the same things. As soon as it comes to talking about the problem, he immediately blames me. I have never been able to make my point in any argument. He explains himself, blames me, and closes the subject. Afterward, he is relieved, and I am exhausted." (K6)

"I think the biggest problem in today's marriages is lack of communication. I can say that healthy communication, the ability of the spouses to listen to each other and be understanding, and even if possible, good problem-solving skills are the keys to healthy and long-lasting marriages." (K3)

"I usually spend most of my free time with my wife; I want to devote my free time to the woman I love. We do all kinds of activities together. We play backgammon, watch movies, go boating. In fact, we try to do whatever activity is appropriate in our free time at that moment, whatever will entertain us in that period of time and whatever the opportunities allow us to do together." (E3)

"My wife and I do not do leisure activities. We do not like the same things." (E1)

"We cannot be alone a lot, since we live with my mother-in-law, they are present in every activity." (K9)

"Emotional bonds of trust, support, and feeling that you are there definitely contribute to the continuation of the marriage and the satisfaction of the marriage. If I can say that my spouse is with me no matter what happens, our marriage is peaceful and happy." (E2)

The results of the analysis of the answers to the question "What do you think are the factors affecting the continuity of marriage and marital satisfaction?" are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Couples' Views on the Factors Affecting the Continuity of Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

Theme	Category	Code
Personal Characteristics	Income level	Impact of income on family relationships
	Education level	Self-development
	Character traits	Behavior patterns
	Cultural differences	Culture clash
Mode of marriage	Marriage by flirting	Common experiences before marriage
	Arranged marriage	Shared experiences after marriage
Root family relationships	Positive effects	Taking family elders as role models
	Negative effects	Family elders' interference in marriage
	Root family history	Family life-based habits
Factors affecting satisfaction	Factors between spouses	Understanding
		Happiness/peace
		Care/attention
		Love
		Respect
Having a child	Spending time with children or grandchildren	Tolerance
		Diversion of satisfaction
Changes in marital satisfaction over time	Decreased satisfaction	Decreased satisfaction

As seen in Table 8, under the theme of "personal characteristics," the couples stated that adequate income level, education and self-development, positive character traits, and morally desirable behaviors contribute positively to the continuity and satisfaction of marriage, but that cultural conflicts between couples raised in different cultural environments may have negative effects on the marital experience.

Although the couples did not establish a direct relationship between the way of marriage and marital continuity and satisfaction, they indicated that common sharing during the dating period could contribute to the marital experience.

Couples mostly mentioned that root family relationships are also influential on the continuation of marriage and satisfaction, especially the interventions of family elders (especially in daughter-in-law-mother-in-law relationships) and the problems of spouses reflecting the negative behaviors and habits they see in their root families to their own marriage processes. They also indicated that spouses should not expose their marriages to the interventions of family elders by regulating their relations with the family of origin.

Among the criteria determining marital satisfaction, the couples emphasized the criterion of being understanding the most, followed by the variables of happiness, peace, love, and having children. In addition, the couples indicated that their marital satisfaction levels can change during the marriage and that the direction of this change is realized according to the needs and differentiated goals that manifest themselves over time rather than defining the direction of this change as negative or positive.

Some of the statements of the participants regarding the factors affecting the continuity of

marriage and marital satisfaction are as follows:

"Being financially well off and having similar personalities adds satisfaction and continuity to the marriage." (E1)

"...I was not even a high school graduate when I got married, and now I am studying open university. These things have improved me; maybe I learned how to be a better wife and mother, and I reflected it in my marriage." (K4)

"I think that the more well-mannered or characterful, heavy, determined your spouse is, the more satisfying and lasting the marriage will be." (K6)

"There are some situations where culturally different people do not have a satisfying and lasting marriage. This is because they have problems communicating and sharing with each other." (E3)

"For a long and healthy marriage, spouses should not let anyone come between them. They should at least keep their distance from their families. No one cares about your marriage but you." (K13)

"I think tolerance is the most important thing; after marriage, you see a person more closely and with the borders removed; if you do not tolerate some rough edges or if you are not understanding, it will not last." (E8)

"Approaching with love, being able to make you laugh even when you are unhappy, your partner's efforts for you determine our satisfaction." (K12)

"Marriage is something that grows and becomes more difficult with time; the satisfaction I got at the beginning of my marriage is different from now. Time can change you." (E1)

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, and RECOMMENDATIONS

Looking at the first finding of the study, it was found that there was a significant difference in secure attachment, fearful attachment, and dismissing attachment according to their gender, while there was no significant difference in preoccupied attachment. In Karaşar's (2014) study, it was found that there was a significant difference between the scores of secure and fearful attachment styles according to gender; there was no significant difference in terms of the scores obtained from preoccupied and dismissing attachment styles. In the recent study, no significant difference was found in marital satisfaction based on the participants' gender. This result is in line with the findings of Özşenel (2017). It is thought that these results are due to the increase in the modern nuclear family structure and the change of gender role patterns towards egalitarian attitudes in the relationships of spouses.

In the current study, the difference between the scores obtained from the secure attachment, fearful attachment, preoccupied attachment, and dismissing attachment sub-dimensions of the Relationship Scales Questionnaire according to the participants' educational level was found to be significant. There are studies in the literature that support the difference between the educational status of the participants and their attachment styles (Ateş, 2019; Erdem, 2015). Within the scope of this study, it was found that the mean scores of the participants' marital satisfaction showed a significant differentiation according to the educational status of the participants and that primary school graduates were significantly higher than university graduates. The findings of Osmanlı's (2023) study align with those of the current study. The study revealed that individuals who have completed either primary or secondary school report higher levels of marital satisfaction than those who have completed high school, undergraduate studies, or graduate studies. Unlike the research result, Öztahtacı (2017) found that marital satisfaction did not show a significant difference according to the educational status of the participants. It can be posited that individuals with a high level of education are more career-oriented and have different expectations from marriage, such as autonomy and romance. This may be a

contributing factor to low levels of marital satisfaction.

Within the scope of the study, no significant difference was found between the participants' marriage type and their scores on attachment styles and marital satisfaction. The finding obtained in the study is similar to the finding of Koca (2016) that there is no significant difference between the type of marriage and the mean attachment styles. In Berk's (2009) study, it is seen that there is no significant difference between the participants' marriage style and the marital satisfaction. When the literature on the subject is examined, there are some studies (Cingisiz, 2010; Houser, 2009) that found that individuals who married by agreement received more satisfaction from their marriages than those who married through arranged marriages, but unlike this result, there are studies showing that individuals who married through arranged marriages received high levels of satisfaction from marriage (Kahveci, 2016). The discrepancy between the findings of the studies may be attributed to the fact that the study group exhibits disparate socio-cultural characteristics and is insufficient in number. Some of the participants interviewed in our study made a connection between the type of marriage and marital satisfaction. For example, the participant coded E7 said, "*If I had married for love, I would have behaved differently, and my spouse would have been completely different.*" Although it is possible that the spouses getting to know each other during the dating period and the love they feel contribute positively to the satisfaction received from marriage, it can be stated that the form of marriage alone is not a sufficient reason.

According to the second finding of the study, when the correlations between the participants' attachment styles and marital satisfaction were examined, it was determined that there was a negative and significant relationship between the participants' secure attachment and fearful attachment, preoccupied attachment and dismissing attachment scores a positive and significant relationship between the marital life satisfaction score. Accordingly, as participants' secure attachment scores increase, their marital life satisfaction scores increase. However, a negative and significant relationship was found between the participants' fearful attachment and dismissive attachment and their marital life satisfaction score. Some studies support the results of the research (Toksöz & Kolburan, 2018; Crowley, 2006). This result of our study is thought to be due to the differences in factors such as spouses' early attachment styles, conditions of socialization environments, cultural differences, personality traits, perceptions of marriage, marital expectations, and sharing of household responsibilities.

The third finding of the study was that the effect of the participants' sociodemographic characteristics and attachment styles on marital life satisfaction levels was obtained by hierarchical regression analysis. Accordingly, it was determined that an increase in the secure attachment scores of married individuals increased marital life satisfaction, while an increase in the dismissing attachment scores decreased marital life satisfaction. Frenn et al. (2022) found that secure attachment style had a significant relationship with the marital satisfaction levels of couples. Studies also indicate that attachment styles are the best predictor of marital satisfaction (Collins & Read, 1994; Çelik & Çiftçi, 2020; Raesisipoor et al., 2012).

When the opinions of the couples on the bond between the spouses and their marital satisfaction experiences were evaluated, it was concluded that establishing healthy communication, spending time together, meeting on common ground, nurturing the emotional bond with love, respect, trust, and support contributed to the continuation of marriage and marital satisfaction. In reaching this conclusion, it was also effective that the participants who expressed similar opinions to the statement of the participant coded K5, "*Our communication is one-sided, I always try to establish it, we have a marriage that I conduct emotionally one-sidedly,*" defined their emotional bond and satisfaction levels as negative even though their marriages continue. When the literature on the subject is examined, there are studies (Aktaş, 2009) in which the marriages of spouses who can meet in common decisions and sharing and who can solve the problems encountered are evaluated as compatible.

When the views of the couples on the factors affecting the continuity of marriage and marital satisfaction were evaluated, it was concluded that high income, education level, and positive character traits in the personal characteristics theme contributed to the continuity of marriage and marital satisfaction. Based on the participants' statements, the type of marriage does not affect marital continuity and satisfaction. Instead, the character traits of the spouses and their behavior towards each other are more decisive. Although common experiences during the dating period contribute to the marriage, the type of marriage cannot be considered the sole factor affecting the continuity and satisfaction of marriages. This finding of the study is similar to the results of Gültekin and Parlar (2019). Participants also mentioned the relationship with the family of origin among the factors affecting the continuity and satisfaction of marriage. Some couples stated that they reflected the positive relationship examples they learned from their families of origin in their marriages, while others stated that they had spouses who adopted negative life or behavior patterns based on their families of origin and that this situation negatively affected their marriages. They emphasized that it is important to prevent the interventions of their families of origin that would have a negative impact on family dynamics in order for the marriage to function properly. In line with the statements of the participants, it was understood in our study that the effect of root family relations on marriage is two-way, negative and positive. In the study conducted by Kızmaz and Altuğ (2019), it was determined that the interventions of the spouses' parents in the marriage led to negative situations such as arguments, violence, and divorce between the spouses, thus increasing the disharmony between the spouses but decreasing the happiness within the family. From the participants' statements, it was concluded that the presence of understanding, love, interest, happiness, and peace between spouses and having children contributed positively to marital satisfaction and, thus, to the continuity of marriages. In addition, all but one of the interviewed couples stated that marriage caused positive changes in themselves and enabled them to mature over time.

Some suggestions can be made in line with the results of the current study. Considering that the female participants' fearful and dismissing attachment scores were higher than the male participants in our study, it may be recommended to conduct new studies to determine the factors that differentiate women's attachment styles. Given that attachment styles are formed in childhood and affect relationships in adulthood, field studies focusing on the determination of attachment styles of married couples in childhood and comparisons between attachment styles in adulthood can be conducted. Furthermore, future studies could examine marital satisfaction, the personality characteristics of spouses, and the division of domestic responsibilities in greater depth. Since it is understood in this study that dynamics such as communication between spouses, personal characteristics, and relationship styles with root families are effective in the continuity and satisfaction of marriage, training activities can be conducted by relevant institutions for spouse candidates and married couples in order to increase their capacity to adapt to changes in the family cycle. The study is limited to individuals living in Konya province who have been married for ten years or more. In order to generalize the results of the study, similar studies can be conducted using the same scales with individuals living in different provinces and with a marriage duration of less than ten years.

Ethical Statement

This study is based on the master's thesis entitled Investigation of the relationship between attachment and marriage satisfaction in couples' marriage experiences, submitted under the supervision of Doç. Dr. Hatice BUDAK on 17/07/2023 date.

Ethics Committee Approval

29/04/2022 dated 2022/04/02 and numbered was given by KTO Karatay University, Human

Research ethics committee.

Author Contributions

Research Design (CRediT 1) Author 1 (%50) – Author 2 (%50)

Data Collection (CRediT 2) Author 1 (%80) – Author 2 (%20)

Research - Data analysis - Validation (CRediT 3-4-6-11) Author 1 (%70) – Author 2 (%30)

Writing the Article (CRediT 12-13) Author 1 (%50) – Author 2 (%50)

Revision and Improvement of the Text (CRediT 14) Author 1 (%50)– Author 2 (%50)

Finance

This study was not supported by any institution.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Sustainable Development Goals: Does not support

REFERENCES

- Ainsworth, M. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44(4),709- 716. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.4.709>
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S, (1978), *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*, Routledge Publications.
- Aktaş, S. (2009). Eşlerden birinin kaygı düzeyi ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi [Determination of the relationship between marital adjustment and anxiety of each of the couples] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Maltepe University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>.
- Alkan, V., Şimşek, S., & Erbil, B. A. (2019). Karma yöntem deseni: Öyküleyici alanyazın incelemesi [Mixed methods design: A narrative literature review]. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 7(2), 559-582. <https://doi.org/10.14689/issn.2148-2624.1.7c.2s.5m>
- Ateş, N. (2019). Eğitim düzeylerine göre 20-35 yaş arasındaki evli ve bekârların bağlanma stili puanlarının karşılaştırılması [Comparison of attachment style scores of married and single people between the ages of 20-35 according to their education levels]. *Journal of Education and New Approaches*, 1(1), 1-11.
- Baki, A., & Gökçek, T. (2012). Karma yöntem araştırmalarına genel bir bakış [An overview of mixed methods research]. *Electronic Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(42). <http://esosder.org>
- Bakiler, E., & Satan, A. (2020). Beliren yetişkinlikte bağlanma stilleri ile yaşam doyumunu arasındaki ilişkide ihtiyaç doyumunun aracı rolü [The mediating role of need satisfaction in the relationship between attachment style and life satisfaction in emerging adulthood]. *Marmara University Atatürk Faculty of Education Journal of Educational Sciences*, 51, 72-94. <https://doi:10.15285/maruaeabd.526342>
- Balcı, G. (2011). *Madde kullanım bozukluğu olan ergenlerde çocukluk çağı travmalarının bağlanma ile ilişkisi* [The relationship of childhood trauma and attachment in adolescent with substance use disorder] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Bakırköy Prof. Dr. Mazhar Osman Mental Health and Neurological Diseases Training and Research Hospital. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Barker, P. (1998). *Basic family therapy*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2850.1999.00250.x>
- Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 7(2), 147-178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407590072001>
- Berk, M. (2009). *Evli öğretmenlerin yüklenme tarzları ve evlilik doyum algılarının bazı demografik değişkenler açısından incelenmesi* [Married teachers considering their demographics in relation to attribution and marital satisfaction viewing it from this angle] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Çukurova University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal relationships*, 7(2), 147-178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407590072001>
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 226-244. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.2.226>

- Binici, S. A. (2000). *Psikolojik yardım için başvuruda bulunan ve bulunmayan evli çiftlerin evlilik ilişkilerini değerlendirmelerinin karşılaştırılması* [Comparison of evaluation for marital relationships of married couples who applied and who didn't for psychological help] [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Ankara University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss* (1. ed.). New York: Basic Books. <https://124.im/XYLzARu>
- Burr, W. R. (1970). Satisfaction with various aspects of marriage over the life cycle: A random middle class sample. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 32(1), 29- 37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/349968>
- Carter, B., & McGoldrick, M. (1988). *The changing family life cycle: A framework for family therapy* (2. ed.). New York: Gardner Press.
- Cingisiz, N. (2010). Ortaöğretim okullarında görev yapan öğretmenlerin duygusal zekâları ile evlilik doyumları arasındaki ilişki [The relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction of teachers working in secondary schools] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Gaziantep University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Colin, V. (1996). *Human attachment*. New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://124.im/LeRtk>
- Collins, N. (1996). Working models of attachment: Implications for explanation emotion, and behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(4), 810-832. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.4.810>
- Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1994). Cognitive representations of attachment: The structure and function of working models. In K. Bartholomew & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Attachment processes in adulthood* (pp. 53–90). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (3. ed.). Sage Publications, Inc, Thousand Oaks, California. <https://124.im/5ix>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Araştırma deseni: Nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları* [Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches] (4. ed.). Eğiten Publishing.
- Crowley, A. K. (2006). *The relationship of adult attachment style and interactive conflict styles to marital satisfaction* [Doctoral thesis. Texas A&M University]. <https://124.im/SQIox>
- Çelik, D. B. (2018). *Yatırım modellerine dayalı evlilik öncesi ilişki sürdürme becerileri psikoeğitim grubunun ilişki istikrarına etkisinin incelenmesi* [The effect of investment model based premarital maintenance skills psycho-educational group on relationship commitment] [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Çukurova University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Çetinkaya, B. (2017). *Sevdiğinizize bağlı mısınız, bağımlı mısınız? Bağlanma kuramı* [Are you dependent or dependent on your loved one? Attachment theory] (3. ed.). Pegem Academy Publications.
- Dilmaç, Bülent, & Bakırcıoğlu, Ayşe (2019). Evli bireylerin sahip oldukları değerler, iletişim becerileri ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki yordayıcı ilişki [The predicted correlation among values of married individuals, marital adjustment and communication skills]. *Necmettin Erbakan University Ereğli Faculty of Education Journal*, 1(2), 110-122.
- Erbek, E., Beştepe, E., Akar, H., Eradamlar, N., & Alpkan, R. L. (2005). Evlilik uyumu [Marital adjustment]. *Dusunen Adam Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences*, 18(1), 39-47. <https://124.im/B783tJM>

- Erdem, Ç. (2015). *Aile ve sosyal politikalar bakanlığı il müdürlüğüne müracaat eden eğitim düzeyi ve gelir seviyesi düşük bireylerde bağlanma stillerinin umutsuzluk düzeyleri ve stresle başa çıkma tarzları arasındaki ilişki* [An investigation of the relationship between attachment styles, coping styles and hopelessness among low ses people who apply Istanbul division of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies provincial directorate of education] [Unpublished master's thesis]. İstanbul Arel University. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12294/914>
- Ertan, Ö., (2002). *The Role of attachment styles in partner pairing and satisfaction within marriage in critical and non-critical stages*, [Unpublished master's thesis]. Middle East Technical University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Eryorulmaz, A. (2010). Evlilik ve boşanma sürecinde bağlanma [Bonding during marriage and divorce]. T. Solmaz inside, *Bağlanma, evlilik ve aile psikolojisi* [Attachment, marriage and family psychology] (pp. 296-306) System Publications.
- Eskin, M. (2012). Evlilik terapisi için başvuran çiftlerin evlilik doyumu ve evlilik terapisiyle hakkındaki görüşleriyle ilişkili etmenler [Factors related to marital satisfaction and views about marital therapy in couples applying for marital therapy]. *Turkish Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 15(4), 226-237. <https://klinikpsikiyatri.org/>
- Frenn, Y. E., Akel, M., Hallit, S., & Obeid, S. (2022). Couple's satisfaction among Lebanese adults: validation of the Toronto Alexithymia Scale and Couple Satisfaction Index-4 scales, association with attachment styles and mediating role of alexithymia. *BMC Psychol*, 1(10), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-022-00719-6>
- Gottman, J. M., & Krokoff, L. J. (1989). Marital interaction and satisfaction: A longitudinal view. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 52(1), 47-52. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.57.1.47>
- Griffin, D. W., & Bartholomew, K. (1994). Models of the self and other: Fundamental dimensions underlying measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(3), 430–445. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.3.430>
- Gültekin, D. T., & Parlar, H. (2019). Evlenme biçimi ve evlenme süresi bağlamında evlilik öncesi sürecin kadınlardaki evlilik doyumuna etkisi [The Effects of the Type of Marriage and Pre-Marital Process on Marriage Satisfaction for Women]. *Academic Platform Journal of Education and Change*, 2(1), 38- 56. <https://124.im/fxsWky>
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511>
- Hinde, R. (1997). *Relationships: A dialectical perspective*. Cambridge: Psychology Press. <https://124.im/LapbdYi>
- Houser, G. A. (2009). *Evli bireylerin sahip oldukları iletişim çatışması türü, romantik kıskançlık ve duygusal zekâ düzeylerinin evlilik doyumları üzerine etkisi* [The effect of tendency of conflict in communication, level of romantic jealousy and emotional intelligence on the marriage satisfaction of spouses] [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Ankara University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>

- İlhan, T., & Özdemir, Y. (2012). Beliren yetişkinlerde yaş, cinsiyet ve bağlanma stillerinin kimlik statüleri üzerindeki yordayıcı rolü [The predictive role of age, gender, and attachment styles on identity status among emerging adults]. *Dicle University Ziya Gökalp Faculty of Education Journal* (19), 227-241.
- Kahveci, G. A. (2016). *Evli çiftlerde evlilik uyumu, evlilik çatışma biçimi ve depresyon düzeylerinin değerlendirilmesi* [Assesment of marital harmony, types of marital conflict and levels of depression in married couples] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Beykent University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Karabacak Çelik, A., & Çiftçi, M. (2020). The predictive role of married individuals' attachment styles and psychological well-being on their marital adjustment [Evli bireylerin bağlanma stilleri ve psikolojik iyi oluşlarının evlilik uyumlarını yordayıcı rolü]. *International Journal of Turkish Literature Culture Education*, 9(2), 898-918.
- Karaşar, B. (2014). Öğretmen adaylarının bağlanma stilleri ve sosyal kaygı düzeyleri arasındaki ilişki [The relationship between teacher candidates' attachment styles and social anxiety levels]. *Amasya University Faculty of Education Journal*, 3(1), 27-49.
- Kılıçaslan, A. (2007). *Ebeveynliğe geçiş döneminin çeşitli doğum öncesi ve doğum sonrası etkenler açısından incelenmesi* [The investigation of transition to parenthood in terms of several pre-partum and post-partum factors] [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. İstanbul University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Kızmaz, Z., & Altuğ, S. (2019). Aile sorunlarının ortaya çıkmasında ebeveyn müdahalelerinin etkisi [The effects of parental interventions on marital problems]. *Bitlis Eren University Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(2), 538-557.
- Koca, B. (2016). *Evlilikte bağlanma stili ile evlilikte sorun çözme becerisi arasındaki ilişkide duygusal zekanın aracı değişken rolü* [The mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between attachment style and problem solving skills in marriage] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Hasan Kalyoncu University. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11782/1207>
- Müezzinoğlu, S. (2014). Romantik ilişkilerde aldatma: Bağlanma boyutları kişilik özellikleri ve ilişki bağlanımı [Infidelity in romantic relationships: Attachment dimensions, personality traits and relationship commitment] [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Gazi University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Osmanlı, B. S. (2023) *Examination of the relationship between marriage satisfaction and the levels of forgiveness and interpersonal mindfulness of married individuals* [Evli bireylerin evlilik doyumunu ile affetme ve kişilerarası bilinçli farkındalık düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi] [Unpublished master's thesis]. İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Özabacı, N. (2019). *Evlilik ve yakın ilişkiler* [Marriage and intimate relationships]. Pegem Academy Publications.
- Özdemir, P. (2023). *Mutlu çiftler yaratmak üzerine evlilik analizi ve değerlendirilmesi* [Marriage analysis and evaluation on creating happy couples]. Educational Publications.

- Özşenel, E. (2017). *Otizm spektrum bozukluđuna sahip çocuđu olan ve olmayan ailelerin evliliklerinde problem çözme becerilerinin ve evlilik yaşam doyumlarının karşılaştırılması* [The comparison of marital satisfaction and problem solving abilities in families who has got children with and without autism spectrum disorders] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Üsküdar University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Öztahtacı, D. (2017). Evli kadınlarda evlilik doyumunu, yetişkin bağlanma stilleri ve depresyon düzeyinin ilişkisinin incelenmesi [An investigation of the relationship between marriage satisfaction, adult attachment styles and depression level in married women] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Hasan Kalyoncu University. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11782/1649>
- Petch, J. (2006). *The couple care for parents program: Enhancing couple relationships across the transition to parenthood* [Doctoral thesis]. Griffith University. <https://doi:10.25904/1912/734>
- Raeisipoor, Z., Fallahchai, R., & Zarei, E. (2012). The study of adult attachment styles, communication patterns, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Life Science and Biomedicine*, 3(1), 64-68.
- Saraç, E. (2021). *Evli bireylerde cinsel tutum ve bağlanma stillerinin evlilik doyumuna etkisinin incelenmesi* [Examination of the effect of sexual attitudes and attachment styles on marriage satisfaction in married individuals] [Unpublished master's thesis]. İstanbul Arel University. <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- Sokolski, D. M., & Hendrick, S. S. (1999). Fostering marital satisfaction. *Family Therapy: The Journal of the California Graduate School of Family Psychology*, 26(1), 39-49.
- Sümer, N., & Güngör, D. (1999). Yetişkin bağlanma stillerinin Türk örneklemini üzerinde psikometrik değerlendirilmesi ve kültürler arası bir karşılaştırma [Psychometric evaluation of adult attachment styles on a Turkish sample and an intercultural comparison]. *Turkish Journal of Psychology*, 14(43), 71-106 <https://hdl.handle.net/11511/79158>
- Şahin, Selva Barkale ve Hamarta, Erdal (2022). Ergenlerin duygusal özerklik ve yaşam doyumlarının bağlanma stilleri açısından incelenmesi [The examination of emotional autonomy and life satisfaction of adolescents in terms of attachment styles]. *Ahmet Keleşođlu Faculty of Education Journal*, 4(1), 146-157.
- Terzi, Ş., & Çankaya Cihangir, Z. (2009). Bağlanma stillerinin öznel iyi olmayı ve stresle başa çıkma tutumlarını yordama gücü [The power of attachment styles to predict subjective well-being and attitudes to cope with stress] *Turkish Journal of Psychological Counseling and Guidance*, 4(31), 1-11. <https://hdl.handle.net/11454/12913>
- Tezer, E. (1996). Evlilik ilişkisinden sağlanan doyum: Evlilik yaşamı ölçeđi [Satisfaction with marital relationship: Marital life scale]. *Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Journal*, 2(7), 1-7. <https://doi:10.17066/pdrd.19981>
- Toksöz, İ., & Kolburan, Ş. G. (2018). Evli bireylerde bağlanma stilleri ve bilişsel esnekliđin ilişki doyumuna etkisi [The effects of attachment styles and cognitive flexibility on relationship satisfaction in married individuals.]. *Journal of intellectual people and society*, 4(2), 17- 34.
- Twenge, J. M., Campbell, W., & Foster, C. A. (2003). Prent hood and marital satisfaction: A meta-analytic review. *Journal Of Marriage and Family*, 65(3), 574-583. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00574.x>

- Yılmaz, E., ve Kağan, S., (2022). Covid-19 sürecinde evlilik uyumu ve çatışma çözme becerileri arasındaki ilişkide sosyal medya bağımlılığının aracı rolü [The mediator role of social media addiction in the relationship between marriage adjustment and conflict resolution skills in the covid-19 process]. *Journal of Necmettin Erbakan University Ereğli Faculty of Education*, 4(2), 84-95. <https://doi.org/10.51119/ereegf.2022.24>
- Zhumgalbekov, A., ve Efilti, E., (2023). Evli bireylerin evlilik uyumu ve yaşam doyumunun incelenmesi [Investigation of marriage adjustment and life satisfaction of married individuals] *Ahmet Kelesoglu Education Faculty*, 5(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.38151/akef.2023.41>