

**T.C.
TED UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
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**INVESTIGATING THE ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN IRRATIONAL RELATIONSHIP
BELIEFS, CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN
DATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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ANKARA, 2025

INVESTIGATING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN IRRATIONAL
RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS, CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN DATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN IRRATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS, CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN DATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Master of Science, Psychological Counseling and Guidance

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Romantic relationships are one of the important life domains affecting the psychological well-being of university students. This study investigated the association between romantic relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being among university students. Especially perceived partner's conflict resolution styles were included in this study. Romantic Beliefs Scale, Conflict Resolution Styles Scale and Psychological Well-being Scale were used to measure the variables of the study. The data were collected from university students currently having in romantic relationships lasting at least six months. Mediation analysis disconfirmed the proposed model. Therefore hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. The findings revealed that relationship satisfaction significantly predicted PWB, whereas demographic variables such as age, gender, and relationship duration

did not. The important finding is that perceived partner's constructive conflict resolution styles emerged as the strongest positive predictor of both relationship satisfaction and PWB. Interestingly, contrary to previous research, relationship beliefs were positively related to both satisfaction and PWB. These results emphasizes the critical role of perceived partner behavior and constructive conflict handling in promoting well-being in romantic relationships. The results were analyzed in relation to both theoretical and practical implications. Recommendations for psychological counselors were noted.

Keywords: Psychological well-being, conflict resolution styles, relationship beliefs, romantic relationships

ÖZ

FLÖRT İLİŞKİSİ YAŞAYAN ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNDE İRRASYONEL İLİŞKİ İNANÇLARI, ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZME TARZLARI VE PSİKOLOJİK İYİ OLUŞ ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİNİN İNCELENMESİ

ZEYNEP HAZAN DENİZ

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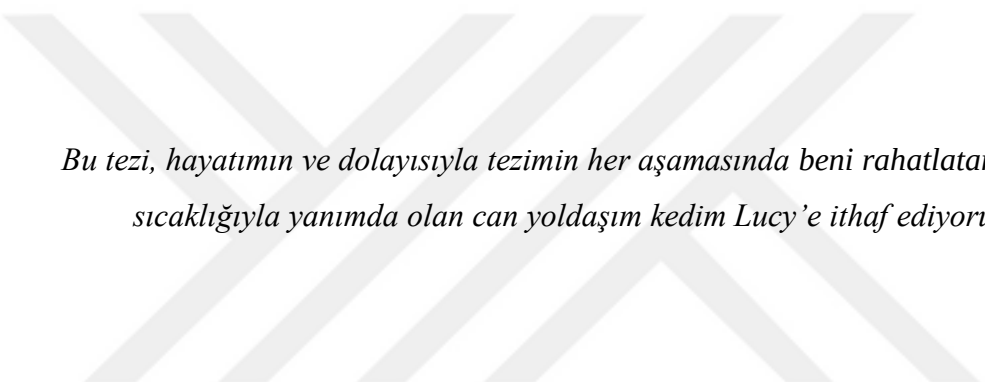
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Romantik ilişkiler, üniversite öğrencilerinin psikolojik iyi oluşunu etkileyen önemli yaşam alanlarından biridir. Bu çalışma, üniversite öğrencileri arasında romantik ilişki inançları, çatışma çözme stilleri ve psikolojik iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemiştir. Özellikle algılanan partner duyarlılığı bu çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Çalışmada değişkenleri ölçmek için Romantik İnançlar Ölçeği, Çatışma Çözme Stilleri Ölçeği ve Psikolojik İyi Oluş Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Veriler, en az altı aydır romantik ilişki içinde olan üniversite öğrencilerinden toplanmıştır. Aracılık analizi önerilen modeli desteklememiştir; bu nedenle hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Bulgular, ilişki doyumunun psikolojik iyi oluşu anlamlı şekilde öngördüğünü, ancak yaş, cinsiyet ve ilişki süresi gibi demografik değişkenlerin bunu öngörmediğini ortaya koymuştur.

Önemli bir bulgu olarak, algılanan partnerin yapıcı çatışma çözme stilleri hem ilişki doyumunu hem de psikolojik iyi oluşun en güçlü olumlu belirleyicisi olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. İlginç bir şekilde, önceki araştırmaların aksine, ilişki inançları hem doyum hem de psikolojik iyi oluş ile pozitif ilişkilidir. Bu sonuçlar, algılanan partner davranışının ve yapıcı çatışma yönetiminin romantik ilişkilerde iyi oluşun desteklenmesinde kritik rol oynadığını vurgulamaktadır. Sonuçlar teorik ve uygulamalı açılardan analiz edilmiştir. Psikolojik danışmanlar için öneriler sunulmuştur.



Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik iyi oluş, çatışma çözme tarzları, ilişki inançları, romantik ilişkiler



Bu tezi, hayatımın ve dolayısıyla tezimin her aşamasında beni rahatlatan, sesi ve sıcaklığıyla yanımda olan can yoldaşım kedim Lucy'e ithaf ediyorum.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PWB	Psychological Well-Being
SWB	Subjective Well-Being
CRS	Conflict Resolution Styles
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
CRSSLF	Constructive Conflict Resolution Style Self
DSTSLF	Destructive Conflict Resolution Style Self
CRSPRT	Constructive Conflict Resolution Style Partner
DSTPRT	Destructive Conflict Resolution Style Partner

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background and rationale of the current study. It introduces the research problem, provides an overview of the key concepts and outlines the objectives and significance of the study.

Well-being is a significant concept in the behavioral and social sciences. Particularly, scholars have been curious about what would lead to happy individuals and thriving societies (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Over the past two decades, the focus in the scientific community has shifted from solely examining mental disorders and their impact on human life to highlighting psychological well-being and fostering mental health (Keyes, 2002). Well-being can be understood as achieving the highest levels of psychological functioning and overall positive experiences (Ryan & Deci, 2001). For example, Diener and Chan (2011) indicated that well-being could serve as a protective element in health and all-cause mortality rates. High subjective well-being (SWB) can extend life expectancy by 4 to 10 years and contributes to a healthier and more enjoyable life. Thus, measures to enhance SWB at the societal level can positively influence individuals' physical health and longevity. Accordingly, psychological well-being offers a foundation for evaluating psychological disorders as well as guiding clinical practice by aiding counselors in directing clients towards alleviating distress and attaining fulfillment, purpose, and meaning, ultimately informing the goals and objectives of counseling interventions (Christopher, 1999). Promoting a heightened sense of well-being can be facilitated by fostering positive mental health through cultivating greater self-awareness, mindfulness, and self-

compassion (Rybak, 2013). Therefore, higher well-being is an important precursor of both physical and psychological health.

On the contrary, low well-being is detrimental. Population studies indicate that self-reports of psychological well-being by individuals are increasingly sparking intense debate in public policy and economics, with enhancing the well-being of the population emerging as a prominent societal goal (Steptoe et al., 2015). As stated in the Target 3.d outlined by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, promoting health and well-being has become a global goal, emphasizing the importance of building resilience to emergencies and crises (United Nation, n.d.). This goal is directly related to improving the psychological well-being of societies. According to Gallup's *World Happiness Report* (Helliwell et al., 2024), the world's happiest countries include Scandinavian nations such as Finland, Denmark, and Sweden. The report underscores the importance of social well-being and mental health support alongside economic growth. Conversely, countries with lower happiness levels often struggle with economic difficulties, social conflicts, and a lack of trust, illustrating how welfare policies impact overall happiness (Helliwell et al., 2024).

Gallup's ranking of the happiest countries and the summaries from the *World Happiness Report* also highlight Türkiye's low levels of happiness (Helliwell, et al., 2024). Specifically, when looking at the 2024 data related to Türkiye, in the ranking of happiness among the youth (age below 30) from 2021 to 2023, Türkiye is placed 101st out of 143 countries, and negative emotions were more prevalent among women than men (as in every region of the world). Also, in the ranking of life evaluations by age group Türkiye is placed 98th out of 143 countries for all ages. According to changes in overall happiness from 2006-2010 to 2021-2023, overall happiness of Türkiye decreased by 0.2 points. According to life satisfaction research, the proportion of individuals aged 18 and over who declared that they were happy was 52.7% (TÜİK, 2023). Also, when the data showing the general happiness level between 2003 and 2023 is examined, it is observed that there has been a decrement in the general happiness level from past to present (TÜİK, 2023). Therefore, Türkiye generally has a low level of happiness and this situation underscores the importance of studying psychological well-being in Türkiye in order that research-informed counseling

interventions could be developed. The present thesis study is thus designed as an attempt to fulfill this objective via testing cognitive and behavioral antecedents of well-being in the romantic relationship context.

1.1. The Nature and Antecedents of Well-Being

Well-being is a broad concept which is defined by different scholars in various ways. Yet, there is a consensus such that all conceptualizations might be classified under two traditions, namely the hedonic and the eudaimonic traditions. To start with the hedonic well-being, subjective well-being viewed as the primary indicator of well-being and frequently used as a key outcome variable (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Subjective well-being encompasses individual's perceptions and emotions regarding their lives, reflecting both their cognitive assessments and emotional experiences when considering their existence (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Individuals respond diversely to identical circumstances, assessing situations according to their distinct expectations, values, and past encounters. Therefore, subjective well-being includes emotional reactions, satisfaction within specific life domains, and general judgments of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999). Subjective well-being, often summarized as happiness, is composed of three key elements: experiencing positive emotions, absence of negative emotions, and life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2009).

While hedonic well-being research primarily defines well-being based on pleasurable experiences, scholars in eudemonic well-being research have proposed a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of well-being (Reinecke & Oliver, 2017). While both approaches evaluate well-being, they focus on different aspects of what it means to be well. Hedonic well-being emphasizes broader assessments of emotions and overall life satisfaction, whereas eudaimonic well-being focuses on how individuals perceive their success in facing life's existential challenges, such as striving for meaningful goals, personal growth, and building deep connections with others (Keyes et al., 2002). Eudaimonism posits that the experience of pleasure, on its own, is inadequate to sustain the complexities of a fulfilling life (Kopperud & Vittersø, 2008). Therefore, eudaimonic well-being's emphasis on personal growth, meaningful goals, and deep social connections provides a more comprehensive understanding of

well-being, as it goes beyond the transient pleasure and satisfaction that hedonic well-being focuses on.

Waterman (1993) emphasizes that according to eudaimonist philosophy, achieving self-realization is fundamental to attaining human excellence, and it is considered a component of maximal psychological functioning. He also proposed that eudaimonia is achieved when individuals' life pursuits align closely with their core values and involve complete and holistic engagement. Therefore, while hedonic well-being has focused on the significance of experiencing positive emotions, eudemonic well-being has frequently been described as performing effectively across various aspects of life (Keyes & Annas, 2009). These aspects are conceptualized as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance by Ryff (1989). Therefore, Diener (1984) conceptualized the *hedonic tradition as subjective well-being*, whereas Ryff (1989) framed the *eudaimonic perspective as psychological well-being*. Thus, rather than being solely focused on pleasure-seeking, as suggested by Diener, Ryff's approach also encompasses cognitive components.

Psychological well-being as the umbrella term in the eudaimonic tradition is described as a journey towards self-discovery encompassing six key aspects: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989). Ryff (1989) has defined *autonomy* as the ability to act independently, exert internal control, and make self-determined decisions based on personal standards. *Environmental mastery* is the individual's capacity to select or shape environments that align with their psychological state, which is regarded as a feature of well-being. *Personal growth* is defined as a desire to fulfill one's potential and actualize oneself while *positive relationships* with others as forming trusting and fulfilling connections with other individuals. *Purpose in life* is composed of the beliefs that instill in a person the sense that life possesses purpose and significance. Finally, *self-acceptance* is defined as knowing and accepting oneself with all good and bad characteristics, and having a positive attitude about one's past. On the other hand, psychological well-being incorporates both hedonic and eudemonic elements (Adler et al., 2017). Psychological well-being encompasses

various dimensions, such as experiencing happiness and satisfaction with life, fostering meaningful social connections, discovering purpose and meaning in life, and maintaining optimism towards the future (Boylan et al., 2022).

Seligman (2011) also developed a well-being theory consisting of five elements that encompasses both the hedonic and eudaimonic traditions. These five elements are positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships and accomplishment. *Positive emotion* include hedonic experiences like joy, pleasure, and comfort. They act as indicators of flourishing. *Engagement* describes a profound psychological attachment to a specific activity, organization, or cause. This attachment is characterized by feelings of interest, involvement, and absorption. Also, *meaning* involves having a sense of purpose and direction in life, as well as feeling connected to something greater than oneself. *Positive relationships* encompass a sense of belonging to society or a community, the feeling of being supported by loved ones, and satisfaction with one's social connections. *Accomplishment* is defined that in many cultures, working towards goals and achieving exceptional results can bring both external recognition and a personal sense of accomplishment. While accomplishment can be measured objectively, it is also shaped by individual ambitions, motivations, and personality traits (Khaw & Kern, 2014). These five elements, collectively referred to as PERMA (the acronym for the five components), illustrate that Seligman's theory of well-being integrates both eudaimonic and hedonic approaches, expressing them as the concept of psychological well-being.

There is yet another the conceptualization of well-being which is labelled as mental well-being in the *Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale* (Tennant et al., 2007). In this scale, mental well-being is essentially positive mental health, encompassing both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions, overall life satisfaction, positive emotions, fulfilling relationships, and effective functioning (Tennant, et al., 2007). Furthermore, Diener and his colleagues utilize both hedonic and eudaimonic traditions to offer a comprehensive assessment of well-being, highlighting the importance of both subjective experiences and psychological factors (Diener et al., 2009). Diener and his colleagues also used the concept of psychological well-being in their research. Thus, it is possible to assert that there is a conceptual confusion in well-

being context. Considering these differences in terminology use, in any literature review I conduct, I will adopt the specific term used in each source. However, I will utilize the concept of *psychological well-being* to cover both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects, and measure the construct accordingly.

Past research identified various antecedents of well-being such as genetic factors, demographic factors, socioeconomic factors, and personality (Huppert, 2009). To start with, genetic factors appear to play an important role in the connections between different well-being dimensions, such as life satisfaction, positive affect, and eudaimonic aspects (Røysamb & Nes, 2018). As stated by Bartels (2015), the two meta-analyses, one focusing on well-being and the other on life satisfaction, indicated that genetic factors account for 36% of the variance in well-being and 32% of the variance in life satisfaction. Also, according to Nes et al. (2010), broad-sense heritability was estimated at 36% for males, while for females, it was calculated to be 33%. Also, genes that provide protection against depression partially overlap with those that play a role in promoting well-being (Røysamb & Nes, 2018). For instance, a variant of the serotonin transporter (5-HTT) gene called the short allele was found to increase a person's susceptibility to depression, but only when certain environmental factors are present. On the other hand, the long allele variant of the same gene acts as a protective factor, making a person more resilient to stress. In other words, the specific variant of this gene a person might have, combined with environmental influences, could significantly influence their mental health (Kendler et al., 2005).

Secondly, demographic characteristics also exhibit varying effects on well-being (Huppert, 2009). In terms of age, Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) use single-item assessments of well-being, such as overall life satisfaction ratings. These assessments typically reveal a U-shaped relationship with age. Specifically, both younger and older individuals generally report higher well-being scores compared to middle-aged individuals. However, there may be a decline in well-being among the very elderly. In terms of gender, there is less clear effect of gender in well-being (Huppert, 2009). Stephens and colleagues (1999) discovered that men, whereas Huppert and colleagues (1989) indicated that women scored higher on specific sub-scales, particularly those

assessing social functioning. Considering literature, understanding gender differences in well-being remains complex, as it depends on various factors such as the components of well-being, biological, individual, and environmental influences. Ultimately, the answer to whether men and women differ in subjective well-being appears to be context-dependent (Batz & Tay, 2018). In terms of demographic factors, one of the most reliable predictors of well-being was found to be marital status, as married individuals especially those who have remained married tend to report higher levels of well-being compared to those who have been previously married or who have never been married (Kim & McKenry, 2002). Nevertheless, findings from alternative positive measures demonstrate that individuals who are unmarried or remarried tend to have better well-being compared to those who are continuously married. Furthermore, certain results indicate that women who are either remarried or never married experience greater benefits than men in similar circumstances (Hsu & Barrett, 2020).

Thirdly, in terms of socioeconomic factors, the relationship between income and SWB shows its strongest effects on life satisfaction rather than on the affective components of SWB such as positive and negative emotions (Diener et al., 2010). Generally, there exists a social gradient indicating that increased income and socioeconomic status are linked to higher well-being levels and lower prevalence of disorders (Dolan et al., 2008). Additionally, evaluations of SWB may be more strongly influenced by broader external conditions, whereas affective components are more closely tied to personal, day-to-day experiences (Tay et al., 2014). According to a study spanning 34 countries, while income and happiness may be connected in the short term, this relationship appears to weaken over a period of 10 years or more (Easterlin et al., 2010). Income inequality is also linked to both psychological disorders and overall well-being (Huppert, 2009). According to a review by Diener and colleagues (2018), both cross-sectional and longitudinal research showed a connection between income inequality and lower levels of life satisfaction. Also, according to Schwarze and Härpfer (2007) data from Germany indicate that individuals in all income groups tend to express low life satisfaction when income inequality within their region increases.

Finally, in terms of personality, the strongest evidence for the role of personality in SWB comes from research that investigates the relationship between particular personality traits and subjective well-being (Lucas, 2018). Extraversion (sociability) is closely linked to a positive emotional disposition, while neuroticism is related to a more negative emotional tendency (Diener et al., 1999). Personality is associated not only with our emotional states but also with the efficacy of our psychological functioning (Huppert, 2009). Vitterso and Nilsen (2002) have demonstrated significant correlations between psychological well-being and both extraversion and neuroticism. However, according to a recent longitudinal study utilizing the Ryff's (1989) scale, extraversion has a significantly greater impact than neuroticism on evaluating psychological well-being (Abbott et al., 2008). Also, Fleeson, Malanos and Achille (2002) demonstrated that encouraging individuals to behave in an extraverted way like higher participation in social activities leads to an increase in the positive affect they experience. Moreover, some individuals may focus more on the positive aspects of their surroundings, while others may be more inclined to notice potential threats. Similarly, some people may have a tendency to recall positive life experiences more easily, while for others, negative events may come to mind more readily (Lucas, 2018). Therefore, the relationship between well-being and personality can be explained by how personality traits shape individuals' behaviors and their perception of the world (Lucas, 2018).

In summary, psychological well-being is influenced by a complex interplay of genetic, demographic, socioeconomic, and personality factors, each contributing in varying degrees to individuals' overall mental health and life satisfaction.

One specific context that the well-being of an individual could be shaped is the romantic relationship context. As noted by Ryff (1989), positive relationships with others are considered a vital component of well-being. Interpersonal relationships hold greater importance for well-being compared to one's economic status and financial wealth (Diener et al., 2009). A steady and mutually fulfilling romantic partnership is a strong indicator of positive health and well-being among adults (Diener et al., 1999). Key contributors to well-being include being in a relationship, experiencing intimacy, and perceiving high relationship quality (Czyżowska et al., 2020). Considering the

central role that intimate relationships play in individuals' lives, it is reasonable to expect that the functioning of a relationship would affect and be affected by the mental health of both partners involved (Whisman & Baucom, 2012). Also, the feeling of being understood by a romantic partner may have a significant effect on well-being, relationship satisfaction, and how conflicts are managed between partners (Gordon & Chen, 2016). In addition to the role of a romantic partner in offering social support during times of conflict, distress, or other challenges, the value of sharing positive experiences and confiding in a romantic partner may also shed light on the connection between relationship status and well-being (Kansky, 2018). In this vein, Gable and colleagues (2006) discovered that partners' reactions to positive news have a stronger connection to relationship stability and well-being than their responses to negative news. In sum, romantic relationships significantly contribute to well-being of individuals by providing emotional support, fostering relationship satisfaction, and enhancing stability.

Considering the brief review above, it is important to emphasize a developmental perspective in understanding the impact of romantic relationships on an individual's well-being. Romantic relationships progressively assume greater importance and become a more integral aspect of an individual's identity throughout late adolescence, young adulthood, and into adulthood (Kansky, 2018). When the developmental viewpoint emphasizing the importance of nurturing intimacy within romantic relationships during young adulthood is taken into account, it is understandable that an individual's relationship status and their romantic partnership quality are closely associated with both physical and mental well-being (Kansky, 2018). According to the developmental task theory, adolescence marks the emergence of romantic involvement as a developmental task, which later becomes a prominent task in adulthood (Furman & Collibee, 2014). Also, Gómez-López and colleagues (2019) propose that young adults in romantic relationships experience greater happiness, life satisfaction, fewer mental and physical health issues, increased positive emotions, and higher levels of self-esteem compared to single individuals. Also, White and colleagues (2023) stated that greater satisfaction with relationship status correlated with reduced psychotic symptoms and enhanced mental well-being. In a longitudinal study conducted by Gibb and colleagues (2011) over a period of 30 years, partner

relationships were found to serve as a safeguard for mental well-being, with this protective influence strengthening as the duration of the relationship lengthens. In broad terms, a relationship that contributes to well-being would typically exhibit high levels of quality, enabling partners to enhance their potential, attain individual and mutual objectives, and sustain a secure bond (Gómez-López et al., 2019). Thus, it is important to understand which relationship factors contribute to or thwart the sustenance of well-being in a romantic relationship context. For the present thesis, one cognitive and one behavioral variable was investigated, former being the relationship beliefs, and the latter being the conflict resolution styles.

1.2. Relationship Beliefs in Intimate Relationships

One potential relation of psychological well-being for university students may be relationship beliefs. Beliefs can be psychologically defined as “claims or expectations about reality” which aim for truth (Smith et al., 1991). In other words, beliefs are subjective judgements about the truth. Specifically, *relationship beliefs* are defined as a type of knowledge framework, schema, or assessment that pertains to every aspect of close relationships (Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992). Individuals often come into their relationships with pre-existing beliefs about the relationship dynamics. Sprecher and Metts (1999) stated that before entering into relationships, individuals often hold preconceived beliefs about the relationship nature, including their ideal characteristics, factors that contribute to satisfaction and fulfillment, and the principles that should lead the behavior of both partners. They suggested that when a relationship is seen as romantic or has potential for romance, the expectations and beliefs linked to romantic ideals are likely to stand out.

Certain beliefs about relationships are more beneficial or *adaptive* compared to others (Cobb et al., 2013). For instance, the belief that partners can change can promote behaviors that help maintain the relationship and enhance its overall quality. This notion supports the idea that fostering positive interactions and growth leads to healthier partnerships (Karney et al., 2001). On the other hand, some beliefs individuals hold about relationships are *dysfunctional*, meaning they have negative impacts on relationship quality, reducing the likelihood of self and partner satisfaction

(Goodwin & Gaines, 2004). For instance, the belief that disagreement is destructive may function as a persistent vulnerability that hinders a partner's ability to effectively address relational challenges (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Moreover, a person might hold unrealistic beliefs in a relationship which may be excessively idealistic and romanticized, leading to unattainable standards for relationships and inevitably resulting in distress and disappointment (Miller, 2017). In this vein, as defined by Ellis (1986), irrational beliefs in romantic relationships refer to rigid, resistant-to-change, and harmful beliefs held by couples about each other or the relationship itself. If beliefs remain inflexible, irrational, and impervious to change, couples will inevitably encounter difficulties in their relationships such as aggression (Gündoğdu et al., 2018) or more positive dating violence attitudes (Şenol et al., 2022). Therefore, as irrational beliefs become more prevalent, couples might experience an increase in disagreements and frustrations, which can ultimately result in conflicts and the dissolution of romantic relationships (Addis & Bernard, 2002). In consequence, the dysfunctional, irrational, or inflexible nature of relationship beliefs might have a negative impact on the difficulties and conflicts couples encounter in their relationships, ultimately adversely affecting individuals' psychological well-being.

Eidelson and Epstein (1982) developed a model and then an inventory designed to assess five dysfunctional beliefs about close relationships. To start with, *disagreement is destructive* belief suggests that when conflicts arise, it indicates a deficiency in love or even foreshadows an impending divorce. *Mindreading is expected* belief indicates that close partners should be able to understand each other's needs and preferences without needing to communicate them directly. *Partners cannot change* belief is the belief that partners cannot change themselves or the quality of their relationship. *Sexual perfectionism* refers to the belief that one must be an ideal sexual partner. Finally, *sexes are different* belief suggest that men and women vary significantly in their personalities and relationship needs, and it is likely to promote stereotypical views of one's partner and reduce sensitivity to their unique desires and traits. Moreover, Metts and Cupach (1990) found that individuals' possession of irrational beliefs contributes to increased levels of abandonment and disinterest. Wright and Roloff (2015) stated that these beliefs can increase the likelihood of experiencing distress and dissatisfaction in intimate relationships.

On the other hand, Sprecher and Metts (1989) proposed that relationship beliefs have four dimensions. Accordingly, romantic beliefs include various ideas that create an ideology surrounding romanticism. These beliefs particularly emphasize the idealization of partners and romantic relationships. They also convey the notion that love can overcome any challenges or obstacles. Additionally, these beliefs reflect the conviction in the existence of a single true love. Finally, considerations regarding love at first sight are also included within this framework. *Love finds a way* belief encompasses the individual's conviction that they can navigate their romantic relationship despite any obstacles, problems, or differences. *The one and only* belief entails the conviction that true love will last forever and that there will be only one true love for the individual. Additionally, the *idealization* belief includes the conviction that everything will be perfect in the individual's romantic relationship, and that the person they love will be a perfect partner. Finally, *love at first sight* belief, is defined as the conviction that the individual can recognize true love and understand it as soon as they meet (Sprecher & Metts, 1999). Küçükarslan and Gizir (2013) assumed that emotional distress in romantic relationships, which often stems from irrational relationship beliefs. They stated that understanding these beliefs could help guide individuals who are experiencing problems in their romantic relationships.

In the literature, there are several empirical studies examining the impact of relationship beliefs on well-being. For instance, Shabani and colleagues (2023) proposed that irrational beliefs have a direct impact on subjective well-being. Sprecher and Metts (1999) stated that for both men and women, the quality of relationship was found to be positively linked to beliefs such as *love finds a way*, *one and only*, and *idealization*, while it was negatively associated with the belief in *love at first sight*. Interestingly, they found that romantic beliefs foster stronger commitment in men within dating relationships, while, for women, a higher level of commitment tends to increase the endorsement of romantic beliefs. According to Küçükarslan and Gizir (2013), women tend to be more sensitive, objective, and confrontational when dealing with issues, conflicts, or problems in romantic relationships, while men are more likely to adopt a subjective and avoidant attitude. Therefore, it appears more likely that men, compared to women, hold a more optimistic view that love can overcome any obstacle, aligning with the *love finds a way* belief. Also, men hold a higher level of belief in

love at first sight compared to female students among the beliefs associated with romantic relationships. Students who are currently experiencing a romantic relationship without having previously been in one demonstrate a higher level of *the one and only* belief and *idealization* belief compared to individuals who have experienced romantic relationships in the past as well as in the present, and those who have never engaged in a romantic relationship. A study in Makassar found that romantic beliefs are strongly connected to the marital relationships quality. The idealized view of romantic love is closely tied to the culture in which the individuals live, influencing how they experience and evaluate their relationships (Fakhri et al., 2020).

The existing research on the impact of these beliefs on well-being is limited, with most studies primarily focusing on the negative effects of dysfunctional beliefs. Therefore, one purpose of the present study is to extend this line of research by means of exploring the role of conflict resolution within this framework, which I introduce in the next section

1.3. Conflict Resolution in Intimate Relationships

Another construct which is behavioral and might potentially be associated with psychological well-being for university students in the relationship context is conflict resolution styles in their romantic relationships. The topic of conflict in dating relationships and marriages has generated considerable interest in both academic circles and the general public (Caughlin et al., 2006). Also, conflict is a concept that every couple encounters in their romantic relationship. While certain youths adjust their approach to handling conflicts based on their interpersonal dynamics, others consistently maintain ineffective strategies throughout various relationships (Gonzalez-Mendez et al., 2018). Moreover, the level of distress tends to increase when partners react destructively and fail to respond constructively to their partners' potentially harmful behavior in their relationship (Rusbult et al., 1986a). When managed effectively, conflict in romantic relationships can serve as a means for partners to gain insight into each other and strengthen their bond as well as dedication (Siegert & Stamp, 1994). According to Plocharczyk (2013), effectiveness of conflict

resolution is influenced by the speed at which the conflict issue is tackled and the specific resolution techniques employed. In general, conflict should not be shunned; instead, it should be seen as a valuable opportunity to enhance relationships, foster better communication, and provide positive outcomes for everyone involved.

There are different definitions of conflict and conflict management in the literature. To start with, Hartup et al. (1988) defined conflict as “opposition between two individuals” (p. 1590). Similarly, Wall and Callister (1995) defined conflict as “a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party” (p. 517). Accordingly, conflict resolution is defined as “the process used by parties in conflict to reach a settlement” (Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996, p. 328). Conflict resolution involves minimizing, eliminating, or concluding conflicts (Rahim, 2002). Moreover, basic assumptions about conflict resolution processes include that conflicts can be resolved in a variety of ways and that outcomes depend on the specific methods used to resolve those conflicts (Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996). Individual’s specific behavioral patterns they choose to employ in addressing conflict situations define their conflict resolution style (Rahaman et al., 2010).

Kelly and Conley (1987) identified conflict resolution as one of the most robust and consistent predictor of satisfaction in romantic relationships. Vincent et al. (1979) discovered that couples instructed to simulate marital happiness exhibited enhanced positive problem-solving skills and communication behaviors, indicating a potential impact of relationship satisfaction on conflict resolution styles. The way conflict is handled plays a crucial role in determining the extent to which a relationship will be impacted by these instances of conflict (Reese-Weber & Bartle-Haring, 1998). Moreover, couples demonstrate better health when partners perceive each other as having a more constructive problem-solving style and less destructive behavior (Rusbult et al., 1986a). Constructive management of conflict leads to growth and enrichment in a relationship. Conversely, if conflict is handled destructively, the couple is likely to face an enduringly unsatisfactory relationship (Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). In other words, negotiation tends to yield more constructive outcomes in close relationships compared to conflict resolution through coercion (Laursen et al., 1996).

Rusbult et al. (1982) formulated a conflict resolution style model for romantic relationships based on two axes. One axis identifies whether the person is *active* or *passive* in resolution process, and the other axis delineates whether the style they use is *constructive* or *destructive* for the relationship. Thus the model proposes four styles which emerge out of crossing the two axes: *exit*, *voice*, *loyalty*, and *neglect*. Exit style involves formally separating, moving out, or deciding to be just friends, potentially leading to divorce. Voice style entails talking about issues, compromising, seeking help from a therapist, suggesting solutions, and attempting to address concerns through communication. Loyalty style is characterized by waiting and hoping for improvement, giving things time, and praying for positive changes. On the other hand, neglect style involves ignoring the partner, investing less time together, denying to talk about issues, treating the partner poorly emotionally or physically, criticizing unrelated aspects, and potentially developing extra-relationship sexual involvements. While voice and loyalty are constructive responses aimed at preserving and improving the relationship, exit and neglect are destructive responses that are harmful for the relationship. Considering the active-passive dimension, active responses where the individual takes action regarding the relationship include exit and voice while passive responses include loyalty and neglect. Their model addresses responses to conflict and approaches to conflict resolution in romantic relationships. According to research of Rusbult et al. (1986b), individuals tend to utilize passive conflict management strategies such as loyalty and neglect rather than active responses like exit and voice when dealing with dissatisfaction in longer-term relationships.

In the literature, there are several empirical studies examining the impact of conflict resolution styles on well-being. Rusbult et al. (1986b) stated that in relationships, *constructive* responses such as *voice* and *loyalty* generally lead to more positive immediate outcomes as well as greater long-term satisfaction and commitment compared to *destructive* responses like *exit* and *neglect*. According to a study conducted by Harasymchuk and Fehr (2019), constructive responses such as *voice* and *loyalty* (yet particularly *voice*) from a close individual are perceived as contributing to the resolution of conflicts, while destructive responses like *neglect* and *exit*, (especially *neglect*), are viewed as hindering resolution. They also noted that the *neglect* response was more obstructive to resolving a dissatisfying issue than the *exit*

response. In other words, when problems arise in a close relationship, doing nothing is perceived as even worse than responding in a destructive way. Also, according to the research by Taluy and Büyükşahin-Sunal (2016), both the constructive conflict resolution responses exhibited by the individual and those perceived in their partner are positively associated with relationship satisfaction while destructive conflict resolution responses observed both in oneself and perceived in one's partner are negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. When examining the main effects of conflict resolution responses predicting relationship satisfaction, it was observed that the individual's *loyalty* response and the perceived exit and *neglect* responses in their partner were significant. Therefore, the results indicate that individuals who remain calm in the face of problems and wait for the situation to improve experience increased satisfaction, whereas those who feel abandoned or neglected by their partner experience decreased relationship satisfaction (Taluy & Büyükşahin-Sunal, 2016). Finally, according to a study conducted with young dating couples in Cyprus, adaptation styles that emphasize constructive conflict resolution and prioritize relationship quality, specifically voice and loyalty, have been found to be significantly associated with satisfaction and commitment (Panayiotou, 2005).

These studies highlight the relationships between conflict resolution styles and variables such as relationship satisfaction, relationship quality, and overall well-being. However, there is a need for research examining the effects of both relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles on psychological well-being among university students in the relationship context.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

Following from the above discussion, the present study aims to understand how psychological well-being emerges during the romantic relationship process. Specifically, the relationship between individuals' beliefs about romantic relationships and how they resolve conflicts in their relationships will be investigated in relation to psychological well-being. Therefore, the expected outcome of this research assumes that individuals with dysfunctional romantic beliefs might be more

likely to use destructive conflict resolution styles, which in turn might be associated with low psychological well-being.

To the best of my knowledge, bivariate associations between relationship beliefs and well-being, and between conflict resolution styles and well-being in dating university students are studied yet there is not any research investigating both relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles as antecedents of psychological well-being of university students in their romantic relationship. Therefore, the present research aims to fill in this gap. Accordingly, the research question of the present study is as follows: “*How are romantic relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles related with psychological well-being?*”

In order to answer this question, the present study will aim to investigate the direct effects of individuals’ romantic relationship beliefs on the conflict resolution styles they employ in intimate relationships (Hypothesis 1), conflict resolution styles on their psychological well-being (Hypothesis 2), and the individuals’ romantic beliefs on their psychological well-being (Hypothesis 3). Specifically (Hypothesis 4), it is expected that irrational relationship beliefs (X) will have an indirect effect on psychological well-being (Y) through the mediation of the destructive conflict resolution styles (M). Overall, the present study will investigate these associations in a simple mediation model (Model 4 in Hayes, 2018). As an important note, in a romantic relationship, how one’s relationship partner engages them in a conflict situation may also affect their well-being. Since the present study is not designed as a dyadic research, this interactive effect needs to be at least statistically controlled. Therefore, partner’s perceived conflict management style will be used as a covariate (W) in the mediation analysis. The model and the hypotheses are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

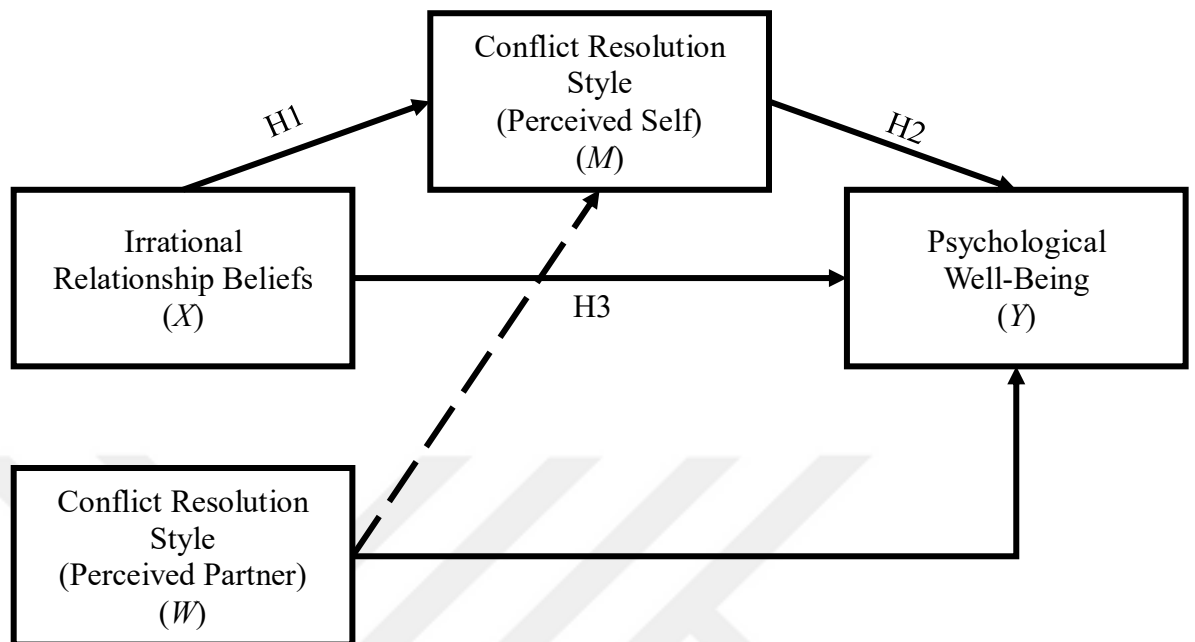


Figure 1. The Proposed Model

1.5. Significance of the Study

Answering the questions stated above is expected to contribute to the field of psychological counseling and guidance in two ways. Firstly, the present study can offer valuable insights for mental health professions working with individuals experiencing relationship difficulties. The study's findings can inform counseling interventions aimed at improving individuals' psychological well-being by addressing dysfunctional beliefs in the cognitive domain and maladaptive conflict resolution strategies in the behavioral domain. It may ultimately lead to improved psychological outcomes for their clients in romantic relationships.

Secondly, established couples often turn to couple counseling when they face overwhelming stress caused by a buildup of chronic and acute pressures, leading to feelings of being overwhelmed and helpless (Kieslich & Steins, 2022). Considering the robust connection between the couple's relationship and the health and well-being

of individuals, it's understandable that challenges in romantic relationships often emerge in therapeutic settings alongside individual concerns (Halford & Pepping, 2019). Premarital counseling programs have been increasingly popular as they aim to assist couples in assessing their relationship and equipping them with strategies to cultivate a healthier marriage (Bagarozzi & Rauen, 1981). Pre-marital prevention programs tend to yield notable and immediate improvements in communication, conflict management abilities, and the overall quality of relationships (Carroll & Doherty, 2003). Overall, through its focus on understanding the dynamics of romantic relationships and their impact on individuals' well-being, the findings of the present study might contribute valuable knowledge to the field and offer practical implications for especially couple counseling practice.

1.6. Definition of the Terms

Well-being: Well-being is characterized by attaining optimal psychological functioning and experiencing a high degree of positivity in life (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Psychological Well-Being: Psychological well-being refers to optimal human functioning, and is grounded in the fulfillment of universal psychological needs and the realization of one's potential (Diener et al., 2009).

Subjective Well-Being: Subjective well-being refers to an individual's self-assessment of their overall quality of life, encompassing their experiences of positive emotions, life satisfaction, and the balance of positive over negative affect, based on their own criteria and judgments (Diener, 1984).

Conflict: The "process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party" (Wall & Callister, 1995, p. 517).

Conflict Resolution: "[T]he process used by parties in conflict to reach a settlement" (Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996, p. 328).

Conflict Resolution Styles: Conflict resolution styles describe the ways in which individuals interact or behave to address and manage challenges within romantic relationships (Markman, 1991).

Relationship Beliefs: A type of cognitive framework, schema, or evaluation that relates to all aspects of intimate relationships (Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992).

Irrational Beliefs: Inflexible, resistant-to-change, and damaging views that couples hold about one another or the relationship as a whole (Ellis, 1986).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, nature, definitions, traditions and theoretical background of well-being are elaborated within the relationship context. Then, relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles in the relationship framework are elaborated.

2.1. Nature of Well-Being

The conceptualization of well-being is deeply rooted in Ancient Greek philosophy, particularly in the works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and Epicurus. During the Enlightenment, the study of well-being evolved into a scientific discipline, turning it into a measurable phenomenon that could be analyzed and theorized (Stoll, 2014). In the past, the field of psychology predominantly focused on addressing psychopathology, which led to the relative neglect of initiatives aimed at fostering well-being and personal growth. Since the 1960s, with a shift towards prevention, the concept of well-being has been studied in a broader context, extending beyond simply the absence of mental illness (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The term *well-being* includes all the various ways individuals perceive and assess their lives in a positive light (Tov, 2018). It represents a persistent state that facilitates the development and flourishing of individuals or populations (Ruggeri et al., 2020). The concept of experiencing life positively can be understood through various perspectives (Tov, 2018). For Diener (1984), well-being is synonymous with happiness. On the other hand, Ryff (1989) conceptualize well-being as a sustained state of contentment, while Huppert (2009) interprets it as a matter of wellness encompassing both physical and mental health.

2.1.1. Definitions and Traditions of Well-Being

The term *well-being* refers to a state in which an individual or something is in a positive or healthy condition (Veenhoven, 2004). Also, well-being can be defined as reaching optimal psychological functioning and experiencing overall positive feelings. It is a concept central not only to casual daily interactions (like asking somebody how they are) but also to rigorous scientific investigation (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Well-being has developed through two distinct, yet overlapping, perspectives rooted in different philosophical ideas: Hedonism and Eudaimonism (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

To start with, the term *hedonism* is derived from the ancient Greek word for *pleasure* (Moore, 2004). Philosophers like Aristippus, Epicurus, Hobbes, Locke, and Hume supported the idea of aiming to achieve the greatest possible pleasure and hedonic well-being (Joshani, 2013). In psychology, hedonism refers to the belief that the pursuit of pleasure is a primary driver of human behavior. Also, hedonism suggests that happiness arises from a positive balance between pleasant and unpleasant experiences, with the idea that seeking enjoyment will lead to a greater overall sense of well-being. This balance is believed to be more favorable when one actively pursues pleasure (Veenhoven, 2003). Thus, hedonism consists of subjective well-being which includes presence of positive affect, absence of negative affect, and life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985). SWB is described as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life as a whole” (Diener et al., 2018, p. 1). The strongest indicator of overall subjective well-being, when considering affective experiences, is how often positive states occur in comparison to negative states in a person’s life over time (Larsen et al., 1985). In addition to its hedonic aspect, subjective well-being includes a cognitive evaluation of one’s life overall, assessing its extent for providing fulfillment and satisfaction (Larsen & Eid, 2008). Thus, affective well-being is characterized by positive and negative emotions, while cognitive well-being is defined by life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2018).

Since subjective well-being involves both emotional experiences and cognitive evaluations, self-report assessments of subjective well-being are essential (Larsen &

Eid, 2008). Subjective well-being has been fundamentally assumed to reflect an individual's personal experience. A key source of information about an individual's subjective experience is their own self-report. Self-reports are advantageous because they offer a direct account of the respondent's experience, without requiring interpretation or inference from others (Pavot, 2008). Self-reports typically ask individuals to indicate a general evaluation, such as life satisfaction, or how much they experience certain emotions (Diener & Ryan, 2009). While self-report measures are generally dependable, external factors like the environment and mood can affect the responses (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

The other tradition, eudaimonism (literally meaning *a good demon*, as well as *Glück* in German, *prospérité* and *bonheur* in French, *happiness*, *human flourishing*, and the *good life* in English), has been a central idea in ethics and philosophy. Happiness, or more accurately, the good life, was once linked to virtue. It was understood subjectively, focusing on the self, the control of passions and emotions, self-realization, and the achievement of personal goals or the fulfillment of one's life as a whole. Additionally, happiness has been seen in connection with others, such as through friendship, love, and recognition, all of which are grounded in ethical interaction (Frieze, 2015). Also, happiness and the good life have been linked to the community and a just political system. Waterman (1993) argued that while happiness is characterized in hedonistic terms, the eudaimonic view of well-being empowers individuals to live in alignment with their true self, or *daimon*. He proposed that eudaimonia is achieved when people's life actions are closely aligned with their core values and are fully engaged in a holistic way. The daimon is an ideal representing excellence or perfection that one strives to achieve, and as such, it provides meaning and direction in life. The attempt to live in harmony with the daimon and to realize one's potential leads to a state known as eudaimonia. Thus, eudaimonic well-being (EWB) involves experiencing a sense of meaning, purpose, and fulfillment in life. In this vein, philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and Fromm argued that striving for virtue holds greater significance than simply seeking pleasure-based happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001). EWB tradition includes the concept of psychological well-being, as exemplified by Ryff's (1989) model (I will summarize it in the following section).

While hedonic well-being is centered on experiencing pleasure and happiness, eudaimonic well-being goes beyond mere happiness. It emphasizes the fulfillment and realization of one's potential, focusing on the deeper aspects of human growth and self-actualization (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Also, in hedonism, concepts like pleasure, satisfaction, enjoyment, comfort, freedom from pain, and ease are linked to specific mental frameworks that emphasize self-focus, living in the present moment, and tangible, concrete experiences. These variables also reflect a mindset centered on fulfilling one's needs and desires through acquisition and consumption (Huta, 2016). Also, Huta and Waterman (2014) identified four core elements that are commonly included in definitions of eudaimonia: *meaning* or relevance within a larger context, *personal growth* or self-realization, *excellence* or ethical behavior, and *authenticity* or autonomy. These elements align with certain perspectives, such as maintaining a balance between focusing on oneself and others, balancing present and future concerns, adopting abstract and broad conceptual thinking, and prioritizing efforts to nurture and develop what one values and aspires to achieve (Huta & Waterman, 2016). Furthermore, hedonia and eudaimonia are not contradictory or mutually exclusive; instead, they serve as complementary aspects of psychological functioning (Huta, 2015). Therefore, evaluating both hedonic and eudaimonic factors is essential for a comprehensive understanding of well-being outcomes (Huta, 2016).

2.1.2. Models and Theories of Well-Being

The well-being literature includes various models and theories aimed at understanding different dimensions and determinants of human flourishing. Diener (2009) stated that the SWB literature focuses on understanding the reasons and components behind individuals' positive life experiences, including both cognitive evaluations and emotional responses. The concept of SWB was initially introduced by Diener (1984) to define a field of psychology that seeks to understand how individuals assess their quality of life, which includes both their cognitive evaluations and emotional responses (Diener et al., 1997). Also, Diener et al. (1997) stated that individuals with high SWB are characterized by life satisfaction, frequent positive affect like joy and optimism, and infrequent negative affect such as sadness or anger. On the other hand, individuals with low SWB tend to be dissatisfied with life, experience less joy, and

frequently encounter negative emotions like anger or anxiety. In the literature, the affective aspects of SWB have generally been emphasized more than its cognitive elements such as life satisfaction (LS; Diener et al., 1985). This disparity can partly be explained by the nature of affective components, which are based on emotional reactions. These emotions are inherently transient and variable. However, they reflect the dynamics of everyday life (Gilman et al., 2000). That is, although affective components are transient and variable, they reflect individuals' daily life experiences and their responses to these experiences. Moreover, Larsen et al. (1985) have shown that the frequency of affective experiences (PA and NA), rather than their intensity, has the greatest influence on an individual's overall SWB over time (Larsen et al., 1985). The cognitive component (life satisfaction) is centered on an individual's overall evaluation of their quality of life. As such, it is generally less prone to changes driven by short-term emotional responses to life events (Proctor, 2024). Therefore, life satisfaction is recognized as both the most stable aspect of SWB (Eid & Diener, 2004) and its primary indicator for well-being (Diener & Diener, 1995).

Well-being is explored through various theoretical perspectives, ranging from biological theories, which focus on genetic factors that influence happiness, to relative standards theories, which examine the impact of social comparisons on how individuals perceive their own subjective well-being (Diener & Ryan, 2009). Diener and Ryan (2009) stated telic theory, top down versus bottom up theory, cognitive theories, and evolutionary theory. Firstly, *telic theory* refers to a conceptual framework that views well-being as a goal-directed process. According to telic theories, individuals experience happiness or satisfaction when they reach certain end-points, such as achieving goals or fulfilling needs. Second, bottom-up theories propose that an individual's overall sense of subjective well-being is the result of adding up the positive and negative experiences in their life. According to this perspective, each positive or happy moment contributes to individual's sense of well-being. The more positive experiences a person encounters, the higher their perceived well-being becomes. Essentially, it suggests that well-being is the cumulative effect of the frequency of positive moments.

Secondly, *top-down theories* suggest that an individual's natural tendency to perceive and engage with the world in a particular way influences how they interact with their surroundings (Diener & Ryan, 2009). People with a more positive mindset are likely to interpret events as happier compared to those with a more negative perspective. Thus, it is not the events themselves, but the individual's positive attitude that plays a key role in shaping their well-being. In this view, the person's internal disposition is seen as the main driver of well-being, rather than external circumstances. In addition, cognitive theories of well-being emphasize the role of mental processes in shaping an individual's sense of well-being. The theory highlights how cognitive patterns, such as focusing on the positive aspects of life, influence overall well-being. Theories explaining the formation of SWB focus on the role of individuals' perceptions and experiences in this process. The findings consistently suggest that two seemingly conflicting psychological theories (bottom up and top down) of SWB can be effectively combined. Specifically, it seems that both objective life circumstances, as proposed by bottom-up approaches, and global personality traits, as suggested by top-down approaches, influence SWB (Brief et al., 1993).

In this vein, a model that can serve as a bridge between these theories is the *dynamic equilibrium model* developed by Headey and Wearing (1989). It suggests that the changes in SWB due to life events are temporary and that individuals tend to return to a baseline or equilibrium level over time. The model argues that SWB is not solely dependent on personality traits or entirely on external (exogenous) events. Instead, it posits that although individuals are influenced by life events, the effects are generally short-lived, and their well-being tends to stabilize back to a certain level. Thus, dynamic equilibrium model emphasizes that despite fluctuations in SWB caused by life events, well-being ultimately regains stability over time. Therefore, the dynamic equilibrium model builds on top-down and bottom-up theories by integrating the role of personality and life events in shaping SWB, providing a more comprehensive explanation.

Finally, from an evolutionary theory point of view, Fredrickson's (1998) *broaden and build theory* suggests that high subjective well-being and positive affect yield a state from which individuals can certainly investigate their environment, approach new

goals, and in this manner gain vital personal resources. Evolutionary models suggest that emotional and physical well-being are the result of factors that contribute to human survival (Diener & Ryan, 2009). The evolutionary role of negative emotions like fear, anger, and anxiety, which helped our ancestors react to environmental dangers, has been recognized for a long time. In contrast the understanding of the role of positive emotions in driving adaptive behaviors and the benefits of well-being has evolved with subsequent research (Diener & Ryan, 2009). In summary, well-being is explored through various theoretical frameworks, including telic, bottom-up, top-down, cognitive, and evolutionary theories and each emphasizes different factors like goals, experiences, mindset, mental processes, and the role of positive emotions in personal development.

Beyond subjective well-being, other perspectives in the literature emphasize the multidimensional nature of well-being, focusing on psychological and eudaimonic aspects. Ryff (1989) highlighted the lack of a solid theoretical foundation and clear definitions regarding the key aspects of well-being as a significant issue in the field. To overcome this challenge, she introduced a comprehensive model of psychological well-being (PWB), drawing from various theoretical perspectives on positive human functioning. This model identifies six central aspects: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Ryff (1989) summarized that *self-acceptance* involves recognizing and embracing one's overall strengths and weaknesses. *Positive relationships with others* refers to the ability to form warm, trusting, and deep relationships with others. It is an important factor for mental health and maturity, encompassing emotions such as empathy, love, and friendship. *Autonomy* involves acting in alignment with one's personal beliefs and values. *Environmental mastery* refers to the ability to navigate life situations and actively engage with the environment. It highlights the person's capacity to make progress in the world and creatively transforms it through both physical and mental actions. *Purpose in life* refers to how much one's life feels significant and is guided by a clear sense of direction and intention. It includes having objectives, purposes, and a sense of direction, all of which enhance the perception of life's meaning. Finally, *personal growth* involves the ongoing development of one's abilities, realizing one's potential, and confronting new challenges to progress. These

six aspects define PWB both conceptually and practically and they outline the factors that contribute to emotional and physical health (Ryff & Singer, 1998).

As the PWB model outlines the dimensions of psychological well-being, *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) explains the psychological processes that support these dimensions. Basic psychological needs play a crucial role in determining optimal experiences and overall well-being in everyday life (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT is grounded in a fundamental principle of humanism, which posits that well-being primarily results from optimal psychological functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It asserts that healthy psychological functioning requires the adequate fulfillment of three essential psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, along with a system of aligned and coherent goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000). *Autonomy* refers to the desire to act in alignment with one's own choices and desires, rather than being controlled by external pressures. *Competence* involves the need to feel effective and capable in one's endeavors. *Relatedness* encompasses the desire for meaningful connections, intimacy, and a sense of belonging with others (Church, et al., 2013). The first element, which involves satisfying basic needs, focuses on maintaining a life balance that ensures an adequate level of satisfaction in each area independently. The second component of the model suggests that to cultivate eudaimonic well-being, individuals should set their personal goals based on specific criteria whenever possible (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The theory posits that fulfilling basic psychological needs improves both subjective well-being and eudaimonic well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Also, the fundamental psychological needs identified in this theory closely align with three dimensions of Ryff's (1989) model, specifically autonomy, environmental mastery, and positive relationships with others (Lent, 2004). To sum up, both Ryff's (1989) PWB model and SDT emphasize the importance of fulfilling basic psychological needs to enhance individual development and overall well-being.

Similarly, Seligman (2011) asserts that his well-being model combines elements of hedonia as the experience of positive emotions and the fulfillment of desires and eudaimonia as the presence of meaning and the development of one's potential into a unified framework. Seligman's (2011) well-being theory is a fundamental theory of voluntary choice, and its five components represent what free individuals would

choose for their own benefit. These five components are *positive emotion*, *engagement*, *meaning*, *relationships*, and *accomplishment*. These five components, known collectively as PERMA, represent an acronym for its components. *Positive emotion* includes hedonic experiences like happiness, joy, and comfort. They act as indicators of thriving and well-being while *engagement* describes a profound psychological bond, such as feeling interested, involved, and fully immersed in a specific activity, organization, or purpose. In positive psychology, assessments have concentrated on flow, which refers to an intense state of psychological engagement characterized by deep concentration, total absorption, and sustained focus (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Also, *relationships* involves a sense of belonging to a society, the feeling of being supported by loved ones, and experiencing satisfaction with one's social connections. *Meaning* relates to experiencing a clear purpose in life, a sense of direction, and a connection to something beyond oneself. Finally, *accomplishment* is the process of advancing towards one's goals and attaining exceptional outcomes, which can result in external recognition as well as a personal feeling of success. Although it can be measured in objective terms, accomplishment is also shaped by individual ambition, motivation, and personality traits. Thus, expanding on Seligman's view of well-being, PERMA model offers a structured framework that captures the key elements of positive psychology.

2.1.3. Operationalizations for the Well-Being Construct

As detailed above, there are various theoretical positions pertaining to the conceptualization of well-being. Accordingly, different measurement instruments that assess well-being from multiple perspectives have been developed in the literature. Some instruments have been widely utilized to evaluate both the affective and cognitive aspects of SWB (Eid & Larsen, 2008). The *Positive and Negative Affect Schedule* (PANAS) is developed for measuring affective aspects of SWB (Eid & Larsen, 2008). The PA scale is associated with social engagement and exhibits noticeable daily fluctuations, while the NA scale is strongly linked to perceived stress but does not display significant variations throughout the day (Watson et al., 1988). The PANAS scales are recognized for their strong psychometric properties although they primarily emphasize emotions characterized by high activation or arousal

(Watson et al., 1988). Moreover, the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS) is a widely recognized tool developed to evaluate an individual's overall perception of their life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985). It emphasizes the cognitive aspect of SWB and five-item scale demonstrates strong internal consistency and reliability over time (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

On the other hand, Ryff (1989) stated that happiness is not the ultimate goal of psychological well-being but rather that it is achieved through the integration of factors such as self-acceptance, personal growth, and environmental mastery. She criticized existing measurement tools as inadequate, lacking a theoretical foundation, and overlooking significant aspects of positive functioning (Akin, 2008). Thus, Ryff (1989) developed the *Psychological Well-Being Scales* (PWBS) to define the dimensions of psychological well-being in operational terms and to establish their empirical validity.

In the literature, another conceptualization of well-being is referred to as mental well-being, as described in the *Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale* (Tennant et al., 2007). Mental well-being encompasses an individual's psychological functioning, overall life satisfaction, and capacity to establish and sustain relationships that are mutually beneficial (Stewart-Brown & Janmohamed, 2008). This instrument covers a broad range of concepts associated with positive mental health, such as hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions, positive feelings, fulfilling interpersonal relationships, and effective functioning.

While measurement instruments like PANAS and PWBS focus on distinct dimensions of SWB or PWB, there has also been a growing interest in instruments that integrate these frameworks to offer a more holistic view of well-being. Butler and Kern (2016) developed and validated the PERMA-Profiler to thoroughly assess the components of PERMA and it employs a multidimensional approach to capture the unique aspects of each dimension, with the goal of identifying each domain. It combines the elements of both SWB and PWB. Similarly, Diener and colleagues (2009) developed *New Measures of Well-Being* addressing the need of assessment in several dimensions in positive and negative emotions, optimistic thinking, and a concise measure of

psychological well-being (PWB). The new PWB scale gives a good evaluation of overall self-reported psychological well-being because it shows a strong correlation with the total scores of other psychological well-being scales. Thus, in the present study, new PWB measure was used because it is shorter than other scales, reflects the common elements of the other scales, and provides an overall psychological well-being score (Diener et al., 2009).

2.1.4. Antecedents of Well-Being

Well-being is influenced by various factors including biological, socio-economic, demographic, and personality-related aspects (Huppert, 2009). To begin with biology, more than three decades of twin studies have demonstrated that genetic factors account for a substantial portion of the variation in well-being (Vries, et al., 2023). The human brain is the central organ of the human nervous system and is a key player in mood and emotion regulation (Vries, et al., 2023). Based on a systematic review of 56 studies investigating the neural correlates of well-being, the results were highly varied regarding the brain regions involved. There was considerable inconsistency in both the direction and magnitude of the associations between well-being and different brain structures or districts (Vries et al., 2023). For instance, prefrontal cortex (PFC) is responsible for some functions like maintaining working memory, abstract thinking, sensory attention, making decision, planning and controlling motor behaviors (Chafee & Heilbronner, 2022). Kong et al. (2015) stated that the volume of grey matter in the medial PFC was found to be negatively correlated with subjective well-being, suggesting that a smaller prefrontal cortex is associated with lower levels of well-being. However, Kong et al. (2020) found a positive correlation between the medial PFC and life satisfaction.

Also, there are meta-analysis studies indicating the effect of genetics on well-being. Bartels (2015) analyzed data from ten distinct samples comprising a total of 55,974 participants, arriving at a general heritability estimate of 36% for SWB. Additionally, when narrowing the analysis to focus specifically on life satisfaction, she identified a heritability estimate of 32%. Nes and Røysamb (2015) analyzed 13 unique studies from seven different countries and estimated the average heritability rate as 40% in

the general population. Also, the study supported the theoretical idea that heritability is not a constant value but can differ between populations and groups, influenced by the scope of environmental factors present and the specific measures employed in the research. Moreover, among the largest biometric studies on SWB, one analyzed data from 6,600 twins and 54,450 nuclear family members, highlighting genetic influences. The broad-sense heritability was estimated at 36% for men and 33% for women (Nes et al., 2010). All in all, it is possible to assert that 30% to 40% of SWB trait seems to be determined by genetic factors. Nevertheless, studies in behavioral genetics that examine heritability estimates also highlight the considerable role of environmental factors. Establishing direct causation for specific variables, such as life events, is typically difficult in correlational research. However, findings from genetically informative studies suggest that the other 60% of the variation in well-being is driven by environmental influences and random errors in measurement (Røysamb & Nes, 2018).

Second, demographic factors also have different impacts on well-being (Huppert, 2009). When comparing well-being across different ages, a common trend observed is a U-shaped curve, where well-being is higher in both the earlier and later stages of life compared to mid-life. This pattern applies to life satisfaction, positive emotions, and the absence of negative emotions (Stone et al., 2010). Similarly, Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) found that both younger and older individuals typically report higher well-being scores than those in middle age and well-being may decline among the very elderly. Nevertheless, Frijters and Beatton (2012) found that when socio-economic control variables were included, the age-happiness profile appeared U-shaped. However, when fixed-effects methods were applied to account for unobserved individual characteristics, this relationship disappeared. Thus, the U-shaped age-happiness profile could arise from individualistic characteristics or other unobserved factors and it means that relationship between age and happiness may not directly stem from age itself. Similar findings were also reported by Gwozdz and Sousa-Poza (2010), and Kassenboehmer and Haisken-DeNew (2012). According to the World Happiness Report, specifically the ranking of life evaluations by age groups in Turkey (2021-2023), the youngest age group reports the highest, whereas the oldest age group reports the lowest levels of life satisfaction. Moreover, Ryff and Singer (1996)

suggested that environmental mastery and autonomy tend to increase gradually with age, especially between young adulthood and midlife. On the other hand, aspects like personal growth and purpose in life showed a decline, particularly from midlife into older adulthood. In contrast, dimensions such as positive relationships with others and self-acceptance remained largely consistent across the three age groups.

In terms of gender, differences in well-being become more noticeable at certain stages of life (Lansford, 2018). Before adolescence, boys and girls have similar well-being levels, but as puberty begins, gender differences start to appear, particularly with a rise in anxiety and depression among girls (Hankin & Abramson, 2001). A meta-analysis of 300 studies revealed that, in later life, women reported lower levels of life satisfaction and happiness compared to men, and these results remained significant even after accounting for factors such as widowhood, socioeconomic status, and physical health (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2001). Biological factors may contribute to some of the observed gender differences, yet environmental factors, including societal levels of gender equality, also play a significant role (e.g., Meisenberg & Woodley, 2015). Specifically, Meisenberg and Woodley (2015) found that increased women participation in the labor force and nonagricultural employment seem factors that may lower well-being of women compared to men. In contrary, it improves men's well-being more than women's. Thus, they observed that higher levels of gender equality might reduce women's subjective well-being instead of enhancing it. In adult literature, it is commonly found that women report greater life satisfaction than men, but also experience more negative emotions, such as anxiety and depression (Senik, 2015). Wood et al. (1989) conducted a meta-analysis and found that women reported higher levels of happiness than men. However, another meta-analysis by Pinquart and Sörensen (2001), which examined 58 studies on happiness differences between men and women over the age of 55, revealed that older women reported slightly lower levels of happiness compared to older men. Moreover, a comprehensive analysis by Zuckerman et al. (2017) reveals a significant gender difference in negative affect, with women reporting higher levels of negative emotional experiences compared to men. Also, according to a study by Salleh and Mustaffa (2016) found no significant differences between genders in terms of psychological well-being. On the other hand, according to a cross-sectional study conducted with individuals between the ages of

21 and 64, men scored higher than women in self-acceptance and autonomy, while women scored higher than men in personal growth and positive relations with others (Matud et al., 2019). Thus, there is not a clear understanding in terms of gender on both subjective and psychological well-being in the literature. In the end, whether men and women differ in well-being seems to depend on the context (Batz & Tay, 2018). This suggest that gender differences in well-being cannot be explained by a single factor and are shaped by various influences such as life conditions, social roles, and cultural factors.

Well-being varies across different life stages and transitions. One of this transitions occurs in early adulthood. It is marked by significant shifts in family dynamics as individuals move from their families of origin to their own families. However, relationships with parents remain linked to well-being during this stage (Trzcinski & Holst, 2008). Intimate relationships gain more importance during early adulthood. A commonly observed finding is that both married men and women report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction compared to their unmarried counterparts (e.g., Waite & Lehrer, 2003). Also, in various countries, married individuals reported higher life satisfaction and positive emotions, along with lower levels of negative emotions, compared to those who were cohabiting or divorced (Diener et al., 2000). Similarly, married individuals, particularly those who have stayed married, generally report higher levels of well-being than those who have been previously married or who have never been married (Kim & McKenry, 2002). However, existing longitudinal studies indicate that, on average, marriage leads to an increase in well-being, though this improvement tends to fade by the couple's second anniversary (Nelson-Coffey, 2018). Also, marriage has a protective influence on psychological well-being, remarriage leads to better outcomes than divorce, but cohabitation does not provide similar advantages (Kim & Mckenry, 2002). Another way to explore the connection between marriage and well-being is by examining how the quality of a relationship influences happiness, beyond just the marital status. Research revealed that the quality of a marriage is a stronger predictor of happiness than merely being married. One study on this subject found that individuals in the most fulfilling relationships — whether married, cohabiting, or dating — reported the highest levels of subjective well-being (Dush & Amato, 2005). In conclusion, these findings highlight that marital status plays

a crucial role in well-being. That is, married individuals are generally happier than those who are single, cohabiting, divorced/separated, or widowed (Nelson-Coffey, 2018).

Third, in terms of socioeconomic factors, poverty and significant economic hardship are associated with lower levels of subjective well-being (Howell & Howell, 2008). Income exerts a direct positive influence on SWB due to its symbolic importance, so that people with greater income levels are generally happier than those with lesser means (Tay et al., 2018). According to a study by Luhmann et al. (2014), involving older adults found that poverty rate has a stronger influence on life satisfaction and positive emotions, while unemployment rate does not significantly affect these factors. The research also identified that socioeconomic context has a more substantial impact on SWB, especially for individuals who are not retired and those with lower incomes. Moreover, Diener, Ng, Harter and Arora (2010) stated that income plays a significant role in shaping individuals' life evaluations, which involve comparing their current lives to their desires. However, the connection between income and emotional experiences, whether positive or negative, is less pronounced. Also, they found that living in an economically developed country is important for life evaluations. In line with this, research has demonstrated that the wealth of a nation is positively associated with life satisfaction, surpassing the impact of individual income (Tay et al., 2014). Also, income inequality is linked with well-being (Huppert, 2009). According to a study comparing the relationship between well-being and income inequality in Europe and US, greater national income inequality is connected to lower well-being scores and this effect is statistically more precisely defined in Europe compared to the US (Alesina et al., 2004).

In terms of education, a study conducted by Witter et al. (1984) indicates that while higher levels of education typically have a positive impact on individuals' happiness, the nature of this relationship is complex and influenced by multiple factors. For instance, in terms of age, education has a stronger effect on SWB for older people, in terms of gender, education has a greater effect on women. However, the combined effect of age and gender wasn't statistically significant (Witter et al., 1984). Also, they found that the effect of education on SWB has remained stable over a 48-year period

as between 1931 and 1979 despite of important social changes. On the other hand, Chevalier and Feinstein (2006) discovered that men with higher levels of education were more likely to experience depression compared to those with lower levels of education. Therefore, increasing educational attainment does not necessarily ensure an improvement in well-being. Also, Kristoffersen (2018) indicates that education level has a neutral effect on SWB, though expectations and reference points influence satisfaction in various life areas, such as health, finances, work, and leisure. While individuals with higher education report greater satisfaction in economic and health domains, they tend to experience lower satisfaction in work and leisure. Thus, education level has a complex and balanced effect on subjective well-being.

Finally, relationship between personality and well-being has consistently been demonstrated (Diener & Ryan, 2009). Personality is associated with both emotional states and the efficacy of psychological functioning (Huppert, 2009). For instance, Steel et al. (2008) found that neuroticism had the strongest association with SWB, followed by extraversion and then conscientiousness. Also, the dimensions of PWB exhibited a somewhat stronger connection with the Big Five traits compared to the dimensions of SWB (Anglim & Grant, 2016). According to Meléndez et al. (2019), for psychological well-being, neuroticism was negatively and significantly related to all dimensions, except for purpose in life. In contrast, extraversion and conscientiousness had significant positive relationships with all six dimensions. Thus, neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness appear as personality traits that predispose individuals to general well-being. Also, the connections between personality and well-being outcomes may be influenced by the various behaviors exhibited by individuals with different personalities or the different environments they select (Lucas, 2018). Moreover, the way different individuals react to the same external circumstances suggests that there may be underlying differences in perspective and perception that contribute to variations in well-being (Lucas, 2018). Rusting (1998) examined how individual differences in cognitive processes can impact well-being. People may focus on either positive or negative aspects of their environment, with some recalling positive events more easily, while others focus on negative ones. Additionally, individuals may interpret the same event in different ways.

These findings indicate that biological, socio-economic, demographic, and personality-related factors play a crucial role in determining individuals' levels of well-being. Specifically, genetic predispositions interact with environmental influences to shape well-being. In this context, it is possible to conclude that well-being is a multidimensional concept, shaped by the dynamic interaction of various factors in an individual's life.

2.1.5. Consequences of Well-being

Well-being is a construct which both influences and is influenced by other constructs. The factors discussed above are primarily those that might theoretically be argued to affect well-being. However, it is important to recognize that well-being itself also has significant consequences for various life domains. Firstly, people with higher subjective well-being tend to have better physical health and a longer lifespan compared to those with lower subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2017). According to a study conducted with midlife adults (Boehm et al., 2016), individuals with greater well-being often experience more favorable physical health outcomes, including reduced inflammation, enhanced cardiovascular health, and strengthened immune functioning. Also, Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) stated that subjective well-being may mitigate the negative physiological impact of stress, acting as a buffer against its harmful effects. Moreover, according to Strine et al. (2008), life satisfaction is negatively associated with the average number of days in the past 30 days spent experiencing poor mental health, depressive symptoms, and anxiety, as well as with physical complaints such as poor health, sleep deprivation, pain, and limitations in activity. Thus, it is possible to conclude that SWB is also associated with health promoting behaviors that help prevent disease.

In this vein, happiness, along with the frequent experience of positive emotions, likely contributes to health by affecting social relationships, healthy behaviors, stress levels, accident and suicide rates, coping mechanisms, and potentially immune function. Examining the cross-sectional, longitudinal and experimental research, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) concluded that positive emotions and happiness are highlighted as factors that foster success and personal growth. These emotions contribute to the development

of positive traits in individuals, including sociability, altruism, creativity, and robust physical health and immune systems. Furthermore, positive emotions promote behaviors and resources that align with success, such as enhanced coping abilities and effective conflict resolution skills.

Secondly, one of the most significant links to well-being is an individual's social relationships (Kansky, 2017). People with high positive affect tend to be more sociable and have relationships of better quality with others (Lucas & Fujita, 2000). Kansky et al. (2016) discovered that positive affect in adolescence predicted future levels of less loneliness and more sociability, as well as changes positively in these traits over time during the transition to adulthood. They also found that peers rated those with high positive affect as adolescence as having healthier attachment styles in adulthood. In an experience sampling study, Diener et al. (2014) found a strong and consistent correlation between positive affect and sociability. Also, individuals who are experimentally induced a positive mood were found to be more open and expressive, engaged in conversation, and shared personal information more (Cunningham, 1988). They also demonstrated increased empathy, a better ability to understand others' perspectives, and greater sympathy toward those experiencing hardship (Nelson, 2009).

Theoretical frameworks have suggested a connection between relationships, well-being, and health, emphasizing the importance of factors such as trust, respect, and social support in fostering positive emotional and psychological outcomes (Cole & Neumayer, 2006). In addition to friendships, happy people also experience more fulfilling romantic relationships (Kansky, 2017). Additionally, individuals who are more content with their romantic relationship tend to report higher levels of positive emotions and life satisfaction, while experiencing lower levels of negative emotions (Love & Holder, 2016). Also, in romantic relationships, greater intimacy was linked to a reduction in depressive symptoms (Camirand & Poulin, 2022). According to Kansky (2017), positive affect is linked to several key aspects of healthy relationships, including trust and respect. Therefore, individuals with high well-being may prioritize these positive relationship qualities, which in turn might help foster strong social

connections with others. Building upon these insights, the subsequent section explores well-being within the context of romantic relationships.

2.1.6. Well-Being in the Relationship Context

Research indicates that well-being benefits are shaped by the quality of the romantic relationship, satisfaction with both the relationship and partner and relationship status (Kansky, 2018). Firstly, relationship quality refers to how individuals perceive the presence or absence of social support, interpersonal conflicts, and the emotional depth in their relationships (Pierce et al., 1997). The quality of a relationship plays a significant role in the well-being of individuals in romantic relationships (Soons & Liefbroer, 2008). When partners' relationship quality is positive, their SWB is also positive (Love & Holder, 2016).

Secondly, relationship satisfaction has been linked to higher levels of subjective well-being (Dush & Amato, 2005). Relationship satisfaction is linked to the three components (intimacy, passion, and commitment), and the strength of these associations changes positively as relationships develop over time (Kansky, 2018). The study by Downward et al (2022) highlights that mental health plays a critical role in shaping relationship satisfaction among partners in the UK. Notably, reduced mental health, especially in men, can negatively impact partner satisfaction and overall well-being. Also, in terms of PWB, greater relationship satisfaction is linked to elevated levels of well-being dimensions such as having a sense of purpose in life, maintaining positive relationships with others, and environmental mastery (Czyżowska et al., 2020). Moreover, according to Teoh and colleagues (2024) self-compassion has important role in enhancing both PWB and relationship satisfaction by increasing trust, love expression and commitment to partner.

Thirdly, the status of relationship plays a key role in romantic relationships (Cassepp-Borges et al., 2023). Couples in dating relationships who express higher satisfaction is more likely to get married (Keizer, 2014). Also, being in a romantic relationship is associated with higher well-being levels than being single (Soons & Liefbroer, 2008). A study measuring the alcohol use among university student found that students in committed dating relationships tend to drink more responsively and

especially women reported fewer negative consequences related to alcohol use (Pedersen & Pithey, 2018). In a study involving individuals who have experienced psychosis, those who expressed higher satisfaction with their romantic relationship status reported notable improvements in their mental health and a decrease in depressive symptoms (White et al., 2023). Moreover, Shahidi, et al. (2019) stated that loneliness in romantic relationships was more prevalent among students aged 19 and 26 years when compared to family, friendship and larger group relationships. They found that loneliness in romantic relationship is negatively linked with especially purpose in life dimension of PWB. Moreover, marriage is linked to the highest levels of well-being, while separation tends to be linked with the lowest levels, with divorce and widowhood falling somewhere in between (Helliwell, 2003). However, Diener and colleagues (2000) discovered that the positive impact of marriage on well-being was less pronounced in collectivist and divorce-tolerant cultures. Thus, it seems that romantic relationships, particularly their quality, satisfaction, and status, play a crucial role in shaping well-being by promoting mental health, life purpose, and positive connections with others.

Considering the review above, highlighting a developmental perspective is crucial for understanding how romantic relationships influence an individual's well-being. Emerging adulthood, encompassing ages 18 to 29, is defined by notable shifts in social relationships, academic and career development (Arnett, 2015). In the phase of emerging adulthood, friendships and romantic relationships take on a crucial role in shaping individuals' social experiences, greatly enhancing psychological well-being by providing essential social support and connection (Furman & Rose, 2015). Furthermore, romantic relationships which are a special part of close relationships play a central role in young adults' lives (Demir, 2008). Also, during this period, individuals may be more attuned to challenges in their romantic relationships, such as lower intimacy or increased conflict (Camirand & Poulin, 2022). Simon and Barrett (2010) have demonstrated that individuals in romantic relationships tend to have better physical health and psychological well-being compared to those who are not in a relationship. Moreover, in comparison to adolescence, high-quality romantic relationships in emerging adulthood are more strongly associated with well-being and relationship satisfaction, reflecting a developmental shift in the importance of

romantic relationships for overall well-being (Collibee & Furman, 2015). However, Furman and Collibee (2014) found no significant difference in the long-term impact on well-being between casual dating relationships and committed romantic relationships. Thus, emerging adulthood is a paradoxical phase of life, where individuals navigate various experiences and transitions that can enhance their psychological well-being while simultaneously heightening their susceptibility to psychological distress (Camirand & Poulin, 2022). The university setting creates a unique space where young adults frequently build and strengthen romantic connections. Consequently, these relationships play a vital role in students' lives, supporting self-development, psychological well-being and social enrichment (Chanda, 2024). As a result, romantic relationships especially in university students might play a central role on PWB. The quality, satisfaction and status of this relationship can influence the individual's well-being. Considering these factors on mental health and PWB, it gains importance to understand how individuals perceive their relationships. In order to understand this approach, relationship beliefs will be examined in the next section.

2.2. Relationship Beliefs

A romantic relationship is a strong emotional bond between two individuals, usually defined by feelings of love, closeness, and attraction (Chanda, 2024). Individuals start a relationship with some established beliefs about which characteristics satisfy and reward them, how relationships should be like and what rules should govern the behavior of their partners and so on (Sprecher & Metts, 1999). When considering about a relationship, the expectations and beliefs that form the romantic ideal are noticeable and almost every individual has certain fundamental beliefs about how their ongoing relationship should be (Sprecher & Metts, 1999). When looking at how people form beliefs about relationships, it is clear that these beliefs come from their ideas about how relationships should be, their expectations, and how they view what happened in the past (Sarı & Owen, 2015). Also, beliefs about relationships consist of individuals' views on how a relationship should function, their expectations and how they interpret events within the relationships (Addis & Bernard, 2002). Romantic relationship beliefs are seen as important factors that affect the start and development

of romantic relationships and they can cause conflicts in relationships (Knee, 1998; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). In the context of romantic relationships, individuals' beliefs importantly influence their interpretation of events and the meaning they attribute to relational experiences (Knee, 2022).

Understanding relationship dynamics has been made easier by investigating individual's beliefs about relationships (Cobb et al., 2013). According to the cognitive approach, individuals' thinking way and the content of their thoughts play an important role in their adjustment to romantic relationships (Sarı & Owen, 2015). If relationship beliefs help individuals adapt to their relationships and support their personal development, they are viewed as health-promoting (Sullivan & Scwebel, 1995). Holding functional beliefs in a romantic relationship positively influences an individuals' self-esteem and self-perception, while the relationship also fosters personal growth in a constructive manner (Furman, 2002). On the other hand, irrational relationship beliefs are rigid, exaggerated, illogical, and resistant to change beliefs about the relationship, oneself, and others (Ellis, 1986). Romantic relationship beliefs are also referred to as unrealistic relationship standards (DeBord et al., 1996) or dysfunctional beliefs (Sharp and Ganong, 2000).

2.2.1. Definitions of Relationship Beliefs

In psychology literature, *beliefs* can be defined as expression of anticipation and assertions about reality (Smith et al., 1991). Forming beliefs means that a proposition is kept in mind (Smith et al., 1991). Especially, *relationship beliefs* can be understood as a type of knowledge structure, schema or judgement that contained various aspects of romantic relationships (Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992). Relationship beliefs represent a broad category that likely covers expectations, goals, attributions, and memories of behavior. Furthermore, these beliefs are commonly seen as key elements of affective concepts like feelings or attitudes (Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992).

Dysfunctional relationship beliefs refer to excessively exaggerated, inflexible, irrational, and all-or-nothing views about relationships and individuals involved in them (DiGuiseppe & Zee, 1986). When individuals have dysfunctional relationship beliefs, they experience lower satisfaction, poorer adjustment, and more conflicts in

their relationships whereas functional thinking contributes to better adjustment (Stackert & Bursik, 2003). Also, according to Bradbury and Fincham (1988), if dysfunctional relationship beliefs are high in an individual, marital satisfaction tends to be low. Moreover, a study conducted by Goodwin and Gaines Jr. (2004) found negative relationship between dysfunctional relationship beliefs and relationship quality in the context of three countries and married couples from diverse backgrounds. In other words, as dysfunctional relationship beliefs increase, relationship quality decreases.

2.2.2. Theories and Models of Relationship Beliefs

There are certain theories and models of measurements to assess dysfunctional relationship beliefs in romantic relationships. Firstly, *implicit theories of relationships* (ITR) refer to individuals' beliefs about what leads to a successful relationship (Cobb et al., 2013). These beliefs affect people and their relationships by shaping how they think, feel, set goals, and act (Knee et al., 2003). According to Knee (1998), ITR consist of two distinct types of beliefs: relationship growth and relationship destiny. Growth belief is the conviction that difficulties in a relationship can be resolved while destiny belief refers to the idea that people are either naturally suited for each other in a relationship or they are not. (Knee et al., 2003). Knee (2022) summarized that a high destiny belief assumes that an individual's view of the compatibility between partners is fairly accurate and they can predict how the relationship will progress in the future. Additionally, individuals with a high destiny belief use relevant and easily accessible information to determine the compatibility and potential future success of a relationship. However, growth belief assumes that relationship problems are not permanent and they can be managed as they arise and alter throughout the relationship. Knee (1998) stated that growth belief is associated with fewer one-night stands and more long-term partnerships as well as a tendency to adopt relationship maintenance approaches to resolve problems. On the other hand, destiny belief is associated with adopting avoidance strategies and taking more responsibility after the relationship ends. Also, growth belief plays an important role in maintaining feelings of commitment after conflict in romantic relationships because difficulties are seen as a natural part of the growth process (Knee et al., 2004). Thus, ITR especially destiny

and growth beliefs influence different aspects of relationships such as relationship perceptions, conflict handling, managing relationship problems and maintaining commitment.

Secondly, Epstein and Eidelson (1982) developed a model called relationship belief inventory (RBI) to measure dysfunctional relationship beliefs in romantic relationships. According to this model, there are five dysfunctional relationship beliefs held by couples: *disagreement is destructive*, *mindreading is expected*, *partners cannot change*, *sexual perfectionism* and *sexes are different*. To begin with *disagreement is destructive* belief suggests that conflicts are seen as a sign of less love or a sign of an upcoming divorce. People who hold this belief often use unhelpful method like avoiding communication to solve conflicts. *Mindreading is expected* belief indicates that partners should recognize each other's needs and preferences without having to express them clearly. *Partners cannot change* belief suggest that neither partners nor their relationship quality can be changed. Also, *sexual perfectionism* belief state that being a perfect sexual partner is necessary. Thinking sex as a task can cause negative feelings like anxiety, reduce sexual response, and lessen the enjoyment in the relationship. Finally, *sexes are different* belief means that men and women have different characteristic and relationship needs and this belief can result in stereotypical views of the partners and decrease the awareness of their unique wants and characteristics. Also, it can be concluded that destiny belief by Knee (1998) and partners cannot change belief by Epstein and Eidelson (1982) are similar because both beliefs state that change is impossible and this determine the relationship itself. Moreover, according to Bradbury and Fincham (1993), dysfunctional relationship beliefs affects behaviors of married couples and satisfaction in marriage, especially, *disagreement is destructive* and *mindreading is expected* beliefs were associated with lower satisfaction in marriage and negative behaviours. In their study, negative behaviors were defined as aggression or the rejection of the partner's perspectives.

Thirdly, Romans and Debord (1995) developed a model called relationship beliefs questionnaire (RBQ) that is similar with RBI. Although the original scale consists of 9 factors, the valid version in the Turkish adaptation includes 6 factors because there

is difference between married individuals and university students in terms of romantic relationship. Factors of the scale are *we should be completely open and honest with each other, we should meet each other's needs, we should be able to read each other's minds, we should do everything together, we should be willing and able to change for each other* and *romantic idealism*. Gizir (2012) stated that in terms of gender, male students were found to hold such obligation beliefs stronger than female students in the areas of *we should do everything together, we should meet each other's needs, and we should be willing and able to change for each other* within dysfunctional romantic relationship beliefs. Also, students in a romantic relationship have more dysfunctional beliefs than those who are not especially in terms of *romantic idealism*.

Fourthly, in Türkiye, Sarı and Owen (2015) developed irrational romantic relationship beliefs model to assess dysfunctional romantic relationship beliefs of university students. The scale includes six factors that are *over expectations, use of social time, mind reading, different thinking, physical intimacy* and *gender differences*. *Over expectation* belief means that expectations of unrealistic demands to be met by partner or relationship. Also, *use of social time* belief refers that unrealistic expectations such as participating in every social activity together including social and leisure activities. *Mind reading* belief means that individuals in a relationship should understand each other's feelings and thoughts as if they can read each other's minds without the need for expression. Moreover, *different thinking* refers to belief that having different opinions about events is destructive for partners. *Physical intimacy* belief is a dimension where unrealistic statements about physical closeness arise. Finally, *gender differences* belief is the emergence of unrealistic statements about the impact of biological gender differences on the relationship (Sarı & Owen, 2015). It can be concluded that some dimensions like *mind reading, different thinking* and *gender differences* are similar with RBI's *mindreading is expected, disagreement is destructive, sexes are different* dimensions. Furthermore, according to Akbaba and Erol (2019) *gender differences* and *different thinking* beliefs negatively affect individual's relationship satisfaction as well as their happiness during the course of life.

Finally, Sprecher and Metts (1989) developed a romantic beliefs model consisting of four dimensions: *Love finds a way*, *one and only*, *idealization* and *love at first sight*. To begin with, *love finds a way* belief suggests that love has the power to overcome challenges to relationship and difficulties that could lead to a couple's separation and couple's romantic relationship can continue despite any obstacles, problems, or differences. *One and only* belief suggests that there will be only one true love for an individual and that true love will last forever. Also, *idealization* belief refers to the idea that everything will be flawless in individual's romantic relationship, and that the one they love will be an ideal partner. Finally, *love at first sight* belief means that someone can instantly know they have found their true love when they meet them (Sprecher & Metts, 1999). According to these beliefs, individuals tend to expect a passionate and romantic bond with their partners and often see them as perfect (Sharp & Ganong, 2000). As a result, high and unrealistic expectations about relationships can be a major reason for relationships ending (Küçükarslan & Gizir, 2013).

When people have strong beliefs about romantic relationships, they tend to attribute unrealistic qualities to them. These qualities are somewhat needed to strengthen the relationship (Sharp & Ganong, 2000). However, when beliefs and thoughts about romantic relationships are exaggerated, they can cause conflicts and the relationship to end (Metts & Cupach, 1990). According to Sprecher and Metts (1999), in dating relationships, romantic beliefs lead to greater commitment in men, while in women, commitment fosters more romantic beliefs. Romantic beliefs of *love finds a way*, *one and only* and *idealization* were positively linked to relationship quality for both genders. In contrast, *love at first sight belief* was not as strongly associated with quality of relationship as other romantic beliefs. Sprecher and Metts (1989) stated that *love at first sight belief* functioned differently from others. This belief might shape behaviors and relational impact primarily in the initial stages of a relationship but may lose its influence on relational dynamics once the relationship is established (Sprecher & Metts, 1999). Also, as individuals adopt more realistic views, the belief in romantic ideals gradually diminish for both genders but this decline does not lead to increased dissatisfaction with their current relationships. According to a study, men exhibited higher levels of unrealistic and strongly romantic beliefs compared to women, and these beliefs were more resistant to change (Sharp & Ganong, 2000). Similarly,

Küçükarslan and Gizir (2014) analyzed romantic beliefs in terms of demographics and found that, in terms of gender, male students had higher levels of the belief *love finds a way* and *love at first sight* compared to female students. The findings show that students who have experienced a romantic relationship before and are currently in one tend to have higher levels of the belief *love finds a way*. Also, students who have not experienced a romantic relationship before but are now in one have higher levels of the belief *one and only* and *idealization* compared to all other groups. Thus, these findings demonstrate how romantic beliefs shape individuals' relationship experiences and the quality of their relationships.

In the present study, romantic beliefs scale (Sprecher and Metts, 1989) was used because the scale was developed to measure romantic beliefs among university students in a dating relationships whereas other scales focus on mostly married individuals. Also, the scale's validity has been supported by studies conducted in Turkish samples (Küçükarslan & Gizir, 2013).

2.2.3. Relationship between Relationship Beliefs and Psychological Well-Being

To the best of my knowledge, no direct studies examining the relationship between relationship beliefs and well-being have been identified in the literature. Instead, existing studies focus on the associations of relationship beliefs with relationship quality, satisfaction, and conflict resolution styles on mostly married individuals. This gap highlights the need to study how relationship beliefs influence psychological well-being especially for university students. There are some studies on romantic relationship beliefs conducted with both married and dating individuals.

In this context, Cheie and Miu (2016) suggested that functional beliefs serve as a protective factor for different aspects of quality of life, including PWB, resilience, exposing to risk factors, acute illnesses, and academic performance. A study with individuals in marital therapy found that those with unrealistic beliefs rated their chances of improvement in therapy lower. They also preferred individual therapy over couple therapy and had lower marital satisfaction. These beliefs can affect the couples' attitudes toward therapy and their tolerance for conflict. This may make the therapy less effective (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). Also, Hamamcı (2005) suggests that

married individuals with more dysfunctional relationship beliefs experience more conflict in their relationships. Furthermore, Möller and Van Zyl (1991) found that irrational relationship beliefs negatively influence marital adjustment of married couple. Eventually, as Bradbury and Fincham (1993) stated, irrational beliefs about relationships are linked to lower marital satisfaction. In other words, people with higher scores on the relationship beliefs reported more marital problems.

In terms of studies conducted with university students, Metts and Cupach (1990) was found that as irrational romantic beliefs increased, the use of destructive problem-solving skills also increased. Additionally, according to a study by Sullivan and Schwebel (1995), irrational beliefs have a negative impact on relationship satisfaction. Similarly, Stackert and Bursik (2003) found that students with strong irrational beliefs about romantic relationships experienced less satisfaction. In sum, studies indicate that dysfunctional romantic relationship beliefs are linked to lower satisfaction, more conflicts, and less effective problem-solving in relationships. Also, most studies are related with married individuals and there are fewer studies with university students.

Therefore, given evidence above, it can be suggested that individuals who hold dysfunctional or irrational beliefs about romantic relationships are more likely to report lower relationship satisfaction, higher conflict levels, and less effective coping strategies in relational settings. These dysfunctional beliefs may also affect their PWB. based on this rationale, the present study hypothesized that irrational relationship beliefs will have direct effect on psychological well-being (H3). Accordingly, it is important to consider potential mechanisms that might explain how irrational relationship beliefs are associated with psychological well-being. Relationship between irrational relationship beliefs and PWB could be mediated by conflict resolution styles. Thus, it was hypothesized that irrational relationship beliefs will be negatively associated with psychological well-being indirectly through the use of destructive conflict resolution styles (H4). Therefore, in the following section, conflict resolution styles will be reviewed in detail.

2.3. Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict resolution style (CRS) in romantic relationships is a behavioral construct which may be linked with psychological well-being of university students. A conflict may emerge when individuals or groups believe that their values, interests, goals, needs, or beliefs are in opposition (Deutsch & Brickman, 1994). Conflict happens in all types of human relationships and social environments (Fisher, 2000). Also, conflict exists in different settings, including schools, workplaces, marriages, many other environments, relationships, and age groups (Boulter et al., 1995). Because people are so different, lack of conflict often means there is little real interaction (Fisher, 2000). Jamieson and Thomas (1974) stated that individual who initiate the conflict is trying to change the conditions they are unhappy with. Conflict is a typical part of relationships that provides an opportunity for the relationship to evolve, develop, and improve stability (Leo et al., 2019). How conflicts are handled are highly important because constructive conflict resolution styles were associated to longer relationship (Shulman et al., 2008) and less conflict (Missotten et al., 2017). In romantic relationships, conflicts can influence relationship dynamics and outcomes in both beneficial and detrimental ways (Aguirre et al., 2024). Negative conflict, marked by aggression, anger, and ineffective communication, can lead to relationship dissatisfaction and a higher likelihood of separation. However, conflict can also present a chance for growth and resolution by providing partners with the opportunity to share their needs, concerns, and viewpoints (Aguirre et al., 2024).

2.3.1. Definitions of Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict is defined in many ways. For instance, Mostert (1998) defined conflict as “disagreement on the course of action to be taken” while Wall and Callister (1995) described conflict as a situation where one party feels that its interests are being affected or blocked by another party. Also, conflict involves disagreement which is expressed through incompatible or opposing actions or perspective (Laursen & Hafen, 2010). Also, conflict happens when people interact and share different interests, ideas, and opinions (Bell & Blakeney, 1977). Conflict is a natural process that helps partners address their differences, maintain balance in the relationship, and support its stability

(Leo et al., 2019). It describes variations in goals, attitudes, and approaches to handling situations in a close relationship (Koren et al., 1980).

Conflicts can be solved in different ways, and the results depend on how they are handled (Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996). Rahim (2002) stated conflict resolution as “conflict resolution implies reduction, elimination, or termination of conflict” (p. 207). Also, conflict resolution can be seen as an important decrease in conflict achieved through the intentional resolution of challenging issues (Schellenberg, 1996). Also, Sweeney and Carruthers (1996) defined conflict resolution as a process of helping conflicting parties reach an agreement. When conflicts are managed constructively, it is often possible to discover new solutions that satisfy both parties and satisfaction and effectiveness of social relationships can be improved. (Fisher, 2000). Moreover, how a person acts, shows emotions, and responds to their partner during conflict affects whether the conflict helps maintain the relationship meaning its satisfaction and stability (Leo et al., 2019). In other words, the way handling with conflict means conflict resolution style.

Deutsch and Brickman (1994) liken conflict to sex in terms of importance and common dimension of life. They stated that conflict should be savored and should happen certain frequency and after conflict is finished, individuals should feel better. In this comparison, feeling better depends on process of conflict resolution. Conflict in itself is not inherently positive or negative (Fisher, 2000). Depending on the approach to conflict resolution, it can be either destructive or constructive (Deutsch & Brickman, 1994). The term constructive and destructive are defined by couple's impact on the relationship, not by how couples perceive constructive and destructive terms (Celenk et al., 2019). For instance, a behavior that is typically labeled as destructive, such as yelling at a partner, might be perceived as beneficial, constructive, or even positive by the individual engaging in it. However, research has shown that such behaviors are negatively associated with relationship satisfaction (Rusbult et al., 1991). The destructive conflict resolution process makes the conflict grow and become more intense, using power, threats, or deception which increases tension between the parties. On the other hand, the constructive conflict resolution process treats the

conflict as a shared issue and focuses on finding fair solutions through understanding (Deutsch & Brickman, 1994).

In the literature, conflict areas between couples have been identified as challenges related to communication, insecurity, difficulty in balancing time, intimacy and sexuality, financial difficulties, and cultural or religious differences. These factors are recognized as crucial elements influencing relationship dynamics (Chanda, 2024). In terms of financial difficulties, individuals who link their self-esteem to financial success tend to experience more financial conflicts with their partner and also it is linked to lower feelings of satisfaction and support in their relationship (Ward et al., 2021). Because of the symbolic value of money, financial disagreements are often more common, noticeable, harder to resolve, and generate more intense and harmful communication strategies compared to other types of conflicts (Britt & Huston, 2012). Also, confusion, incorrect interpretations, or the lack of effective communication can lead to conflicts in terms of communication (Chanda, 2024). In terms of time management, disagreements can arise when partners have different approaches to managing their time, especially if one feels overlooked or perceives the other as not putting in enough effort (Futris, et al., 2017). In terms of insecurity, if one partner in the relationship consistently feels insecure, it can lead to frequent arguments and conflicts and in terms of sexuality, conflicts can arise when partners have different sexual desires (Chanda, 2024). Finally, in terms of culture, relationship goals, such as how love is defined and expressed as well as conflict resolution styles differ across ethnic groups (Fonseca et al., 2021). Similarly, disparities in religious beliefs may create conflicts between dating couples (Chanda, 2024).

2.3.2. Models of Conflict Resolution Styles

There are some models that describe conflict resolution styles (CRS) in the context of both interpersonal and romantic relationships. Firstly, the model by Killman and Thomas (1975) conceptualizes conflict in two dimensions. The *assertiveness* dimension refers to the extent to which one's own concerns are prioritized and pursued in a conflict whereas the cooperativeness dimension is defined as the extent to which the concerns of the other party are considered and addressed in a conflict. These two dimensions combine to yield five conflict-handling modes: *Competing* mode which is

assertive and uncooperative while *collaborating* mode which is assertive and cooperative. *Avoiding* mode which is unassertive and uncooperative while *accommodating* mode which is unassertive and cooperative. Finally, *compromising* mode which is intermediate in both cooperativeness and assertiveness (Kilmann & Thomas, 1975). These five models were first operationalized in the interpersonal context by Blake and Mouton (1964, as cited in Kilmann & Thomas, 1975). *Competing* is associated with assertive behavior and engaging in win-lose arguments. Also, *collaborating* involves addressing disagreements and actively striving for problem solving to get solutions. *Avoiding* is characterized by disengagement and inability to take a clear stance while *accommodating* is linked to efforts to calm the other person and striving to maintain harmony. Finally, *compromising* is characterized by the willingness to propose middle ground as a means of resolving conflicts.

According to Kilmann and Thomas (1976), individuals who use competing focuses on their own interests, often at the cost of the other person, using any power they think necessary to secure their position. Individuals who use collaboration aim to work together with others to create a solution that fully addresses the needs and concerns of both partners. This process involves exploring the issue in depth to understand the core concerns of both individuals and finding a mutually beneficial alternative. Moreover, individuals who use avoiding do not immediately address their own concerns or those of the other party. They refrain from resolving the conflict. Individuals who use accommodating put aside their own concerns in order to fulfill the needs of the other person and this approach involves a degree of selflessness. Finally, individuals who use compromising aim to find a quick and mutually agreeable solution that meets the needs of both parties to some extent. Compromising occupies a middle position between competing and accommodating, where more is sacrificed than in competing but less than in accommodating.

Secondly, Rahim and Bonoma (1979) described conflict resolution styles along two fundamental dimensions: one's concern for oneself and one's concern for others. The concept of concern for the self signifies the significance of resolving the conflict by advancing one's own priorities, while concern for the other represents the perceived importance of ensuring that the other person achieves a favorable resolution from the

conflict (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). The interaction of these two dimensions leads to five distinct conflict management styles: *Integrating*, *obliging*, *dominating*, *avoiding*, and *compromising*. *Integrating* style includes sharing information and exploring differences to find a mutually acceptable solution. This approach focuses on problem solving and can result in innovative solutions. *Obliging* style involves minimizing differences and highlighting mutual aspects to address concerns of the other party. This approach is effective when one party believes one may be in the wrong or when the issue is perceived to be more important to the other party. *Dominating* style is associated with a win-lose mindset or the use of forceful tactics to secure one's position. A person who adopts this approach exerts maximum effort to achieve their goal, and often disregarding the needs and expectations of the other party in the process. *Avoiding* style is linked to pulling back and passing responsibility. A person who avoids does not address both their own concerns and other's concerns. Finally, *Compromising* style includes a process where both sides make adjustments in order to reach a solution that both can accept. Generally, conflicts are managed more effectively using integrating and obliging styles. If the conflict is minor or insignificant for one of the parties, it can be handled with dominating and avoiding styles and if conflict is mixed for parties, using compromising can be effective. Using each five styles is effective depending on the situation (Rahim & Bonoma, 1979). According to Holt and Devore (2005), when the analysis considers gender and culture together, findings reveal that compromising is more frequently used by females in both individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

Thirdly, Rusbult, Zembrodt and Gunn (1982) formulated a model of conflict resolution in romantic relationships, structured around two dimensions: active or passive and constructive or destructive. One axis determines whether a person takes an active or passive role in the resolution process while the other axis distinguishes whether their approach is constructive or destructive to the relationship. Resulting from the intersection of the two axes, the model includes four styles: *exit*, *voice*, *loyalty*, and *neglect*. Voice is an active and constructive style for resolving conflicts. It helps maintain a relationship where both partners are satisfied by addressing the issue through discussion. Individuals who use voice style prioritize effective communication, mutual openness, and considering all possibilities to reduce tension

in their relationship. Also, loyalty is a constructive and passive style where partners avoid taking direct action to resolve the conflict, instead hoping the issue will resolve itself over time. Individuals who use loyalty style think that the problem will be forgotten and things will eventually return to normal. Moreover, exit is an active and destructive style, characterized by negative behaviors directed towards the partner. These behaviors can include accusations, criticism, or verbal aggression. Also, individuals who use exit style exerts a significant negative impact and openly expresses their negative emotions without holding back. Finally, neglect is a passive and destructive style where there is a lack of commitment to the relationship. It involves ignoring the partner and spending less time. Individuals using this style tend to avoid engaging in conversation or discussion and treat each other in a distant manner.

Destructive conflict resolution styles were stronger indicators of distress in couples than constructive conflict resolution styles. The increasing misunderstandings and rising tensions can be harmful to close relationships (Mandal & Lip, 2022). While destructive conflict resolution is associated with hostile environments and adjustment difficulties, constructive conflict resolution is connected to supportive environments and positive growth (Shulman et al., 2008). According to Birditt and colleagues (2017) couples had a higher likelihood of divorcing when partners reported increased marital tension. According to Mandal and Lip (2022), mindfulness is positively associated with voice but negatively linked to exit and neglect and while constructive styles voice and loyalty are positively correlated with relationship quality, destructive styles exit and neglect show a negative correlation. Also they find that couples who were satisfied with their relationship tended to rely on constructive conflict resolution strategies, such as dialogue and loyalty, as their primary approaches. In contrast, those with lower relationship satisfaction were more likely to adopt destructive strategies like withdrawal and conflict escalation.

Furthermore, when facing problems, both an individual's own responses and the responses they perceive in their partner influence relationship satisfaction and happiness (Rusbult et al., 1986b). To address this impact, it has been suggested to take into account the responses one attributes to their partner (Rusbult et al., 1991).

Including perceived partner responses helps to understand not only individuals' own behaviors but also how they perceive their partner's attitudes and reactions (Rusbult et al., 1991). Thus, Rusbult et al., (1991) modeled to consider perceived partner effect. In Türkiye, Taluy (2018) adapted this model and added perceived partner response to understand relationship deeply. Also, this may reveal that relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution styles are shaped not only by individual factors but also by the interactions between partners. As a result, it provides broader insight into how conflicts within relationships are resolved. Taluy's (2018) model contributes to the literature by systematically addressing the perception of the partner and interpersonal interactions in Turkish culture.

Fourthly, Kurdek (1994) developed a model in order to understand conflict resolution styles between couples. The model includes four conflict resolution styles: *positive problem solving*, *conflict engagement*, *withdrawal*, and *compliance*. Individuals who adopt a positive problem-solving approach handle conflicts in a constructive manner such as engaging in direct conversations centered on solutions that benefit both partners. Parties view conflict as chances for personal development of both and the strengthening of their relationship. In contrast, conflict engagement involves employing verbal and physical tactics against the partner. It also involves actions like attacking, insulting, losing control, getting overly emotional, and saying things that were not meant. Individuals who use withdrawal style aim to evade conflicts despite of their underlying needs. Compliance is linked to accepting partners' suggested solution to avoid discussion without actively seeking personal benefit (Kurdek, 1994). Furthermore, according to a study on marital quality and conflict resolution, the conflict engagement style has the strongest negative impact on marital satisfaction. The withdrawal style also has a negative impact, while the compliance style is inversely related to marital satisfaction. On the other hand, the positive problem-solving style is the most important factor in predicting good marital quality (Wagner et al., 2019). In order to measure these styles for each member of a couple, Kurdek (1994) developed a Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) that employs both self-report and partner-report.

Finally, in Türkiye, another conflict resolution style in romantic relationship model has been developed by Özen and colleagues (2016). Dimension of the model are *positive conflict resolution*, *negative conflict resolution*, *subordination* and *retreat*. *Positive conflict resolution* style includes constructive behaviours that aim to getting to the root of the problem and seek solutions that are beneficial for both parties while *negative conflict resolution* style includes destructive and damaging behaviours that negatively affect romantic relationships both verbally and physically. Also, *subordination* style includes passive behaviours such as trying not to grow problem, compromising and accepting only partner's desires while *retreat* style includes passive behaviours containing handling conflict by keeping quiet or escaping from discussion. When examining the relationship between dimensions and relationship harmony, the positive conflict resolution is positively while the negative conflict resolution is negatively associated with relationship harmony. However, subordination and retreat styles do not show a significant relationship with relationship harmony (Özen et al., 2016).

In the current study, conflict resolution styles in romantic relationships were examined within the framework of model of Rusbult and colleagues (1982) which includes exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect styles. For data collection, the scale adapted to Turkish culture by Taluy (2018) was used. Additionally, its adaptation to Turkish culture and its consideration of both individuals' and their partners' styles without the need for dyadic data provide an appropriate framework for this study. It also focuses on university students as the target group.

2.3.3. Research on Conflict Resolution Styles in Intimate Relationships

Intimacy of partners can be interrupted by conflicts (Cahn, 1992). Aguirre and colleagues (2024) suggest that conflicts in romantic relationships act like threads in a tapestry, and that effectively managing these conflicts can promote growth and harmony between partners. Especially in voluntary relationships such as romantic partnerships, achieving mutually satisfying resolutions is essential for maintaining harmony, ensuring satisfaction, and even preserving the relationship (Shulman et al.,

2008). Furthermore, avoiding conflict prevents addressing the problem, which can lead to negative emotions such as anger and resentment (Christensen & Shenk, 1991).

Conflicts in romantic relationships are closely related to communication and conflict resolution skills. Gottman and Krokoff (1989) suggest that communication issues and lack of effectiveness in conflict resolution skills play an important role in difficulties in marriage. Similarly, according to a study conducting about conflict and communication with different couples, it was found that nondistressed couples demonstrated more mutually constructive communication compared to those in the clinic or divorcing groups. Additionally, couples in both the clinic and divorcing groups showed a greater tendency to avoid discussing problems and engaged more frequently in demand/withdrawal communication patterns than the nondistressed couples (Christensen & Shenk, 1991). Accordingly, in a study by Sanderson and Karetsky (2002), individuals who prioritized the goal of intimacy were found to be more likely to participate in open communication, demonstrate interest in their partner, look for external support, and effectively resolve conflicts. On the other hand, they were less inclined to dismiss or overlook conflicts. Also, the conflict resolution style they adopt also leads to higher relationship satisfaction.

In the literature, conflict resolution styles and relationship adjustment have been studied widely. Tolan and Kılıç (2021) stated that using constructive CRS contributes to adjustment in marriage while using destructive CRS decreases to adjustment in marriage. Similarly, constructive CRS are positively associated with partner satisfaction, while destructive CRS are negatively associated with it (Rusbult et al., 1986b). According to a study examining conflict resolution with best friends and romantic partners, the overall findings revealed that participants employed more constructive CRS with romantic partners but they also reported higher levels of negative tension, increased negativity and greater avoidance of conflict in these relationships (Creasey et al., 1999).

There are several factors that affect the relationship between CRS and relationship satisfaction. One factor is attachment styles. Creasey (2002) stated that even though secure individuals sometimes display negative behaviors during conflict, they frequently use positive behaviors, which likely helps protect their romantic partners'

feelings. Creasey and colleagues (1999) found that individuals with insecure attachment styles tend to struggle more with handling conflicts with their romantic partners. Furthermore, as their ability to manage negative emotions improves, their conflict resolution skills also get better (Creasey et al., 1999). Moreover, Janghu and Bhau (2023) found a significant relationship between the accommodating conflict resolution style and anxious attachment style. Individuals with an anxious attachment style tend to adopt the accommodating conflict resolution strategy because they fear that conflicts may harm the relationship or diminish their partner's affection (Janghu & Bhau, 2023). Another mediator has been found as self-compassion. According to a study conducted on self-compassion and conflict resolution, self-compassion was found an important predictor of conflict resolution and relationship satisfaction. In other words, if self-compassion is high, use of negative conflict resolution styles decreases and use of positive conflict resolution styles increases (Kaya et al., 2022).

Finally, styles of conflict resolution have an important effect on relationship satisfaction. Aguirre et al (2024) found that the two most commonly used conflict resolution strategies among students were compromise and avoidance. Compromise is viewed as beneficial as it helps foster deeper understanding between partners and promotes collaboration, whereas avoidance is discouraged because it could worsen issues in the future. Moreover, according to a study conducted by James-Kangal and Whitton (2019), emerging adults not in committed relationships don't use direct or effective conflict management strategies because these behaviors are seen as inappropriate unless the relationship is clear and exclusive.

To sum up, findings on conflict resolution styles in intimate relationships highlight the important role of communication, attachment styles, and self-compassion. While constructive styles enhance relationship satisfaction and stability, destructive conflict styles cause difficulties in relationships.

2.3.4. Relationship between Conflict Resolution Styles and Psychological Well-Being

Since conflict resolution styles play a crucial role in relationship satisfaction, they may also influence broader aspects of well-being. They may also contribute to individuals'

psychological well-being in various ways. In intimate relationships, happiness influences psychological and physical well-being of the partners (Hicks & Diamond, 2008).

Different theoretical perspectives suggest how relationship affects well-being in different ways. According to Self-Determination Theory, relationships enhance well-being by satisfying essential psychological needs, with a primary focus on relatedness, as well as autonomy and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The need for relatedness, which encompasses the desire to form meaningful connections, experience emotional intimacy, and feel a sense of belonging allows individuals in romantic relationships to feel secure and valued (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Also, beyond emotional support, a fulfilling romantic relationship may create an environment that fosters personal growth and enhances psychological well-being. Similarly, psychological well-being model of Ryff (1989) emphasized positive relations with others as an important aspect of PWB. Romantic relationships supports this aspect by promoting mutual understanding, emotional connection, and intimacy and this increases the life satisfaction and a sense of meaning. To sum up, romantic relationships positively affect psychological well-being by offering emotional support, connection, and growth, leading to greater life satisfaction and purpose.

While romantic relationships play a crucial role in enhancing psychological well-being, the way conflicts are resolved within these relationships can also significantly impact overall well-being. Constructive CRS refer to positive tactics couple use to handle conflict. In contrast, destructive CRS refer to negative tactics that can be harmful as because they do not actually aim to handle conflict (Rusbult et al., 1991). Also, romantic relationships and relationship satisfaction are closely linked with both well-being and life satisfaction of individuals (Özen et al., 2016).

When considering literature, there are some findings about conflict resolution and well-being in different ways. Some studies emphasized the importance of constructive effects on psychological well-being while some studies emphasized destructive effects on it. To start with constructive effects, according to a study conducted with individuals who are in a romantic relationships and age between 18-63, Taluy and Büyükşahin-Sunal (2016) found a positive relationship between constructive CRS

both those exhibited by individuals and perceived in their partners and relationship satisfaction. This suggests that individuals who respond to conflicts with constructive behaviors such as voice and loyalty, and who believe their partners do the same, tend to have higher relationship satisfaction.

Also, a study conducted with college students by Yarnell and Neff (2013) found that individuals with higher self-compassion are more likely to handle relationship conflicts in a way that balances both their own needs and those of others. They also found that self-compassionate people were less likely to put their own needs first instead of compromising. It is showed that since conflicts with romantic partners can be highly emotional, individuals with lower self-compassion may lack the emotional stability needed to handle conflicts in a balanced way. Thus, self-compassionate individuals' tendency to compromise during conflicts partly mediated the relationship between self-compassion and PWB. In other words, individuals with high self-compassion tend to compromise in conflicts, and this behavior strengthens their PWB.

A study exploring the link between conflict resolution, psychological well-being, and marital satisfaction among spouses of working individuals found that marital instability was positively associated with dominating conflict resolution styles, while integrating and avoiding styles were negatively associated with marital instability, along with psychological well-being (Ali et al., 2024). Additionally, the indirect pathways showed a positive correlation between the dominating style and marital instability, while the integrating style was negatively correlated, suggesting that psychological well-being mediates these relationships. Thus, this study highlights the significance of constructive conflict resolution skills and psychological well-being in fostering positive marital relationships among working spouses (Ali et al., 2024).

Also, PWB in adolescents and young adults is associated with poor relationship behaviors and low relationship quality. However, the strength of this relationship is moderate because of the individual differences and contextual factors (Mirsu-Paun & Oliver, 2017). Moreover, an important finding of the study is that the quality of a relationship has a stronger association with PWB than the act of ending the relationship. This suggests that maintaining healthy relationship dynamics can contribute to individuals' psychological well-being (Mirsu-Paun & Oliver, 2017).

When examining the studies emphasizing destructive effects on PWB, according to a study conducted by Rusbult and colleagues (1986b), study indicated that destructive CRS may have a stronger associations with relationship functioning compared to constructive ones. In other words, whether a relationship works depends more on the harmful reactions partners have to problems rather than the positive or constructive actions they take for each other. Also they found that certain ways partners solve problems together strongly predict relationship health. In other words, couple distress increased when individuals responded destructively and did not react constructively to their partner's destructive problem-solving behaviors. Thus, this distress may decrease PWB of couples.

Similarly, according to a study conducted with college students, Cramer (2000) found that relationship satisfaction is more closely linked to destructive conflict styles and unresolved conflicts. The study indicates that relationship satisfaction is influenced more by how disagreements are managed and resolved rather than their frequency. It is also concluded that factors like conflict resolution style and unresolved conflict are significantly related to relationship satisfaction, while the frequency of disagreements does not have a direct impact on it.

Also, goal conflict occurs when striving toward one goal interferes with or prevents the effective achievement of another goal (Kelly et al., 2015). In relationships, goal conflict occurs when partners have different wants or goals, and this can make the relationship more difficult. According to a study conducted with dating couples by Gere and Schimmack (2013), subjective well-being of each partner and the general quality of the relationship were all negatively correlated with the goal conflict that each partner reported. In other words, higher levels of conflict is linked with lower levels of SWB of each partner and lower quality of relationship. Also, results show that when partners are unable to resolve the conflict between their goals, their relationship quality decreases. Moreover, It has been found that the impact of goal conflict on each partner's subjective well-being is also related to the well-being of the other partner (Gere & Schimmack, 2013). This can provide insights into predicting the relationship between an individual's own conflict style and the perceived partner's style with PWB in the present study.

Another study on married couples' subjective well-being found that men's SWB decreased when women's conflict increased. Additionally, men's SWB falls as they become more demanding or have a tendency to criticize and blame to their partner. According to this study, the only conflict resolution activity that was directly linked to SWB was demanding behavior (Siffert & Schwarz, 2011). Demanding behavior during conflict may be linked with competing style from Kilmann and Thomas (1975), dominating style from Rahim and Bonoma (1979) and conflict engagement style from Kurdek (1994).

Another study stated that psychological effects of the pandemic are related to mothers' PWB which is linked to the conflict resolution styles they employ with their kids especially conflict engagement, withdrawal, and compliance styles (Costa et al., 2023). Although this finding is not related with romantic relationships, it provides an insight about the relationship of conflict resolution styles and PWB.

In summary, when examining the findings, it is possible to say that there is a negative relationship between destructive CRS and both subjective and psychological well-being. In the light of these findings, it is possible to assert that individuals who report engaging in destructive CRS more might experience lower levels of PWB. Thus, it was hypothesized that conflict resolution styles will be directly associated with psychological well-being of university students (H2).

2.4. Relationship Beliefs and Conflict Resolution Styles

Irrational beliefs in couples can lead to behaviors and stress that cause dissatisfaction in their relationships (Adibkia et al., 2022). According to Adibkia and colleagues, relationship between irrational beliefs and marriage happiness was negatively and significantly mediated by conflict behavior and marital stress. In other words, conflict behavior and marital stress are directly impacted by irrational beliefs. Moreover, Bahramian and colleagues (2024) found that an important positive connection exists between irrational beliefs and marital conflicts. In other words, couples with more rational beliefs in their marriage tend to adopt more effective discussion and negotiation strategies when dealing with communication issues and openly express their emotions to one another. In this case, they experience greater satisfaction and

happiness in their marriage. On the other hand, if a couple encounters a problem in their relationship and struggles to reach a mutual agreement through open communication, their marital satisfaction can be negatively affected. Additionally, employing constructive conflict resolution styles, such as integrating, obliging, and compromising, results in higher marital satisfaction and reduced marital instability. Couples with more functional beliefs try to use more effective ways of discussing and negotiating communication problems in their marriage and openly express their feelings to each other.

Research suggested that lower relationship satisfaction was linked to irrational relationship beliefs (Janjani et al., 2017). Specifically, irrational beliefs affect marital satisfaction by creating unrealistic expectations and poor emotional control which lead to dissatisfaction in the relationship. These beliefs cause partners to expect too much from each other and diminished overall marital satisfaction. Furthermore, marital adjustment is negatively related with disagreement is destructive belief, sexes are different belief and partners cannot change belief (Tolan & Kılıç, 2021). Disagreement is destructive belief was positively linked with avoidant and dominating style of CRS while partners cannot change belief was negatively linked with using compromising and integrating styles of CRS. They also found that sexes are different belief was linked to dominating style of CRS (Aušraitė & Žardeckaitė-Matulaitienė, 2019). It is possible to say that irrational relationship beliefs was positively associated with destructive conflict resolution styles. Finally, Hania and Amjad (2016) suggest that implicit relationship beliefs influence satisfaction in marriage through the mediation of conflict resolution styles. Specifically, belief in destiny is strongly linked to lower marital satisfaction and it means that the more someone has destiny belief, the less satisfied they are in their marriage. Also, competing style is positively associated with destiny belief but negatively associated with marital satisfaction.

Considering these lines of research, findings on relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles are mostly related with impact of irrational/dysfunctional belief on relationship satisfaction and handling conflict style in married individuals. Thus, individuals who have functional romantic beliefs may use constructive CRS during conflict situation in their romantic relationships.

Taken together, these findings suggest that individuals who hold irrational romantic relationship beliefs are more likely to engage in maladaptive conflict resolution styles which may, in turn, contribute to lower relational satisfaction and stability. Based on the existing literature, the present study hypothesized that irrational relationship beliefs of university students will be directly associated with conflict resolution styles (H1).

2.5. The Present Study

Considering the literature review above, the aim of the present study is to investigate the relationship between romantic relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being by means of a mediation model. In this context, it will be examined whether dysfunctional romantic relationship beliefs have an indirect effect on psychological well-being through the destructive conflict resolution styles.

In the literature, relationship beliefs are studied with relationship and marriage satisfaction, conflict, and problem solving. Also, conflict resolution styles are studied with relationship satisfaction, communication patterns, attachment styles, self-compassion, goal of intimacy, and emotion regulation. Moreover, psychological well-being is studied with relationship quality, conflict resolution styles and adjustment in marriage. Although there are studies that studied bivariate associations between relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles, or conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being, there is no study investigating the combination of these three factors. Moreover, previous studies discussed above are mostly utilized married people or couples as samples. The present study will be conducted with university students, which is another difference from the existing literature. Also, since relationships require some form of mutuality, although the level of analysis in the present study is the individual university student in a romantic relationship, I measured to statistically control for the possible covariation effect of the partner's perceived conflict resolution style in the analyses.

All in all, the purpose of the present study was to test whether conflict resolution styles will be mediate the relationship between irrational relationship belief and psychological well-being.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter covers details about the research model, the study group, data collection instruments, the design process, and the methods used for data analysis. The aim is to present a clear understanding of how the research was conducted and how data were analyzed.

3.1. Research Design

This study aimed to investigate relationships between romantic relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being of university students. In accordance with this purpose, correlational research design was used. Correlational designs are utilized to explore the connections between two or multiple variables (Heppner et al., 2008). A correlational study investigates how variations in one or more characteristic or variable relate to changes in one or more other characteristics or variables. A correlation is present when an increase in one variable is accompanied by either an increase or decrease in another variable in a somewhat predictable manner (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Finally, all variables are measured at the same time. Thus the design was a cross-sectional design.

3.2. Participants

Considering the advantages of accessibility in data collection, time and cost, the study anticipated the active participation of university students, with a focus on increasing the generalizability of the sample. This study included university students, currently

having in romantic relationships lasting at least six months and they were recruited from Türkiye. They were selected from public and private universities in Türkiye. In this study, all data were collected through Qualtrics, without using paper-and-pencil methods. A total of 670 participants were accessed the online survey. After screening the data, 381 surveys were assessed to be usable, and all analyses were done with them. The details of the elimination process are provided in the Data Screening section of the Results chapter. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling methods. Convenience sampling includes choosing participants primarily based on their accessibility and willingness to participate (Shaughnessy et al., 2012). Given that the direct impact of predictor on the mediator and the direct effects of the mediator on the criterion variable may fall within the range of .14 to .26, the anticipated sample size needed to detect significant indirect effects with a power of .80 using bias-corrected bootstrapping varies between 368 and 462 (Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007). These values represent both small and medium effect sizes and are used to achieve sufficient statistical power (.80). Therefore, the sample size was sufficient with respect to the provided criteria.

There were 283 female participants, accounting for 74.5%, 97 male participants, accounting for 25.5% of the sample and 1 nonbinary participant accounting for 0.3%. The gender distribution was coded as 0 for females and 1 for males with the mean for gender 0.26 ($SD = 0.44$). The age range of the participants varied from 17 to 32 years old, with a mean of 21.82 ($SD = 2.13$). Students from 61 different universities including 20 private and 41 public and 95 different departments participated in this study. The total duration of the participants' romantic relationships ranged from 0 to 100 months, with a mean of 23.58 months ($SD = 20.03$) with 313 participants reporting their relationship length. Participants reported an average relationship satisfaction score of 5.99 ($SD = 1.04$) on a scale from 1 (*not satisfied at all*) to 7 (*very satisfied*). The perceived level of conflict in the relationships varied, with a mean score of 3.37 ($SD = 1.60$) on a scale from 1 (*not conflictual at all*) to 7 (*highly conflictual*). The demographic information of the participants are presented in Table 1 in detail.

Table 1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in the present study (*n* = 381)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>f (%)</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Observed Range</i>
Age		21.82	2.13	17 - 32
Gender				
Female	283 (74.3%)			
Male	97 (25.5%)			
Nonbinary	1 (0.3%)			
Relationship status		1.00	0.00	1 - 1
Dating Status				
Single	343 (90%)			
Other*	38 (10%)			
Relationship Length (Month)		23.58	20.03	0 - 100
Relationship Satisfaction		5.99	1.04	1 - 7
Perceived Level of Conflict		3.37	1.60	1 - 7

Other* : refers to any statistics other than married, divorced and widowed.

3.3. Instruments

Informed consent form, demographic information form, romantic beliefs scale, Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect accommodation instrument (EVLN) and psychological well-being scale was used to assess participant's demographic information, romantic relationship beliefs, self and perceived partner conflict resolution style that they used and psychological well-being, respectively.

3.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The form contained questions about participants' demographics, such as gender, age, universities attended, department, relationship status, marital status, relationship

duration, and perceived level of conflict in relationships. As a single item how the participant is satisfied with their romantic relationship was asked. The form is presented in Appendix C.

3.3.2. Romantic Beliefs Scale

Romantic Beliefs Scale was developed by Sprecher and Metts (1989) to facilitate the identification and measurement of certain unrealistic romantic relationship beliefs held by university students. Scale consists of 15 items with 7-point Likert scales (“1 = *Strongly disagree*”, “7 = *Strongly agree*”). The scale is composed of four factors which include items for *love at first sight* (3 items), *love finds a way* (6 items), *one and only* (3 items), and *idealization* (3 items) beliefs. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 15, and the highest score is 105. Higher scores on the scale indicate higher irrational romantic relationship beliefs. When considering the gender variable, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for males is reported as .87 and for females as .88. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the entire scale is .81 and for the subscales, the Cronbach’s alpha ranges from .57 to .80. Love at first sight belief has lower value (.57) while love finds a way belief has higher value (.80). Idealization belief has .64 Cronbach’s alpha and one and only belief has .71. Also, for total scale, test–retest reliability is .75 and for the subscales, it ranges from .49 to .73.

Romantic Beliefs Scale was adapted to Turkish by Küçükarslan and Gizir (2013). Scale has 13 items with 5-point Likert type (“1 = *Strongly disagree*”, “5 = *Strongly agree*”). Two items from the original scale were removed due to one showing low item-total correlation and another loading onto multiple dimensions. The scale includes four factors which are love at first sight (2 items), love finds a way (5 items), one and only (3 items) and idealization (3 items). The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 13, and the highest score is 65. The factor analysis results indicate that the scale accounts for 61.05% of the total variance. When examining the factor loadings, it is observed that the factor loadings range between .57 and .78. These values indicate that the factor loadings of the items are at an acceptable level. When loaded onto a single higher-order dimension named ‘Romantic Relationship Beliefs,’ the factor loadings range between .73 and .81. Upon analysis of internal consistency,

the Cronbach's alpha value was calculated as .79 for Factor 1, .69 for Factor 2, .50 for Factor 3, and .67 for Factor 4. Also, overall Cronbach's alpha value for the entire scale and all dimensions covered was found to be .84. The scale is presented in Appendix C-2.

In the present study, Cronbach's alpha value was calculated as .76 for *love finds a way* belief, .71 for *one and only* belief, .70 for *idealization* belief and .60 for *love at first sight* belief. Also, overall Cronbach's alpha value for all scale was found to be .83. As for the Omega coefficients, they were observed as follows: $\omega = .75$ for *love finds a way*, $\omega = .72$ for *one and only*, and $\omega = .70$ for *idealization*. The *love at first sight* subscale was not assessed due to having only two items. The overall Omega for the total scale was $\omega = .83$. A single irrational beliefs score was calculated by averaging the within-individual responses to scale items. Higher scores indicated higher levels of irrational beliefs.

3.3.3. Conflict Resolution Styles Scale

Rusbult et al. (1991) developed the Responses to Dissatisfaction Scale in Romantic Relationships (EVLN-RDS) to examine the mutual dependency patterns of responses given by distressed couples in the face of problems. It was revised from 24 to 16 items in order to assess an individual's potential ways of responding to dissatisfaction within romantic relationships by Kilpatrick, Bissonnette, and Rusbult (2002). Conflict resolution styles were measured by this shorter version. The scale utilizes a 9-point Likert type scale ("0 = *Never*", "8 = *Always*"). This scale produces four distinct scores, each corresponding to the voice, loyalty, exit, and neglect as conflict resolution styles. The four styles vary across two dimensions: *constructiveness-destructiveness* and *activity-passivity*. Voice and loyalty responses are constructive, while exit and neglect responses tend to be more destructive. Additionally, exit and voice are characterized by active behaviors, whereas loyalty and neglect lean towards relatively more passive approaches. Constructive and destructive dimensions were identified based on combinations of these response categories in the three cross-sectional studies. Thus, constructive reactions were specifically identified as the integrating of voice and loyalty, whereas destructive reactions were characterized by the integrating of exit and

neglect. Scores for each response ranged from 0 to 32, with higher scores indicating greater use of the corresponding response tendencies. For constructive dimensions, Cronbach's alpha reliabilities were reported as .80, .75, and .78, while for destructive dimensions, they were .92, .91, and .92, respectively.

The adaptation study for Türkiye was conducted by Taluy (2018). The scale adaptation was conducted on 294 individuals aged between 17 and 84, all of whom were involved in romantic relationships. Items are responded on using 9-point Likert type scales, and consists of 16 items. The scale includes perceived partner response consisting of 16 items. In the adaptation study of the scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the four sub-dimensions were found as follows: for the exit subscale, individual response was .68, perceived partner response was .63; for the voice dimension, individual response was .80, perceived partner response was .85; for the loyalty dimension, individual response was .74, perceived partner response was .77; and for the neglect dimension, individual response was .53, perceived partner response was .54. Also, to determine the reliability level of the scale, internal consistency coefficient, split-half reliability, and test-retest reliability coefficients were calculated. According to the findings, the split-half reliability coefficients ranged from .54 to .81 for individual responses and from .58 to .88 for perceived partner responses. The test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .55 to .62 for individual responses and from .48 to .58 for perceived partner responses (Taluy, 2018). Therefore, conflict resolution was measured from the participant both for himself/herself and the partner perceived. The scale is presented in Appendix C-3.

In the present study, conflict resolution styles was measured twice. One of them is for the participant themselves (conflict resolution style – self) and another is for the participant's perception of their partner's conflict resolution styles (conflict resolution style – partner). In other words, the participants responded to the same items once for defining their own reactions and once for their partner's reactions as they perceived.

Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega coefficients were calculated for all scales. As for the measurements for the participant themselves, Cronbach's Alpha values for exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect subscales, the alpha coefficients were .50, .33, .19,

and .40, respectively. Also, Cronbach's Alpha is found .33 for the constructive conflict resolution style scale and .58 for the destructive conflict resolution style scale. McDonald's Omega coefficients for the same scales were .50, .32, .23, and .41, respectively. Also, McDonald's Omega was calculated .28 for the constructive and .57 for the conflict resolution style scales. Although some reliability coefficients appear low, the scale was selected for two main reasons: First, this scale allows a distinction between self and perceived partner conflict resolution styles, which is central to the research aim. Second, the Turkish adaptation of the scale by Taluy (2018) reported higher reliability coefficients and validated the use of this structure in a Turkish cultural context. In line with this, although the internal consistency was low in this sample, the scale was considered appropriate due to its relevance to the topic and its previous validation in the target population.

As for the reliability coefficients for partner conflict styles as perceived by the participants, Cronbach's Alpha values for exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect subscales, were .80, .89, .76, .60, respectively. Moreover, Cronbach's Alpha is found .85 for the constructive conflict resolution style scale and .80 for destructive conflict resolution style scale. As for the McDonald's Omega coefficients for the same scales were .81, .89, .76 and .62, respectively. Also, McDonald's Omega was calculated .85 for the constructive and .81 for the destructive conflict resolution style scales. A single index score of constructive conflict management orientation was calculated by averaging constructive and destructive style items in themselves, and subtracting the latter from the former. Thus, higher scores indicated higher levels of constructive conflict management style for both the participant themselves and perceived for their partner.

To sum up, for both the self and the perceived partner measurements, destructive style scores were subtracted from constructive style scores. These calculations yielded two variables to be used in the analyses: Constructive Conflict Management Orientation for the participant themselves (CON-Slf) and for the partners (CON-Prt).

3.3.4. Psychological Well-Being Scale

Psychological Well-being Scale was developed by Diener et al. (2009) in a university student sample. The scale comprises eight items that encompass vital aspects of human

functioning, spanning from positive relationships and feelings of competence to experiencing meaning and purpose in life. Participants respond to each item using a 7-point Likert scale (“1 = *Strongly disagree*”, “7 = *Strongly agree*”). All items are formulated in a positive manner. Scores on the scale can range from 8 as indicating the lowest possible level to 56 as representing the highest level of psychological well-being achievable. A higher score indicates an individual with a greater abundance of psychological resources and strengths. According to the validity study conducted with university students, it was determined that the scale consists of a single factor, explaining 53% of the total variance. The factor loadings of the scale items range from .61 to .77. Cronbach alpha coefficient is 0.86. Thus, PWB is a brief and comprehensive scale for measuring psychological well-being.

Adaptation study of PWB is conducted by Telef (2013) on university students who were teacher candidates. As a result of the linguistic equivalence study, a high level of positive and significant correlation was found between the English and Turkish forms of the scale. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient obtained in the reliability study of the scale is calculated as .80. Concurrent validity of the scale was assessed by investigating the correlations between the Scales of Psychological Well-Being (Akin, 2008; Ryff, 1989). All correlations were positive. The scale is presented in Appendix C-4.

In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha value was .84, and McDonald’s omega coefficient was $\omega = .84$. A single well-being score was calculated by averaging the within-individual responses to scale items. Higher scores indicated higher levels of well-being.

3.4. Procedure

Prior to data collection, ethical approval for study was obtained from TED University’s Human Research Ethics Committee (Decision No. 2024-36 by Semtember 12nd, 2024; Appendix A). Once all required permissions were obtained, all the instruments were transferred to Qualtrics (n.d.) platform for online data collection. The provided link was distributed through social media platforms like LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Instagram, targeting users belonging to the relevant group

exclusively. The purpose was to conveniently reach potential participants by providing a direct link and allowing them to easily access the Qualtrics platform with a single click. On the opening screen, an informed consent form (Appendix B) was presented to inform participants about the study and to request their voluntary participation. Those who filled out the informed consent form and agreed to participate accessed online surveys by clicking the continue button. The study consisted of a total of 53 items including 4 attention check items, making it 57 items in total. Since Qualtrics also provides data on survey completion times, the average completion time was approximately 18 minutes. At the end of the study, participants were thanked for their participation.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

Firstly, descriptive statistics were computed by considering means and standard deviations of variables. Secondly, independent samples *t* tests were used to test potential gender differences on key variables. Thirdly, bivariate correlations between the variables of the study were examined. Finally, mediation model analysis was conducted. In a mediation model, the association of one variable (*X*) with another variable (*Y*) passed along through a third variable (*M*) that comes in between (Fritz & Mackinnon, 2007). According to Hayes (2018), a mediation model consists of two pathways. The first pathway, called the direct effect, goes directly from *X* to *Y* without involving *M*. The second pathway, termed the indirect effect, goes from *X* to *Y* through *M*. The indirect effect demonstrates how *Y* is influenced by *X* through a sequential chain in which *X* affects *M*, which subsequently impacts *Y*. A mediator variable serves to clarify the relationship between two variables by providing an explanatory link (Shaughnessy et al., 2012). In this study, conflict resolution orientation served as the mediating variable in linking the romantic beliefs (predictor variable) and psychological well-being (criterion variable). Also, perceived partner's conflict resolution style used as a covariate. This association was investigated via Model 4 by Hayes (2008). All analyses were conducted on IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 and PROCESS Macro version 4.3.

3.6. Limitations of the Study

One of the main limitations of the study was the reliability issue regarding the conflict resolution style for participant scale. Although the instruments is selected based on the Turkish adaptation study which reported acceptable reliability coefficients (.80 = voice, .74 = loyalty, .68 = exit, .53 = neglect), the scale for present sample did not work in terms of reliability. This outcome was entirely unexpected and unpredictable, given the previously established psychometric properties. Especially, internal consistency of the self-report subscales was found to be quite low, with Cronbach's alpha values of .33 for the constructive dimension and .58 for the destructive dimension. In contrast, the perceived partner subscales demonstrated acceptable reliability, with alpha values of .85 for constructive styles and .80 for destructive styles. This discrepancy suggests that participants may have difficulty evaluating their own conflict resolution styles in a consistent manner, especially in the constructive dimension. Potential explanations for this may include social desirability bias. Social desirability bias means people sometimes give answers they think others will like or accept, instead of saying what they really think or feel (Grimm, 2010).

Also, another limitation is that results of the study are limited to dating university students and it cannot be generalized to other populations. It is important to note that while this study explored romantic relationship beliefs and their impact on psychological well-being, the findings may not be directly applicable to marital contexts. One distinction between married partners and those in dating relationships is that married individuals typically exhibit a greater level of commitment to their partnerships (Stanley & Markman, 1992). Therefore, romantic relationships in dating often involve different dynamics, expectations, and levels of commitment compared to marriages.

Moreover, another limitation of this study is the use of perceived partner ratings instead of dyadic assessments. Since participants only reported how they perceive their partner's behavior, these evaluations may not fully reflect the true dynamics of the relationship.

In addition, it is important to note that causal inference cannot be made from the results because this study uses correlational research design. Therefore, while the study offers understanding into the connection between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being, it cannot confirm whether one variable causes changes in the other.

Finally, a significant gender imbalance in the sample (approximately 90% female and 10% male) may have affected the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. This imbalance could have influenced the results, particularly in terms of how relationship dynamics and conflict styles are reported and perceived. Also, it may have contributed to the non-significant effect of gender in the regression analysis. Future research would benefit from a more gender-balanced sample to allow for more robust comparisons and conclusions.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter includes details about data screening, descriptive statistics and correlations, test of the proposed model, auxiliary hierarchical multiple regression model and summary of findings. In addition, the proposed model was tested, followed by an auxiliary hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Finally, a summary of the main findings is provided.

4.1. Data Screening

The data collection process was completed in March 2025. IBM SPSS version 27 was used to analyse data. Usable data was collected between October 16, 2024 and March 14, 2025. Before conducting any analysis, 210 out of the 670 surveys collected via Qualtrics were excluded due to incomplete responses. Also, 6 surveys were excluded because of the non-approval of the informed consent form. 40 surveys were eliminated because the respondents were not currently in a romantic relationship. Twelve surveys were deleted because participants were married. Also, 21 surveys were eliminated because of the wrong response to attention check items. Specifically, 10 participants were excluded from the Romantic Belief Scale, 5 from the Conflict Resolution Style – Self Scale, 5 from the Conflict Resolution Style – Partner Scale, and 1 from the Psychological Well-Being Scale. There was no need for estimation of missing data since all remaining items were responded. As a result of this screening process, the final dataset consisted of 381 surveys, which were used for all subsequent analyses.

After this, the data were examined to identify any univariate and multivariate outliers. The scale scores were transformed into z-scores, revealing that all variables in the current study fell within the acceptable range for outliers ($z < |3.29|$; Field, 2018). There were 3 univariate outliers in the conflict resolution style - partner scale, and 4 univariate outliers in the PWB scale. Additionally, 3 participants were identified as multivariate outliers. However, they were retained to avoid reducing the sample size.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Since the proposed mediation model was not supported by the data, in order to examine the relative contribution of the variables in the variance of well-being, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. Regression analysis was conducted controlling for demographic variables of age, gender, relationship length, relationship satisfaction, and perceived level of conflict in the relationship. Before conducting the regression analysis, descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations were examined to assess the relationships among the study variables. Missing cases due to control variables were deleted with pairwise method in the regression analysis. Minimum and maximum sample sizes ranged between 313 and 381. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations for the study variables are presented in Table 2.

Significant correlations were observed between several variables. Relationship satisfaction was positively correlated with psychological well-being ($r = .253, p < .001$), constructive conflict resolution style – partner ($r = .217, p < .001$), and relationship belief ($r = .253, p < .001$). In contrast, it was negatively associated with perceived level of conflict ($r = -.427, p < .001$), destructive conflict resolution style – self ($r = -.286, p < .001$), and destructive conflict resolution style – partner ($r = -.400, p < .001$). Additionally, psychological well-being was positively correlated with constructive conflict resolution style – partner ($r = .288, p < .001$) and relationship belief ($r = .121, p < .05$), but negatively associated with perceived level of conflict ($r = -.223, p < .001$), destructive conflict resolution style – partner ($r = -.281, p < .001$) and destructive conflict resolution style – self ($r = -.165, p < .05$). Perceived level of conflict was positively related to destructive conflict resolution style – self ($r = .234, p < .001$) and destructive conflict resolution style – partner ($r = .362, p < .001$) and negatively to constructive conflict resolution style – self ($r = -.133, p < .05$) and

constructive conflict resolution style - partner ($r = -.300, p < .001$). Lastly, relationship belief was positively correlated with constructive conflict resolution style – self ($r = .136, p < .05$).

In order to assess whether data followed a normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values were evaluated. Table 3 displays the result of this analysis. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), values falling within the range of -1.50 to +1.50 are generally accepted as evidence of normality. In the present study, all skewness values were between -.97 and .81, and all kurtosis values were between -.63 and .75. Thus, the variables in this study were approximately normally distributed.

Table 2 Correlations, Means and Standard Deviations of the Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age											
2. Gender	.16**										
3. Length	.18**	-.06									
4. Satisfaction	-.01	.12*	-.02								
5. Conflict	-.09	-.11*	.12*	-.42**							
6. RELBLF	-.04	.20**	-.00	.25**	-.03						
7. CRSSLF	-.09	.18**	-.09	.01	-.13**	.13**					
8. DSTSLF	-.01	-.06	0	-.28**	.23**	-.04	.05				
9. CRSPRT	-.15**	-.25**	-.12*	.21**	-.30**	.08	.05	-.11*			
10. DSTPRT	.08	.21**	.07	-.40**	.36**	.04	.06	.39**	-.49**		
11. PWB	-.06	.02	-.02	.25**	-.22**	.12*	.06	-.16**	.28**	-.28**	
<i>M</i>	21.82	.25	23.57	5.99	3.37	3.32	6.93	5.44	5.60	3.05	5.33
<i>SD</i>	2.13	.43	20.0	1.04	1.59	.71	1.15	1.80	1.65	1.53	.99
<i>N</i>	381	380	313	381	381	381	381	381	381	381	381

Note. Gender was coded as 0 = woman, 1 = man, 2 = nonbinary, Length = Relationship length, Satisfaction = Relationship satisfaction, Conflict = perceived level of conflict, RELBLF = Irrational Relationship Belief, CRSSLF = Constructive conflict resolution style – Self, DSTSLF = Destructive conflict resolution style – self, CRSPRT = Constructive conflict resolution style – Partner, DSTPRT = Destructive conflict resolution style – Partner, PWB = Psychological Well-being
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.

Table 3 Skewness and Kurtosis of the Variables

	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistics	Std. Error	Statistics	Std. Error
RELBLF	-.07	.13	-.25	.25
CRSSLF	-.47	.13	.75	.25
DSTSLF	.21	.13	-.63	.25
CRSPRT	-.47	.13	-.05	.25
DSTPRT	.81	.13	.23	.25
PWB	-.97	.13	.02	.25

Note. RELBLF = Irrational relationship belief, CRSSLF = Constructive conflict resolution style – Self, DSTSLF = Destructive conflict resolution style – self, CRSPRT = Constructive conflict resolution style – Partner, DSTPRT = Destructive conflict resolution style – Partner, PWB = Psychological Well-being

4.3. Test of the Proposed Model

In this study, a mediation model was first tested to explore the links between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being. However, the expected mediation effects were not found. Specifically, Hayes (2018) model 4 was used. In the first stage of the model, the direct effect of relationship belief, on the psychological well-being was examined. Then, the role of the conflict resolution style variable in mediating this relationship was assessed. The PROCESS

macro (Hayes, 2018) Model 4 was used for this analysis, utilizing bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to calculate the conditional indirect effects.

The result indicated a significant positive relationship between romantic relationship beliefs and conflict management orientation for the self ($B = .32$, $SE = .14$, $p = .02$), suggesting that higher relationship beliefs were associated with more self – orientation, and thereby confirming Hypothesis 1. However, there was not a significant relationship between conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being ($B = 0.04$, ns). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Also, considering Hypothesis 3, there was a significant positive relationship between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being ($B = 0.14$, $SE = .06$, $p = .03$). Lastly, considering Hypothesis 4, the indirect effect of irrational romantic relationship beliefs on psychological well-being through conflict orientation for the self was not significant, $B = .01$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI $[-.0023, .0416]$. The confidence interval includes zero, indicating that the mediation effect was not statistically significant. Similarly, the completely standardized indirect effect was also nonsignificant. $B = .0102$, 95% CI $[-.0016, .0300]$. Therefore, the model was not supported by the data.

4.4. Auxiliary Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Since the model did not work, an auxiliary hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being. This model has two step. In the first step, demographic variables of age, gender, relationship length, relationship satisfaction, and perceived level of conflict in the relationship were entered into the model to control potential effects on psychological well-being. In the second step, variables of relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles were included to assess their additional contribution beyond the demographic factors.

For the first step, the model was significant, $F(5, 306) = 5.713$, $p < .001$, explaining 8.5% of the variance in PWB ($R^2 = .085$). Among the predictors, relationship satisfaction ($\beta = .188$, $t = 3.078$, $p = .002$) and perceived level of conflict ($\beta = -.152$, $t(375) = -2.468$, $p = .014$) were significantly associated with PWB. Thus, higher

relationship satisfaction was associated with greater well-being, while higher perceived level of conflict was linked to lower well-being. The other demographic variables like age, gender and relationship length were not significantly associated with PWB ($ps > .05$).

For the second step, relationship belief and conflict resolution styles for the self and perceived from the partner were added to model. The overall model was significant, $F(10,301) = 4.454$, $p < .001$, explaining 14.8% of the variance in PWB ($R^2 = .148$). The addition of the new variables in Step 2 increased the explained variance and it showed that they made an important contribution to the model. Among the new variables entered in the equation, only constructive partner conflict resolution (CRSPRT) was a significant positive predictor of PWB ($\beta = .186$, $t(371) = 2.857$, $p < .005$). This suggests that individuals who perceived their partners as using constructive conflict resolution strategies reported higher well-being. In contrast, other variables like relationship satisfaction and perceived level of conflict from step 1 and relationship beliefs, and other conflict resolution styles like constructive conflict resolution style – self, destructive conflict resolution style – self and destructive conflict resolution style –partner were not significantly associated with predicting psychological well-being ($ps > .05$). In the second step, relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles were included to the model. This addition led to a significant increase in the explained variance of psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .063$, $F(5, 301) = 4.45$, $p < .001$. Notably, relationship satisfaction and perceived level of conflict which were significant predictors in Step 1, became nonsignificant in Step 2, indicating that the newly added variables explained overlapping variance in PWB.

Table 4 Hierarchical Regression Results for Psychological Well-being

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2
Step 1							
(Constant)	5.31	0.73		7.19	0.00	0.08	0.08
Age	-0.03	0.02	-0.07	-1.26	0.20		
Gender	-0.01	0.12	-0.00	-0.12	0.89		
Length	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.17	0.86		
Satis	0.17	0.05	0.18	3.07*	0.00		
Conflict	-0.09	0.03	-0.15	-2.46*	0.01		
Step 2							
(Constant)	4.43	0.92		4.78	0.00	0.14	0.06
Age	-0.01	0.02	-0.03	-0.61	0.53		
Gender	0.13	0.13	0.06	1.00	0.31		
Length	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.53	0.59		
Satis	0.09	0.06	0.09	1.50	0.13		
Conflict	-0.03	0.04	-0.06	-0.95	0.34		
RELBLF	0.08	0.08	0.06	1.08	0.27		
CRSSLF	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.67	0.50		
DSTSLF	-0.02	0.03	-0.04	-0.78	0.43		
CRSPRT	0.11	0.03	0.18	2.85*	0.00		
DSTPRT	-0.08	0.04	-0.12	-1.74	0.08		

Note. Length: Relationship length, Satis: Relationship satisfaction, Conflict: Perceived level of conflict, RELBLF: Irrational relationship belief, CRSSLF: Constructive conflict resolution style of participant, DSTSLF: Destructive conflict resolution style of participant, CRSPRT: Perceived partner's constructive conflict resolution style, DSTPRT: Perceived partner's destructive conflict resolution style.

* $p < .05$

4.5. Summary of Findings

In sum, results indicated that relationship satisfaction and perceived level of conflict significantly associated with psychological well-being in the first model. In the second model, constructive conflict resolution style perceived in the partner was a significant correlate of well-being after controlling for all the demographic variables and the other conflict variables. This suggests that individuals who perceive their partners as constructive during conflicts tend to report higher psychological well-being.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This section presents a summary of the findings and further discussion of the current study. Additionally, recommendations for both researchers and practitioners are provided.

5.1. Discussion of the Results

5.1.1. Discussion of Bivariate Associations

There are many bivariate associations investigated. Some of them require special attention because of their inconsistency with previous literature. To start with, there was a positive significant relationship between relationship beliefs and relationship satisfaction and constructive conflict resolution of the participant. These findings are interestingly different than existing literature because considering literature, among married individuals, Bradbury and Fincham (1993) emphasized that irrational beliefs about relationships were significantly associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction. Similarly, Epstein and Eidelson (1981) reported that individuals who held unrealistic relationship beliefs were less motivated to maintain the relationship, less likely to prefer couple therapy and reported lower satisfaction in marriage. Among university students, Sullivan and Schwebel (1995) found that irrational beliefs were negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. In other words, as irrational beliefs increase, relationship satisfaction of individual decrease. Similarly, Stackert and Bursik (2003) also reported that university students holding stronger irrational

romantic beliefs experienced lower levels of satisfaction in their relationships. In addition, according to Adibkia et al. (2022) irrational beliefs increased the destructive conflict resolution behaviors and marriage stress and this indirectly affected marriage satisfaction. In other words, individuals who hold irrational beliefs experience more conflict and stress in their relationships and report lower satisfaction.

Another finding is interestingly a positive relationship between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being. Although there is no direct study examining the relationship between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being, existing literature has focused on the associations between relationship beliefs and variables such as relationship satisfaction, quality, and conflict resolution. As relationship beliefs became more irrational, psychological well-being was also high. It is not consistent with the previous literature which generally emphasize the negative outcomes of relationship beliefs irrational relationship beliefs. For instance, among married individuals, Hamamcı (2005) suggested that married individuals with more dysfunctional relationship beliefs experienced greater levels of conflict in their relationships. Similarly, Möller and Van Zyl (1991) reported that irrational relationship beliefs negatively influenced marital adjustment. Among university students, Metts and Cupach (1990) demonstrated that as irrational romantic beliefs increased, individuals were more likely to use destructive problem-solving strategies. Thus, the finding is different than expected.

Although it is inconsistent with the existing literature, it is possible to speculate that the positive relationship between relationship beliefs and both satisfaction and PWB may be explained by university students perceiving relationship beliefs differently. Additionally, demographic differences and cultural factors could also be variables affecting this result. For instance, university students in Turkey may perceive irrational relationship beliefs in relationships as less negative or interpret these beliefs in different ways. The beliefs under the *Love Finds a Way* factor in the romantic beliefs scale might help students see overcoming relationship challenges as easier, making them view these problems in a less stressful way. Also, the *One and Only* and *Idealization* factors may represent a more idealized view of relationships. University students, in particular, may idealize romantic relationships which could increase their

commitment and improve their psychological well-being. As a result, these beliefs may help them handle relationship difficulties better, increase their emotional satisfaction, and support their overall well-being. Another interpretation for the present finding could be that *whatever intended to be measured as irrational relationship beliefs might be experienced by the present sample as rational*. This possibility requires future examination.

Another explanation which may be grounded in the existing literature on the difference of perceptions of relationship beliefs could be explained by attribution processes. Miller (2018) defined attribution as the explanations individuals generate to understand why an event happened, especially why a person did or did not do something. An attribution explains why an event occurred by highlighting certain causes while decreasing the importance of others. Among attributions *actor-observer effect* and *self-serving bias* might have affected the sample of the present study. In actor-observer effect, when explaining their own behavior, people often refer to external reasons however when others act similarly, they tend to attribute it to internal causes like personality traits (Miller, 2018). This bias is quite common that in nearly any interaction, two individuals are likely to agree on the actions each person took but tend to disagree on the reasons behind those actions (Robins et al., 2004). University students may have perceived irrational relationship beliefs in a more positive or idealized way and it could lead them to attribute relationship problems to external factors and thus perceive less stress in their relationships. For instance, the belief “if I love someone, I know I can make the relationship work despite any obstacles” might provide a buffering perspective on relationship difficulties, which could result in higher psychological well-being. Also, self-serving bias refers to the tendency of individuals to explain their successes by pointing to personal qualities or efforts, while attributing their failures to outside influences such as chance or other people, which serves to maintain their self-esteem (Miller, 2018). University students’ tendency to perceive irrational relationship beliefs in a more positive and idealized way may be connected to self-serving bias. Thus, these attribution processes may enable them to attribute negative aspects to external and temporary factors, helping them maintain a favorable view of their relationships. While these interpretations offer a theoretical lens to understand the findings, they remain speculative and are not directly supported

by the data in the current study. Therefore, future research is needed to empirically examine the role of attribution processes in shaping perceptions of relationship beliefs. These speculations require future studies to be tested.

Another possible explanation might be related to cultural factors. University students in Turkey may interpret or evaluate certain relationship beliefs differently compared individuals in Western samples. In Turkey, which is a collectivist society characterized by strong family bonds, the dynamics of attachment and commitment in romantic relationships may differ from those observed in individualistic Western cultures (Harma & Sümer, 2016). In collectivist cultures like Turkey, where family and community play a central role in individuals' lives, beliefs such as "*love finds a way*" or "*one and only*" might not be seen as irrational. Instead, they may reflect deeper cultural values such as loyalty, sacrifice, and commitment, which are often idealized in Turkish society. For instance, the belief that love and effort can overcome all obstacles in a relationship may help young adults stay motivated, committed, and emotionally fulfilled. As a result, certain relationship beliefs that are labeled as irrational in Western contexts might actually be seen as typical or even beneficial in collectivist societies. Also, According to the findings of the study conducted by Şenkal Ertürk et al. (2024) individuals with higher levels of attachment anxiety were found to be more committed to their current romantic relationships, and this result was explained in relation to cultural factors. In Turkish culture, behaviors such as emotional closeness, relational harmony, strong focus on the relationship, emotional interdependence and partner clinging are often culturally reinforced. In this vein, the unexpected positive association between irrational relationship beliefs and psychological well-being found in the present study may also be interpreted as an outcome of cultural influences.

Overall, these insights suggest that cultural background significantly influences how university students perceive relationship beliefs and how these beliefs affect their well-being. Future studies should incorporate cross-cultural perspectives to determine whether the meaning and consequences of "irrational" relationship beliefs differ across diverse cultural settings.

In contrast to the inconsistent findings mentioned above, the present study also showed several findings that were aligned with prior literature. A positive relationship was found between relationship satisfaction and psychological well-being. In other words, as relationship satisfaction increases, PWB also increases. This finding is consistent with the study of White et al. (2023) who found that being satisfied with one's romantic relationship status was positively associated with well-being among individuals with lived experience of psychosis. Their sample included both married and unmarried individuals. Also, Ruffieux et al., (2014) conducted a 10-year longitudinal study with 103 couples to predict relationship satisfaction and stability based on initial communication, stress, well-being, and coping skills. They found that relationship satisfaction was the strongest predictor for both men and women. The results highlighted that relationship satisfaction plays a key role in long-term psychological well-being, suggesting its lasting impact over time. Furthermore, A study conducted with married adults revealed that COVID-19 related stress negatively affected relationship satisfaction and well-being, with relationship satisfaction acting as a mediator in this relationship (Tepeli temiz & Elsharnouby, 2022).

Moreover, another negative correlation was found between destructive conflict resolution styles – partner and self and PWB of individual. That is, as an individual perceives their partner as resolving conflicts in a destructive way, PWB of individual decreases. Also, as an individual perceives oneself as resolving conflicts in a destructive way, PWB of individual decreases. However, partner's destructive conflict resolution style perception is more significant than self. The finding is consistent with previous literature. For instance, a negative relationship was observed between destructive conflict resolution responses both exhibited by the individual and perceived in their partner and relationship satisfaction (Taluy & Büyükşahin-Sunal, 2016). Similarly, Rusbult and colleagues (1986b) found that destructive conflict resolution styles are more strongly associated with the overall functioning of romantic relationships than constructive ones. Thus, destructive conflict styles, especially partner's perceived destructive CRS, appear to be particularly harmful to psychological well-being.

All in all, bivariate analyses provided an initial, but somewhat simplistic, overview of the relationships between variables, as they did not account for the potential confounding or overlapping roles of other variables. While some associations appeared significant at this level, many of them diminished when all variables were simultaneously entered into the regression model. This highlights the importance of multivariate approaches in revealing more accurate and nuanced patterns, which is discussed in the following section.

5.1.2. Discussion of the Proposed Model

In this study, a mediation model was first tested to examine the relationships between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being. However, the model did not produce statistically significant results. Thus, conflict resolution styles did not mediate the relationship between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being as expected. A multiple regression analysis was still carried out to explore how relationship beliefs and conflict resolution styles might individually contribute to psychological well-being. This analysis was made to see if there were any important patterns in the data. Accordingly, the relationships between romantic relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles as perceived from oneself and the partner, and psychological well-being were examined. In the first step, only relationship satisfaction and perceived level of conflict was significant predictor of psychological well-being. Other demographic variables like age, gender, and relationship duration did not significantly contribute to well-being.

There might be a few reasons why the model did not work as planned. One possible reason might be related to the measurement quality of the conflict resolution styles. While the original adaptation study (Taluy, 2018) showed high reliability values, in the present study, the reliability scores were surprisingly low for especially self subscales. This may have affected the accuracy of the measurements and made it harder for the model to function properly. In addition, while participants answered questions about their own conflict resolution styles, their responses may be influenced by social desirability bias. It is a kind of distortion that occurs when individuals tend to present themselves in a socially acceptable way (Miller, 2018). In other words, participants might have given answers that they thought were more socially

acceptable. For instance, in a study conducted by Mitchell (2010), 4% of individuals who had divorced a few years earlier claimed that they had never been divorced. It is known because the researchers had examined divorce records filed at county courthouses. This tendency could have led to systematic bias and may have contributed to the unexpected results of the model (Miller, 2018).

Also, people often have biased ideas about themselves. Their opinions do not match their real actions very well, and they sometimes think they have good skills or qualities that they actually do not have (Dunning et al., 2004). Students may be less consistent and possibly biased or overly optimistic when evaluating their own conflict resolution styles. Similarly, in a meta-analysis, Hansford and Hattie (1982) examined the connection between individuals' academic self-perceptions and their actual academic achievement. The findings revealed that this association was relatively weak, with a mean correlation of approximately .21. Also, according to another meta-analysis conducted by Falchikov and Boud (1989) college students' self-assigned grades showed a correlation of .39 with those given by their instructors. However, students tended to overestimate their performance, awarding themselves higher grades than their teachers did in 68% of the cases. Also, Edward and Lemay (2014) stated that individual's accurate and biased views of how they behave in relationships help them feel secure and valued by their partners. They stated that biased self-perceptions especially when positively exaggerated can increase individuals' feelings of being valued by their partners, even if their actual behavior does not fully reflect such responsiveness. Thus, another interpretation of this finding could be a lack of self-awareness among students in the sample. It means that they may not have an accurate understanding of their own conflict resolution styles. *As a result, their self-assessments might be inconsistent, biased, or overly optimistic.*

Moreover, these findings suggest that participants' evaluations of their own conflict resolution styles may have been influenced not only by a lack of self-awareness but also by possible tendencies toward self-deception. Self-deception involves an individual misleading themselves through distorted internal processing, it operates in a similar way with deception between individuals. (Trivers, 2000). Self-deception is a complex way for both people manage their own thoughts and how they interact with

others. Self-deception helps people reduce cognitive effort and act more comfortably. It allows individuals to avoid some responsibility if their deception is revealed (Von Hippel & Trivers, 2011). They stated that self deception could be observed mostly in socially desirable traits. Low reliability observed in participants' self-evaluations may suggest that both the motivation to appear socially desirable and the need to protect one's internal self-perception may have influenced their responses. *Thus, in the present study, especially in emotionally intense context like romantic relationships, students might have tended to show themselves as more constructive, cooperative or patient when assessing their own conflict resolution styles by engaging in self-deception.*

Considering the findings in dating relationships in the present study, it is possible to assume that these tendencies may also influence marital relationships. According to a study investigating how premarital relationships affect the transition to marriage conducted by Rank (1981), four groups of couples were examined: those who lived together before marriage and stayed married, those who lived together but later divorced, those who married after dating and stayed married, and those who married after dating but later divorced. The findings showed that partners' shared views and expectations and perceptions about marriage played an important role in a smooth transition to married life. Especially in divorced groups, marriage was often seen not as a natural step in the relationship but as a major change or a way to fix problems. These different expectations causes new challenges after marriage such as disagreements about housework and increased conflict compared to the dating period. Markman et al. (2010) studied 210 couples over the first five years of marriage to examine how premarital communication quality relates to divorce and marital distress. The findings showed that self-reported negative communication before marriage significantly predicted divorce. Both observed and self-reported negative communication were linked to lower marital adjustment during the early years of marriage. According to Raley and Bumpass (2003), 21% of couples get divorced within the first five years of marriage. When considering in developmental perspective, these findings support the notion that dating relationships may serve as preparation for marriage. *By extrapolation, when couples lack self-awareness or make inaccurate attributions during dating, these patterns might continue into marriage*

and cause more serious problems over time. Such maladaptive patterns could potentially contribute to early marital dissolution, particularly within the first five years. However this extrapolation extends beyond the data presented in the present study, and such transitional effects from dating relationship to marriage requires future longitudinal research.

5.1.3. Discussion of Regression Analysis

The purpose of the regression analysis was to explore which variables serve as unique predictors of psychological well-being when all variables were examined. While several variables showed significant associations at the bivariate level, most of them disappeared when all variables were included in the model simultaneously. When all variables were examined together, only the constructive partner conflict resolution style still showed a meaningful link with psychological well-being. In other words, as an individual perceives their partner as resolving conflicts in a constructive way, individual's psychological well-being increases. Importantly, in the hierarchical regression analysis, constructive partner conflict resolution was the only significant predictor of psychological well-being in the second step of the model. This strong result of the present study emphasized the important role of perceived partner behavior in shaping one's psychological outcomes. Similarly, Tidwell et al., (2012) found that perceived similarity was a stronger predictor of romantic attraction than actual similarity. This finding supports the result that perceived constructive conflict resolution by the partner might be more strongly related to psychological well-being than the individual's own conflict style. Gadassi et al., (2016) found that perceived partner responsiveness significantly mediated the link between sexual and marital satisfaction, particularly on a daily level for women. Finally, according to Kenny and Acitelli (2001), individuals' perceptions of their partners are more strongly related to relationship outcomes than their partners' actual feelings.

In romantic relationships, partners' perceptions of each other or their relationship shape the other partner's perceptions and feelings about the relationship (Tomlinson & Aron, 2013). They found that when individuals perceive their partner to be satisfied, they tend to feel closer to their partner which as a result shapes how close they themselves feel in the relationship. Being seen as more trusting and helpful than one

thinks may increase confidence and improve self-worth, leading to better outcomes in the relationship. Taken together, these studies suggest that in romantic relationships, how people perceive their partners can have a bigger impact on well-being than their own behaviors or traits. Thus, it is possible to state that in romantic relationships, individual's perceptions of their partner, even if inaccurate, can be important in one's level of PWB. In line with these findings, the regression results suggest that students in dating relationships may lack of self-awareness of their own conflict resolution tendencies, as their self-report styles did not emerge as significant predictors when all variables were analyzed together.

Therefore, these findings suggest that *university students in dating relationships may not fully understand how their own behavior affects their relationship*. The lack of a significant effect of self-perceived conflict resolution styles on well-being, when compared to partner-perceived styles, might indicate a biased or self-protective evaluation process. This could mean they tend to deny or minimize their own role in conflicts to maintain a positive self-image. Therefore, it is important to study how these biased perceptions affect young adults' relationships, especially in counseling settings that encourage self-awareness and personal responsibility in relationships.

While relationships play a significant role in psychological well-being, literature suggests that well-being is a multi-dimensional construct influenced by satisfaction across various life like work, health, leisure and finance (Diener et al., 1999). Besides, there are other factors which are consequential for well-being. For instance, domain-specific satisfaction contributes to how people evaluate their overall life satisfaction (Heller et al., 2004). In one study conducted with middle-aged adults, Kim et al. (2024) investigated how various leisure activities, such as sports, travel, and outdoor activities, affect different aspects of satisfaction. Their findings stated that these activities most strongly influenced satisfaction related to physical health, psychological health, and relaxation. For men, relaxation and social satisfaction play a key role in subjective well-being, whereas for women, psychological satisfaction is the most significant contributor (Kim et al., 2024). While the present study centers on romantic relationships as a domain of psychological well-being, these findings emphasize the importance of considering multiple life areas when examining overall

well-being. Similarly, according to Nakamura and colleagues (2021) many areas of life satisfaction were found to be linked to psychological well-being, with the strongest effects seen in satisfaction related to family life and leisure activities outside of work. Financial satisfaction and income played an important role. Moreover, specific life domains were associated with distinct physical health indicators such as risk of death, chronic illnesses, and physical limitations, health-related behaviors including sleep problems, and social elements like feelings of loneliness. In addition, findings from multiple regression analyses indicate that career success, social connectedness, and self-esteem are associated with both psychological and physical well-being and that spiritual well-being moderates the relationship between career success and psychological well-being (Leung et al., 2011). This implies that the relative impact of different domains may vary depending on individual factors. Thus, the present study's focus on romantic relationships provides important insight into one domain of well-being. However, it is important to remember that other life domains also contribute to psychological well-being.

5.2. Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationships among relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being in the context of romantic relationships. Although the original mediation model where conflict resolution styles were expected to mediate the link between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being was not statistically significant, further analyses still revealed important findings about how the variables are connected.

Specifically, the analysis revealed that only perceived partner's constructive conflict resolution style like voice and loyalty was positively associated with PWB when all variables were examined simultaneously. This finding highlights the importance of how individuals perceive their partner's behavior during conflicts, rather than their own conflict resolution styles.

Furthermore, self-reported conflict resolution styles did not significantly predict psychological well-being when all variables were included in the model. This may suggest a lack of self-awareness or a biased evaluation process in self-reports.

Furthermore, demographic variables such as age, gender, and relationship duration did not significantly contribute to the prediction of well-being. In sum, These findings emphasize the critical role of partner perceptions in romantic relationships and suggest that individuals' views of their partner's conflict behavior may be more influential on well-being than their own behaviors.

5.3. Implications

Since the tested model was not supported, and the measurement of conflict resolution styles for the participants themselves showed low reliabilities, findings of the present study should be interpreted carefully. The findings of this study provides contribution the dynamics between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles and psychological well-being. Especially, it has highlighted the effect of relationship satisfaction level on psychological well-being and this finding stated the importance of highly satisfied relationship to maintain the emotional and psychological balance of individuals. Thus, there are two sets of implications for the present study: theoretical implications and practical implications. As for the theoretical implications, unexpectedly positive relationship between relationship beliefs and psychological well-being may reflect lack of self-awareness, self-deceptive thoughts and defensive attributions. This finding may show that students in dating relationships might not have insight into their realistic contributions to relationship outcome. This also may represent a defensive way of perceiving the relationship, aimed at avoiding responsibility for negative outcomes. Moreover, these findings implicate that a lack of insight into romantic relationships may lead to even greater problems in long-term partnerships such as marriage. In this context, by extrapolation, the lack of insight and the presence of irrational beliefs in dating relationships may cause individuals to carry similar behavior patterns into marriage, potentially increasing the risk of divorce. Also, in the present study, partner's conflict resolution styles significantly predicted psychological well-being even after controlling for all other variables in the regression analyses suggests that participants may have more consistent perceptions of their partners, while their self-perceptions might be distorted. Thus, these dynamics underline the importance of self-awareness and constructive attribution styles as core components of healthy romantic functioning.

As a practical implication, psychological counselors should be prepared for the possibility that students in dating relationships may have low levels of self-insight and self-awareness. When working with such individuals, sessions should be structured to help them recognize irrational relationship beliefs, attributions blaming partner and maladaptive thought patterns that may contribute to conflict. Thus, individuals can be encouraged to develop healthier relationship with increased awareness. Kieslich and Steins (2022) argued that couples who have been together for a while often seek counseling when ongoing and sudden problems become too much to handle, making them feel stressed and helpless. In such cases, couples can be provided with information about constructive and destructive conflict resolution styles during couple therapy and awareness can be raised through practical scenarios. During counseling sessions, students can be encouraged to reflect on their negative or irrational relationship beliefs and supported in developing healthier perspectives. In conclusion, while the research primarily examines married couples, the insights may inform interventions for university students and they can build healthier relationships and handle challenges in romantic relationships better.

Moreover, university counseling and guidance centers could provide training on communication, self-awareness, conflict resolution, empathy, irrational relationship beliefs, and other important relationship skills at universities. Moreover, the more relationship satisfaction means the more psychological well-being. This finding suggests that developing strategies aimed at increasing relationship satisfaction may be beneficial in therapeutic interventions and psychological counseling. In addition, the strong link between partner's conflict resolution styles especially constructive ones like voice and loyalty and psychological well-being suggests that improving these skills can help people feel better psychologically. This shows that counseling services of the universities should focus more on teaching constructive conflict resolution skills. Thus, counselors can empower their clients via instilling awareness on irrational beliefs and cultivating constructive conflict resolution styles which are essential for maintaining positive relationships and enhancing psychological well-being.

5.4. Recommendations

Given those implications, it may be beneficial for counseling practices to focus on the recognition of cognitive distortions and partner-blaming attributions that can contribute to interpersonal conflicts in romantic relationships. Based on the finding that constructive conflict resolution styles have a positive impact on psychological well-being, counselors can support clients in exploring and practicing their conflict resolution styles. In addition, incorporating interventions aimed at enhancing emotional awareness, empathy, and perspective-taking may contribute to healthier communication patterns between partners. Cognitive-behavioral techniques that are commonly used to challenge maladaptive thought patterns, could be adapted to address dysfunctional interaction styles and improve relationship functioning more generally.

In light of the findings and limitations of the current study, several recommendations can be made for future research. The present study contributes to the literature by exploring the relationships between relationship beliefs, conflict resolution styles, and psychological well-being among university students through integrative framework. While previous research has largely emphasized individuals' own behaviors and cognitive processes, this study highlights the predictive role of perceived partner constructive conflict resolution style on psychological well-being. It also underlines the possible distortions in self-assessment versus perceived partner assessment and the role of irrational beliefs in dating relationships. In addition, the present study provides culturally relevant insights into how relational beliefs and conflict resolution styles function within the Turkish context by focusing on Turkish university student sample. However, the study had several gaps that future research can aim to address.

Future research could obtain more accurate results by using dyadic measures that directly assess the partner's behavior for conflict resolution style. In this way, The low internal consistency of constructive conflict resolution styles in the current study can also be improved. This study was conducted with university students so, the generalizability of the findings to a broader population is limited. Future studies could enhance generalizability by collecting data from individuals of different age groups or cultural contexts. Also, the effects of the relationships between variables over time

can be observed through the use of longitudinal studies. This could also investigate how conflict resolution styles and relationship beliefs evolve in long-term relationships over time. Finally, the unexpected positive relationship between irrational beliefs and well-being encourages future research to explore whether relationships based on irrational beliefs are sustainable, especially in married or long-term couples. Such studies can determine if these beliefs serve as short-term coping strategies or lead to long-term relationship dissatisfaction or breakdown.



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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE



TED ÜNİVERSİTESİ
İNSAN ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK KURULU
ETİK KURUL KARARLARI
Sayı: 2024-36 Tarih: 12/09/2024

Toplantı Sayısı: 2024-36
Toplantı Tarihi ve Saati: 12 Eylül 2024 Saat: 13.00
Toplantı Yeri: Zoom üzerinden yapılmıştır.

Katılanlar: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kıymet Duygu ERDAŞ – Başkan
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu Onay Çoker - Raportör
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Elçin Emre AKDOĞAN - Üye
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Çağla Öneren ŞENDİL - Üye
Doç. Dr. Melike Ünal GEZER - Üye
Doç. Dr. Beril Türkoğlu DEMİREL - Üye

Raportör: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu Onay Çoker

GÖRÜŞME MADDELERİ :

G.01 : TED Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Anabilim Dalı Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kürşad Demirutku' nun "İlişki İnançları ve Psikolojik İyi Oluş Üzerinde Çatışma Çözme Tarzlarının Aracı Rolü (The Mediating Role of Conflict Resolution Styles on Relationship Beliefs and Psychological Well-Being)" başlıklı çalışmasının araştırma etiğine uygunluğu görüşüldü.

Karar 2024-36/01 : TED Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Anabilim Dalı Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kürşad Demirutku' nun "İlişki İnançları ve Psikolojik İyi Oluş Üzerinde Çatışma Çözme Tarzlarının Aracı Rolü (The Mediating Role of Conflict Resolution Styles on Relationship Beliefs and Psychological Well-Being)" başlıklı çalışmasına,

ONAY KARARI VERİLDİ.

A-2. OTHER PERMISSIONS



B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Sayın katılımcı,

Bu araştırma TED Üniversitesi Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Zeynep Hazan Deniz tarafından, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kürşad Demirutku danışmanlığında yürütülen yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yapılmaktadır. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinin romantik ilişkiye dair inançlarının ve çatışma çözme tarzlarının psikolojik iyi oluşlarıyla ilişkisini incelemektir. Bu amaçla en az 6 aydır romantik ilişki içinde olan ve şu an Ankara’da yaşayan üniversite öğrencilerine ulaşılması hedeflenmektedir.

Süreç: Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden beklenen, size verilecek olan ölçeklerde yer alan bir maddeleri derecelendirme ölçeği üzerinde yanıtlanmanızdır. Bu araştırmaya katılım ortalama olarak 10-15 dakika sürmektedir.

Rahatsızlıklar ve Riskler: Bu araştırmaya katılmanın, normal hayatta karşılaşılanlardan fazla bir riski yoktur.

Kazanımlar: Bu araştırma akademik bir çalışmaya veri sağlayacaktır.

Gizlilik Bildirimi: Araştırma yürütücüsü ve araştırmacı dışında hiç kimse verdiğiniz bilgileri bilmeyecektir. Toplanan veriler kilitli bir dolapta tutulacaktır. Çalışmanın yayınlanması halinde kişisel bilgilerinizi açığa çıkaracak hiç bir bilgi yazılmayacaktır.

Soru Sorma Hakkı: Araştırma hakkında soru sorabilirsiniz. Araştırma yürütücüsü sorularınıza cevap verecektir.

Gönüllü Katılım: Bu araştırmaya katılmak zorunlu değildir. Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Kendinizi kötü hissettiğiniz veya araştırmaya devam etmek istemediğiniz anda araştırmadan ayrılabilirsiniz. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya kurum belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için

ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum. Bu araştırmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

...../...../.....

Katılımcı Ad Soyad

ve

İmzası

Tarih

C. INSTRUMENTS

Demografik Bilgi Formu

Aşağıdaki sorularla sizinle ilgili genel bilgilere ulaşmak amaçlanmıştır. Lütfen kendinizi en iyi yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz ya da boşlukları doldurunuz.

- 1) Cinsiyetiniz?
- 2) Yaşınız?
- 3) Okuduğunuz üniversite?
- 4) Okuduğunuz bölüm?
- 5) Halihazırda süren bir romantik ilişkiniz var mı? () Evet () Hayır
- 6) Medeni durumunuz? () Evli () Bekar () Boşanmış () Dul () Diğer
- 7) Partnerinizle ne kadar zamandır birliktesiniz? yıl ay
- 8) İlişkinizden ne kadar memnunsunuz?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Hiç memnun değilim

Çok memnunum

- 9) İlişkiniz ne düzeyde çatışmalı bir ilişkidir?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Hiç çatışmalı değildir

Çok çatışmalıdır

C-2. INSTRUMENTS

Romantik İnançlar Örnek Maddeler

Aşağıda yer alan ifadeler, romantik ilişkilere dair bireylerin benimsediği düşünceleri içermektedir. Lütfen her bir cümleyi dikkatlice okuyun ve bu düşüncelere katılım derecenizi belirtin.

1: Hiç Katılmıyorum

2: Biraz Katılıyorum

3: Katılıyorum

4: Çok Katılıyorum

5: Tamamen Katılıyorum

1. Birine aşık olursam, ailem ve arkadaşlarım bu ilişkiyi onaylamasa da kendimi ona adarım.

2. Gerçek aşkı bir kere yaşadıktan sonra, onu bir daha bir başkasıyla aynı derecede yaşayamam.

3. Gerçek aşkın sonsuza dek süreceğine inanırım.

4. Birine aşık olursam, her türlü engele rağmen o ilişkiyi yürütebilirim.

5. Gerçek aşkı bulduğumu, onunla tanışır tanışmaz anlarım.

C-3. INSTRUMENTS

Çatışma Çözme Stilleri Örnek Maddeler – Birey

İnsanlar ilişki yaşadıkları kişiyle sorunlar yaşayabilirler. İlişkide yaşanan sorunlar karşısında verilen tepkiler aşağıda yer almaktadır. Aşağıdaki önermeleri okuyup, SİZİN şu andaki ilişkinizdeki sorunlara tepki veriş tarzınızı düşünerek yanıtlayınız. Lütfen her bir ifadenin size ne derece uyduğunu belirtmek için aşağıda verilen ölçekteki sayılardan sizin için uygun olanını her maddenin sağındaki yanıt çizelgesine işaretleyiniz. Teşekkürler.

(0: Hiç yapmam, 1: ..., 2: Nadiren yaparım, 3: ..., 4: Bazen yaparım, 5:, 6: Sıkça yaparım, 7: ..., 8: Sürekli yaparım)

- 1) Partnerim/ilişki yaşadığım kişi gerçekten kötü bir şey söylediğinde onu terk etmekle tehdit ederim.
- 2) Partnerim/ilişki yaşadığım kişi bana kaba davrandığında durumu çözmeye ve koşulları düzeltmeye çalışırım.
- 3) Partnerim/ilişki yaşadığım kişi hoşuma gitmeyen birşey yapınca onu affederim ve olayı unuturum.
- 4) Partnerim/ilişki yaşadığım kişi düşüncesizce bir şey yapınca bu konuyla ilgilenmekten kaçınırım.
- 5) Partnerim/ilişki yaşadığım kişi bana kaba davrandığında çok kızarım ve çekip gitmek isterim.

Çatışma Çözme Stilleri Örnek Maddeler – Algılanan Partner

Aşağıdaki önermeleri okuyup, PARTNERİNİZİN /İLİŞKİ YAŞADIĞINIZ KİŞİNİN şu andaki ilişkinizdeki sorunlara tepki veriş tarzını düşünerek yanıtlayınız. (Partneriniz /ilişki yaşadığınız kişi kısmını doldururken kendi görüşlerinizi yazmanız gerektiğinden soruları lütfen partnerinize sormadan cevaplandırınız). Lütfen her bir ifadenin size ne derece uyduğunu belirtmek için aşağıda verilen ölçekteki sayılardan sizin için uygun olanını her maddenin sağındaki yanıt çizelgesine işaretleyiniz. Teşekkürler.

(0: Partnerim hiç yapmaz, 1: ..., 2: Partnerim nadiren yapar, 3: ..., 4: Partnerim bazen yapar, 5: ..., 6: Partnerim sıkça yapar, 7: ..., 8: Partnerim sürekli yapar)

- 1) Partnerime/ilişki yaşadığım kişiye gerçekten kötü birşey söylediğimde beni terketmekle tehdit eder.
- 2) Partnerime/ilişki yaşadığım kişiye kaba davrandığımda durumu çözmeye ve koşulları düzeltmeye çalışır.
- 3) Partnerimin/ilişki yaşadığım kişinin hoşuna gitmeyen bir şey yapınca beni affeder ve olayı unuttur.
- 4) Partnerime/ilişki yaşadığım kişiye düşüncesizce bir şey yapınca bu konuyla ilgilenmekten kaçınır.
- 5) Partnerime /ilişki yaşadığım kişiye kaba davrandığımda çok kızar ve çekip gitmek ister.

C-4. INSTRUMENTS

Psikolojik İyi Oluş Ölçeđi

Aşağıda katılacağınız ya da katılamayacağınız 8 ifade vardır. 1–7 arasındaki derecelendirmeyi kullanarak, her bir madde için uygun olan cevabınızı belirtiniz.

1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

2 = Katılmıyorum

3 = Biraz katılmıyorum

4 = Kararsızım

5 = Biraz katılıyorum

6 = Katılıyorum

7 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum

1. Amaçlı ve anlamlı bir yaşam sürdürüyorum

2. Sosyal ilişkilerim destekleyici ve tatmin edicidir

3. Günlük aktivitelere bağı ve ilgiliyim

4. Başkalarının mutlu ve iyi olmasına aktif olarak katkıda bulunurum

5. Benim için önemli olan etkinliklerde yetenekli ve yeterliyim

6. Ben iyi bir insanım ve iyi bir hayat yaşıyorum

7. Geleceğim hakkında iyimserim

8. İnsanlar bana saygı duyar

D. CURRICULUM VITAE



E. THESIS PERMISSION FORM

Anabilim Dalı: Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık

YAZARIN

Soyadı : DENİZ

Adı : ZEYNEP HAZAN

Bölümü : Eğitim Bilimleri

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : INVESTIGATING THE ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN IRRATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS, CONFLICT
RESOLUTION STYLES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN DATING
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

☐

Doktora

☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:

