

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP MOTIVATION IN THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED
SATISFACTION AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT: A DYADIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP MOTIVATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED SATISFACTION AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT: A DYADIC ANALYSIS

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The aim of the current study is to explore the potential mediating role of relationship motivation in the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and marital adjustment among Turkish married couples. The participants of the study included 205 married couples (N=410) between the ages of 22-67, all married for at least one year. Data were collected using Turkish versions of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale in Relationship Domain, the Couple Motivation Questionnaire, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and a demographic form. To evaluate the proposed model, Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was employed. For indirect actor effects, the results of the Path Analysis revealed that the associations between autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment were fully mediated through relationship motivation only for husbands, while the associations between competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment were partially mediated through relationship motivation only for wives. Moreover, the associations between relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment were mediated through relationship motivation for

both genders. Regarding indirect partner effects, relationship motivation fully mediated the partner effect of autonomy need satisfaction on wives' marital adjustment, and the partner effect of competence need satisfaction on husbands' marital adjustment. Additionally, relationship motivation was found to contribute to the associations between partners' relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment for both wives and husbands. The findings were discussed in light of existing literature, with implications for counseling practices and suggestions for future research.

Keywords: basic psychological need satisfaction, relationship motivation, marital adjustment, actor-partner interdependence model



ÖZ

TEMEL PSİKOLOJİK İHTİYAÇ DOYUMU İLE EVLİLİK UYUMU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİDE İLİŞKİ MOTİVASYONUNUN ARACI ROLÜ: İKİLİ ANALİZ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türk evli çiftler arasında temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu (özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma) ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide ilişki motivasyonunun potansiyel aracılık rolünü araştırmaktır. Araştırmanın katılımcıları, 22-67 yaşları arasında, en az bir yıldır evli olan 205 evli çiftten (N=410) oluşmaktadır. Veriler, İlişki Alanında Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği, Çift Motivasyon Ölçeği, Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeği'nin Türkçe formları ile demografik bilgi formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Önerilen modeli değerlendirmek için Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) kullanılmıştır. Dolaylı aktör etkileri için Yol Analizi sonuçları, özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide sadece erkekler için ilişki motivasyonunun tam olarak aracılık ettiğini, yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide ise sadece kadınlar için ilişki motivasyonunun kısmen aracılık ettiğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide her iki cinsiyet için de ilişki motivasyonu aracılık etmektedir. Dolaylı partner etkileri açısından ilişki motivasyonu, özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun kadınların evlilik uyumu üzerindeki partner etkisine ve

yeterlik ihtiyaı doyumunun erkeklerin evlilik uyumu zerindeki partner etkisine tam olarak aracılık etmiřtir. Ayrıca, iliřki motivasyonunun hem kadınlar hem de erkekler iin partnerin iliřkili olma ihtiyaı doyumunu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki iliřkiye katkıda bulunduėu grlmřtr. Bulgular mevcut literatr ıřıėında tartiřılmıř olup, psikolojik danıřma uygulamaları ve gelecek arařtırmalar iin neriler sunulmuřtur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: temel psikolojik ihtiya doyumunu, iliřki motivasyonu, evlilik uyumu, aktr-partner karřılıklı baėımlılık modeli



to my loving husband

&

to our loving marriage

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Several significant milestones mark the human life cycle, each representing a critical transition in an individual's personal and social development. These milestones include starting school, entering adolescence, graduating from educational institutions, securing one's first job, getting married, and becoming a parent. Among these, marriage and establishing a family stand out as particularly transformative events, often regarded as key indicators of the transition to adulthood. Marriage, in particular, represents a profound shift in an individual's life, as it not only signifies a personal commitment but also reflects broader social and cultural expectations.

Through marriage, people become part of a long-term relationship with a strong commitment to a mutually rewarding exchange (Wilson & Oswald, 2005). Marriage provides individuals with love and passion, support and loyalty, stability and security, recognition, togetherness, friendship, sexual satisfaction, and physical well-being (Knoester & Booth, 2000; Previti & Amato, 2003; Lawrence et al., 2019). There are many studies to demonstrate the benefits of marriage on mental health (Carr et al., 2014; Kamp Dush et al., 2008; Stutzer & Frey, 2006; Wadsworth, 2016; Waite et al., 2009) and physical health (Bookwala, 2005; Miller et al., 2013; Umberson et al., 2006). Moreover, further studies asserted that married individuals are more satisfied with life than never married, separated, divorced, or widowed individuals (Dupre et al., 2009). A recent study conducted with over 100,000 participants from diverse cultures and countries revealed that unmarried individuals consistently exhibited a higher risk of experiencing depressive symptoms compared to those who are married across all

countries (Zhai et al., 2024). Given the critical role of marital relationships in personal well-being, researchers have extensively studied the determinants of marital quality, seeking to understand the underlying psychological mechanisms that contribute to a fulfilling and stable relationship.

Marital adjustment, encompassing satisfaction, cohesion, and consensus, is one of the most measurable indicators of marital quality. It is broadly defined as a multidimensional concept that reflects spouses' ability to harmonize their interactions, establish agreement on shared values and goals, maintain emotional bonding, and achieve mutual satisfaction within their relationship (Spainer, 1976; Spainer & Cole, 1976). Researchers have examined the factors contributing to marital adjustment, emphasizing individual and relational variables such as personality traits, attachment styles, communication patterns, and emotional regulation (Chen et al., 2007; Kelly et al., 2003; Özmen & Atik, 2010; Rusu et al., 2019). More recently, self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2000) has been applied to understanding the dynamics of marital relationships, suggesting that the fulfillment of basic psychological needs plays a crucial role in relational well-being (Patrick et al., 2007).

SDT posits that human well-being and optimal functioning largely rely on the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The fulfillment of these needs has been associated with a range of positive outcomes for individual and relational well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2014; Knee et al., 2013; La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). When individuals feel that their psychological needs are fulfilled in their relationship, they tend to exhibit adaptive relational behaviors, including lower conflict, more effective conflict resolution, higher relationship satisfaction, stronger commitment, a more secure attachment to their partner, and greater emotional dependence on the partner (La Guardia et al., 2000; Ryan et al., 2005; Uysal et al., 2012). Conversely, frustration with these needs has been linked to relationship distress, anger, anxiety, and maladaptive conflict patterns (Chen et al., 2015; Hanne, 2024; Pirrone et al., 2023; Vansteenkiste et al., 2020; Warburton et al., 2020). Patrick et al. (2007) conducted a series of studies

examining how the fulfillment of basic psychological needs function within close relationships and revealed that satisfaction of each need (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) significantly predicted personal well-being, relationship quality, and effective conflict management, with relatedness being the strongest unique predictor of relationship outcomes. Notably, one of their studies further demonstrated that when a partner experienced higher satisfaction of these psychological needs, it independently predicted the individual's perception of enhanced relationship quality, even beyond their own need fulfillment.

Although certain relationships might prioritize specific psychological needs (for instance, coworkers may foster competence, while a romantic partner enhances relatedness), each relationship requires a balance of support for all three needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). If any of these needs is persistently unmet in a particular context, both individual well-being and functioning within that social environment are likely to be undermined. Therefore, the degree to which a relationship supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness determines not only personal well-being but also the couple's long-term relational functioning. Considering the three fundamental psychological needs as essential for optimal growth and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000), understanding how each partner's support for these needs influences relationship dynamics is expected to provide deeper insights into marital adjustment.

Beyond its direct effects, basic psychological needs satisfaction may shape marital adjustment via a mediating mechanism. Relationship motivation could serve as a mediator, explaining how the need for satisfaction within the relationship translates into marital adjustment. Relationship motivation, grounded in SDT, refers to the reasons for individuals' engagement in their romantic relationships, which can range from an autonomous motivation, originating within the self, to one that is controlled and stems from outside pressure (Deci & Ryan, 2000; 2008; Knee et al., 2013). The motivational styles of each partner in establishing or maintaining a relationship with their partner is an individual difference variable that is crucial to understanding the

quality of the couple's relationship. Autonomous relationship motivation is characterized by engaging in the relationship out of genuine love, appreciation, and personal values, whereas controlled motivation stems from external pressures, social expectations, or avoidance of guilt (Deci & Ryan, 2014). This motivational perspective asserts that people differ in the extent to which they regulate their behavior based on autonomy and choice or on pressures to perform (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). In the relationship context, the internal form of motivation is commonly referred to as relationship autonomy, which is having more autonomous reasons for being in the relationship (Blais et al., 1990). Relationship autonomy states an authentic involvement in one's relationship, and that one's motivations to be involved in the relationship stem from a genuine interest in the relationship, rather than an interest that arises from some separable outcome (Hadden, 2016). Hodgins and Knee (2002) assert that people with high relationship autonomy (i.e., autonomous motivation) desire to be in a certain relationship emerging from their true selves and more fully approve of being in their relationship. Conversely, people with low relationship autonomy (i.e., with controlled motivation) have not integrated their relationships within their *self* and are more likely to be with their partners due to some external pressure, such as fear of being alone or a need to prove their value. Blais et al. (1990) investigated the role of self-determined motivation in relationships and concluded that being motivated to maintain one's relationship for intrinsic or more self-determined reasons was related to reporting more adaptive couple behaviors, which was in turn related to higher couple happiness.

Research suggested that one of the potential mechanisms between self-determined motivation and optimal relationship development is the role of relationship-specific autonomy in fostering flexible, non-defensive approaches to navigating interpersonal dynamics (Ryan, 2023). Specifically, autonomy-oriented individuals exhibit greater openness to their partner's distinct perceptions and expectations, reframing conflicts as opportunities for mutual growth rather than personal threats (Koestner & Levine, 2023). Such individuals employ constructive coping mechanisms, such as maintaining positive behaviors and minimizing negative emotions, whereas controlled orientations

correlate with avoidance and denial (Knee et al., 2002). Autonomous people show less self-serving attribution, self-handicapping, and desire to escape (Hodgins et al., 2006), and they use less defensive emotion regulation strategy (Weinstein & Hodgins, 2009). Furthermore, self-determined motivation mediates how basic psychological needs fulfillment shapes responses to daily disagreements. Patrick et al. (2007) demonstrated that individuals with higher basic psychological need satisfaction reported stronger self-determined motivation to sustain their relationships, leading to increased post-conflict satisfaction and commitment. Relationship-specific autonomy also mitigates defensiveness during conflicts. Knee et al. (2005) found that both partners' autonomous motivations predicted constructive conflict resolution and satisfaction, emphasizing that mutual autonomy amplifies relational well-being. Another potential mechanism between self-determined motivation and optimal relationship development involves pro-partner orientations, wherein self-determined motivation fosters empathy and active support for a partner's needs (Ryan, 2023). Rooted in Relationship Motivation Theory (RMT; Deci & Ryan, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2017), this process encourages individuals to enhance their interest in their partner's perspectives, promoting willingness to empathize with close others. For instance, Weinstein et al. (2010) observed that dyads primed with autonomy displayed greater empathy and collaboration, reflecting care for their partner's perspectives and needs. Similarly, Hadden et al. (2015) linked relationship autonomy to supportive actions—such as encouraging a partner's independence and responding to their emotional needs—without intrusive behavior.

Taken together, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and its mini-theory, Relationship Motivation Theory (RMT), suggest that motivation is a multidimensional construct comprising autonomous and controlled types. The quality of motivation depends on the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) within a given context, with autonomous motivation linked to adaptive cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 1991). Extending this framework, Vallerand and Losier (1999) proposed a motivational sequence wherein social-contextual factors influence needs satisfaction, which in turn shapes motivation

and subsequent outcomes. In relational contexts, this implies that partners' fulfillment of each other's needs fosters autonomous relationship motivation, which then enhances marital adjustment. To integrate these perspectives, the current study aims to examine whether relationship motivation mediates the link between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationship between basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) satisfaction and marital adjustment in Turkish married couples, through the potential mediating role of relationship motivation. Consistent with the aforementioned purpose of the study, Figure 1.1 depicts the conceptual structure of the proposed model.

1.3. Research Questions

According to the proposed models, the study addresses the following research question:

RQ. To what extent does relationship motivation mediate the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment of married couples?

Based on the purpose and research question, the following specific hypotheses are to be tested in the current study.

Actor Effects:

Hypothesis 1

H1a: There will be a significant positive actor effect of autonomy need satisfaction on their own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

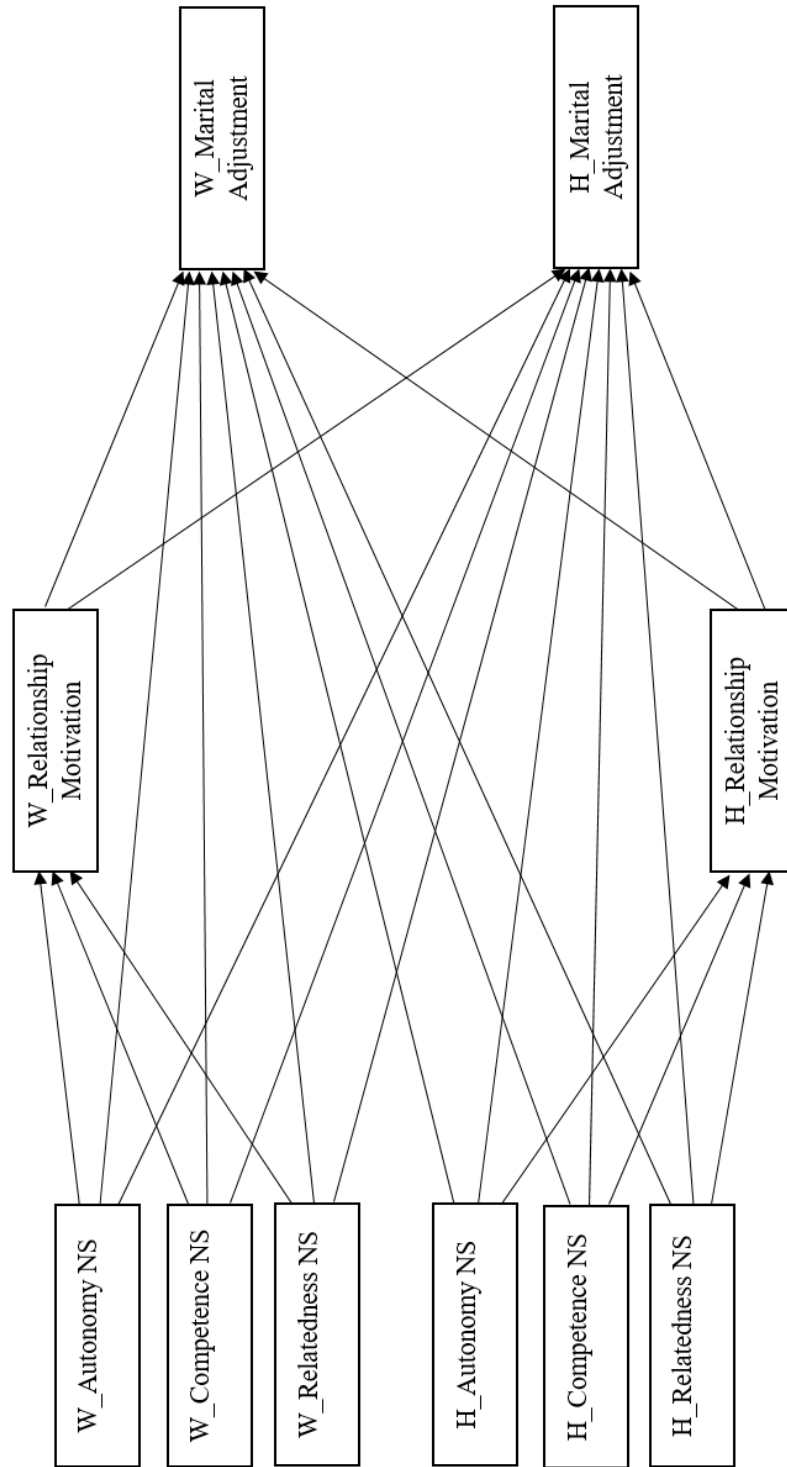


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Diagram of the Hypothesized Model

H1b: There will be a significant positive actor effect of competence need satisfaction on their own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

H1c: There will be a significant positive actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on their own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

Hypothesis 2

H2a: There will be a significant positive actor effect of autonomy need satisfaction on their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H2b: There will be a significant positive actor effect of competence need satisfaction on their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H2c: There will be a significant positive actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

Hypothesis 3

H3a: The actor effect of autonomy need satisfaction on marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H3b: The actor effect of competence need satisfaction on marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H3c: The actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

Partner Effects:

Hypothesis 4

H4a: The relationship between individuals' partners' autonomy need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H4b: The relationship between individuals' partners' competence need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

H4c: The relationship between individuals' partners' relatedness need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.

Hypothesis 5

H5a: There will be a significant positive partner effect of autonomy need satisfaction on individuals' own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

H5b: There will be a significant positive partner effect of competence need satisfaction on individuals' own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

H5c: There will be a significant positive partner effect of relatedness need satisfaction on individuals' own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Although most individuals commit to marriage with the aspiration of lifelong harmony, marital discord and divorce rates have risen globally, reflecting profound shifts in societal structures. Extended life expectancies, evolving gender roles, and legal reforms—such as simplified divorce procedures—have redefined marriage from a lifelong commitment to a union contingent on mutual fulfillment (Brown & Lin, 2022; Pedulla & Thébaud, 2015; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2006). Historically, marriages ended primarily due to spousal death; however, divorce has become the leading cause of marital dissolution (Pinsof, 2002). As emphasized by Skerrett (2015), the simple fact of ‘being married’ is no longer considered a sufficient reason to sustain a marital relationship. In Türkiye, this trend is clearly evident; official statistics reveal that divorce rates have doubled over the past two decades (TÜİK, 2024), mirroring global patterns and demonstrating urgent societal and psychological challenges. These developments necessitate a deeper understanding of the factors that sustain marital relationships beyond mere legal or social obligation.

The impact of marital dissolution extends beyond the couple, affecting family members and broader society (Lansford, 2009). A strong and stable marriage is essential not only for the well-being of the partners involved but also for raising healthy children and preserving social stability (Amato, 2000). Consequently, understanding the characteristics of an optimal marriage and examining the relationship between marital adjustment and related factors has become increasingly important.

In this study, the first concept to be investigated about marital adjustment is basic psychological needs satisfaction. One of the main factors affecting marital adjustment can be considered as the needs of married individuals to make choices in line with their values, to feel free to express their feelings and thoughts, to feel competent in navigating marital responsibilities, to establish warm and close relationships with their partners, and to receive the support of their spouse while fulfilling these basic needs

(Ryan & Deci, 2017). Considering meeting these needs may vary from culture to culture, the approaches of married individuals in this issue in Turkish society, where familial interdependence and social approval are emphasized, may be important for the happiness of married individuals. Existing research in this context is limited, though preliminary findings suggest that meeting the autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs of married individuals are positively related to marital adjustment and that subjective well-being increases when the needs are met and the desired goals in marriage are achieved (Kulaber Demirci & Odacı, 2020). Revealing the impact of basic psychological needs on Turkish couples' marital adjustment can lead to foundation for new research. By exploring how the fulfillment of these needs affects marital adjustment, this study makes a significant contribution to the cross-cultural validity of Self-Determination Theory. Specifically, identifying which needs hold greater importance in Turkish marital relationships and how they influence relational dynamics provides valuable insights for the continuing research.

Studies in the literature showing that self-determined motivation is positively associated with favorable outcomes seem to focus more on different life domains. For example, self-determined motivation promotes persistence in goal attainment and better learning gains in education (Evans & Bonneville-Roussy, 2015; Vansteenkiste et al., 2018), associated with healthier lifestyles and eating behavior (Pelletier et al., 2004), influences on more positive performance work outcomes (Güntert, 2015; Howard et al., 2016; Trépanier et al., 2013), has more positive psychotherapy outcomes (Zuroff et al., 2007), and links to the high level of satisfaction and competence in parenting (Jungert et al., 2015). Some researchers have begun to test the mediating effect of motivation in specific areas. For example, in the domain of sport and physical activity, motivation has been shown to mediate (at least partially) the link between psychological need satisfaction and a variety of outcomes, including affect, effort, intentions for greater participation, and drop-out (Ntoumanis, 2005; Sarrazin, et al., 2002). Additionally, Milyavskaya and Koestner (2011) demonstrate that motivation acts as a partial mediator between need satisfaction and well-being in a variety of life domains including family, friends, relationship, school, work, and

activities. Although the mediator role of motivation between psychological needs satisfaction and different outcomes have received considerable attention in a variety of domains, its relevance to romantic relationships, marital relationships in particular, has barely been explored.

Moreover, the methodology utilized in this study can contribute to the Turkish literature. The Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was used while conducting the main analyses of the study. Thus far, marital adjustment and its correlates have largely been tested with correlational and regression analysis (Bolluk Uğur & Çakmak Tolan, 2024; Chamorro et al., 2022; Rodoplu, 2019). Recent studies, however, contend that in intimate relationships, while the individual influences relationship dynamics, there is also the role of interaction between the couples, influencing each other's outcome variables, too (Kenny, 1996; Kenny & Cook, 1999). As a result, rather than reporting individual effects, the current study intends to consider both the actor and partner effects that married couples have on each other.

Even though it was not stated as one of the aims of the study, current research represents the attempt to adapt the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale – Relationship Domain (La Guardia et al., 2000) and Couples Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ) (Blais et al., 1990) into the Turkish language and examine the psychometric properties. Although the general version of the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale (Deci & Ryan, 2000) was adapted into Turkish earlier by Bacanlı and Cihangir-Çankaya (2003), the adaptation study was carried out with university students and addresses need satisfaction in general in one's life. Therefore, the Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Scale – Relationship Domain, which addresses need satisfaction in one's particular relationships, was adapted into Turkish in the present study. Moreover, it is seen that the motivation scales available in Turkish are intended to measure motivation toward a particular domain including lessons, job, sports, and physical activity, and no measurement tool measures motivation for a given relationship. Consequently, it is expected that this study would take the first step in stimulating scholars who would like to investigate these constructs with married

couples from Türkiye in the future by using the psychometrically tested measures in the current study.

By exploring the connections between relationship motivation, basic psychological needs satisfaction, and marital adjustment, this study aims to guide evidence-based practices in marital counseling and intervention. The findings are expected to improve strategies for preventing and resolving marital issues, offering useful insights for family therapists and counselors working with Turkish couples. Specifically, the results can provide empirically grounded guidance on enhancing marital adjustment by identifying key psychological needs that contribute to relationship quality. Tailored to Türkiye's unique social and cultural context—where family traditions and community values often shape relationship dynamics—these findings may inform culturally relevant interventions. Additionally, this research may contribute new perspectives to the literature on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by examining how the fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs influences marital adjustment in a collectivist cultural setting. Testing SDT's cross-cultural applicability in Türkiye may provide valuable insights into whether universal psychological needs function similarly across diverse relationship contexts or if cultural norms and expectations alter their impact on marital well-being. These findings can inform future studies on healthy marriages by emphasizing the role of motivation and need satisfaction in fostering long-term relationship quality. Marital relationships deserve detailed examination as they involve complex interactions between partners, bidirectional interpersonal influences, and profound societal implications. Overall, this study seeks to connect theory and practice, fostering culturally sensitive frameworks that empower couples to achieve sustainable marital relationships.

1.4. Definitions of Terms

This section defines the key terms used throughout the study.

Marital Adjustment: The term marital adjustment used in this study corresponds to Spanier's (1976) definition of dyadic adjustment. Accordingly, it is a process, the

outcome of which is determined by the degree of troublesome dyadic differences, interpersonal tensions, personal anxiety, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and consensus on matters of importance to dyadic functioning.

Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction: Self-determination theory posits three universal psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT suggests that these must be ongoingly satisfied for people to maintain optimal performance and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Autonomy refers to people's intrinsic desire to govern their own thoughts, actions, and behaviors. It involves experiencing a sense of willingness, volition, and self-endorsement in one's decisions and behaviors (de Charms, 1968; Deci & Ryan, 1985b; Ryan & Connell, 1989). The need for autonomy is fulfilled when individuals feel that they are the true origin of their actions, exercising self-regulation and ownership over their choices.

Competence refers to the tendency to feel effective and confident in one's interactions with the environment. It involves experiencing opportunities to exercise, expand, and express one's abilities and talents (Deci & Ryan, 1980; Deci & Moller, 2005; Ryan & Moller, 2016; White, 1959). The need for competence is satisfied when individuals feel capable of achieving their goals and successfully managing tasks within their social and personal contexts.

Relatedness refers to the fundamental human need to experience meaningful social connections, both in feeling accepted and valued by others and in reciprocating care and concern (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 2000). It involves experiencing others as responsive and sensitive, as well as having opportunities to express care and support toward them. This bidirectional experience of connectedness enhances one's sense of belonging and social integration (Deci et al., 2006; Deci & Ryan, 2014).

Relationship Motivation: It refers to the underlying reasons individuals have for being in a relationship, ranging from externally controlled behaviors driven by outside pressures to autonomous behaviors that originate from within the self (Blais et al., 1990). A self-determined form of relationship motivation, known as *relationship autonomy*, involves fully embracing one's commitment to the relationship and experiencing a genuine desire to be with one's partner (Blais et al., 1990). Relationship autonomy allows individuals to integrate their relationship into their authentic selves, contributing to healthier and more adaptive partnerships (Blais et al., 1990). On the other hand, individuals with low relationship autonomy may not fully endorse their reasons for being in the relationship and may feel pressured to stay due to factors such as fear of loneliness, guilt about ending a commitment, or a strong need to meet others' expectations, which can have negative consequences for both partners' well-being and relationship satisfaction (Blais et al., 1990).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of key concepts related to marriage and marital adjustment, including theoretical perspectives and empirical findings on the subject. The chapter begins with an overview of marriage and marital adjustment, highlighting the essential components that define a well-adjusted marriage. This is followed by an examination of empirical studies that have investigated marital adjustment. Next, the focus shifts to the conceptualization of needs, exploring their theoretical foundations and psychological significance in interpersonal relationships. The theoretical background of needs is discussed in detail, followed by a review of empirical studies on basic psychological need satisfaction, which provide evidence of how fulfilling these needs impacts relationship well-being and functioning. Subsequently, relationship motivation is examined, addressing the role of motivation in shaping relationship dynamics. This section also includes a review of empirical studies on relationship motivation, which shed light on the various motivational factors that influence marital adjustment. Finally, the section concludes with a summary of the literature review, synthesizing key findings and highlighting their relevance to the present study.

2.1. Marriage and Marital Adjustment

Marriage, as a social institution, has undergone significant transformations throughout history, shaped by cultural, economic, and sociological shifts (Gottman, 1990). Traditionally, marriage was often viewed as a pragmatic union, serving purposes such as economic stability, social alliances, and ensuring family continuity

(Coontz, 2005). In many cultures, marriages are arranged by families, with little emphasis on individual choice or romantic love. However, the transition to modern marriage has been marked by a shift toward affectionate marriage, where emotional intimacy, personal fulfillment, and mutual affection have become central to the marital relationship (Cherlin, 2004; Perelli-Harris & Styrac, 2018). Increased economic independence, gender equality, and shifting cultural expectations have further redefined marriage, leading to an emphasis on relational quality and individual well-being (Jayakody et al., 2007; Thornton et al., 2008).

In contemporary societies, marriage is often characterized by the freedom to choose one's partner, egalitarian dynamics, and the expectation of emotional and sexual fulfillment (Perelli-Harris & Styrac, 2018). These changes have redefined the roles and expectations within marriage, placing greater emphasis on the quality of the relationship and the psychological well-being of the spouses. Despite these shifts, marriage continues to serve as a fundamental social institution, providing emotional support, companionship, and a framework for raising children (Waite, 2000). The dual role of marriage, as both a private relationship and a public institution, emphasizes its complexity and its enduring significance in human life.

As the definition and expectations of marriage have changed over time, academic interest in marital adjustment has also grown, making it a widely explored topic in the study of marriage and family functioning. The marital adjustment refers to the dynamic process through which spouses adapt to each other and maintain harmony within their relationship over time (Fitzpatrick & Best, 1979; Lively, 1969; Spainer, 1976). It involves key components such as consensus, cohesion, affective expression, and satisfaction (Spainer, 1979; Spanier & Cole, 1976). While the specific subdimensions of marital adjustment are not explicitly defined in the literature, researchers often refer to the framework established by Spainer (1976) through the development of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). Dyadic consensus refers to the degree of agreement between partners on significant relational issues, such as making major decisions, religious beliefs, conventionality, and career decisions. Higher consensus indicates

stronger mutual understanding and shared values within the partnership. Dyadic cohesion evaluates the degree of closeness and shared activities between partners. It examines aspects such as engaging in joint activities, sharing ideas, and working together on projects. Higher cohesion reflects a greater sense of togetherness and collaborative interaction within the relationship. Affectional expression encompasses the extent to which partners express affection and love towards each other, including both verbal and physical demonstrations of love, care, and intimacy. Dyadic satisfaction reflects the evaluations of the perceived stability of the relationship, the frequency of considering separation or divorce, and overall happiness with the partnership. These elements contribute to the overall quality of marital life by shaping how partners communicate, resolve conflicts, and provide emotional support to one another (Lively, 1969; Spanier & Lewis, 1980).

Marital adjustment is often used interchangeably with terms such as marital satisfaction, marital happiness, and marital quality, though each term carries slightly different implications. For instance, marital satisfaction typically refers to the subjective evaluation of the marriage, while marital adjustment emphasizes the ongoing process of adaptation and cohesion between partners (Bradbury et al., 2000; Spanier, 1976; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Despite these nuances, these constructs are closely interrelated, as they all reflect the overall health and stability of the marital relationship (Heyman et al., 1994; Ward et al., 2009).

2.1.1. Empirical Studies of Marital Adjustment

There are many important studies conducted on marital adjustment, marital satisfaction, marital strength, marital quality, and marital relations (Haack & Falcke, 2014; Fincham, 1998; Gottmann & Krokoff, 1989). Existing studies have demonstrated that various sociodemographic factors can influence the degree of marital adjustment, either enhancing or diminishing it. For instance, gender differences play a role, with some studies suggesting that women report lower marital satisfaction due to unequal financial decision-making within the household, a higher

likelihood of experiencing interpersonal violence, and the existence of double standards concerning sexual behavior (Brezsnyak & Whisman, 2004; Finlay & Clarke, 2003; Jackson et al., 2014). The timing of marriage also matters, as individuals who marry at a later age tend to have higher marital satisfaction, possibly due to greater emotional maturity and life experience (Hymowitz et al., 2013; Glenn et al., 2010; Lehrer, 2008). Similarly, the age difference between spouses can impact marital dynamics, with larger age gaps sometimes associated with lower relationship satisfaction due to differences in life stages and expectations (Lee & McKinnish, 2018; Zhang et al., 2012). The duration of marriage influences marital adjustment, as relationship satisfaction often follows a U-shaped curve, declining in mid-years but improving later in life (Jose & Alfons, 2007). The number of children can either strengthen or strain a marriage, with research indicating that marital satisfaction often decreases after the birth of a child due to increased stress and shifting priorities (Twenge et al., 2003). Additionally, higher educational attainment and socioeconomic status are generally linked to greater marital satisfaction, as they contribute to better communication skills, financial stability, and shared decision-making (Akpınar & Kırılığlu, 2020; Conger et al., 2010; Şendil & Korkut, 2008). Moreover, individuals who choose their own partners for marriage tend to have a higher level of marital satisfaction compared to those in arranged marriages (Allendorf & Ghimire, 2013; Hortaçsu, 1999; Pimentel, 2000; Xiaohe & Whyte, 1990).

In addition to sociodemographic factors, studies increasingly focus on the dynamics of marital relationships, including individual aspects such as personality traits (Abbasi, 2017; Gattis et al., 2004; Knabb & Vogt, 2011; Lampis et al., 2018; Luo et al., 2008; Nemeček, & Olson, 1999), attachment styles (Davila et al., 1998; Haseley, 2006; Hollist & Miller, 2005; Scott & Cordova, 2002; Shaker et al., 2010), dysfunctional relationship beliefs (Addis & Bernard, 2002; Filipović et al., 2016; Möller & van der Merwe, 1997), as well as relational aspects such as romantic attachment (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Rholes et al., 2001), dyadic coping (Bodenmann et al., 2006; Wunderer & Schneewind, 2006), and social support (Graham et al., 2000; Sullivan et al., 2010). Plooy and Beer (2018) synthesized 15 studies on effective couple

interactions, finding that higher marital satisfaction is associated with engaging in meaningful communication, sharing positive and constructive interactions, managing conflicts effectively through specific techniques and language use, utilizing effective communication skills that emphasize personal expression and mutual understanding, and applying positive communication strategies to promote feelings of being understood. Moreover, Gottman and Krokoff (1989) examined the difference between a happy and an unhappy marriage from a longitudinal perspective and concluded that defensiveness (which includes whining), stubbornness, and withdrawal from interaction contribute to the longitudinal decline in marital quality, signifying a dysfunctional pattern in marital interactions.

Having a good marital relationship also plays a significant role in individual outcomes such as life satisfaction, well-being, physical and mental health (Gove et al., 1983). Existing literature indicates a reciprocal relationship between marital adjustment and life satisfaction over time. Headey et al., (1991) analyzed data across four waves and found evidence of bidirectional causation, showing that being in a happy marriage contributes significantly to one's overall life satisfaction, yet it is equally valid that inherently happy individuals are more inclined to maintain happy marriages. Furthermore, Stanley et al. (2012) investigated the dynamics between relationship adjustment and life satisfaction by assessing a sample of 126 couples both before marriage and again six years after they were married. Their findings revealed that both relationship adjustment and life satisfaction at baseline independently predicted marital adjustment at follow-up. Be et al. (2013) conducted a study with a population-based sample of middle-aged and older adults, including 1,385 couples, investigated the longitudinal associations between marital adjustment and life satisfaction for both actor and partner effects over two years. The findings showed several key implications: first, higher marital adjustment at the start of the study was associated with higher life satisfaction at the end of the study period. Second, higher initial life satisfaction predicted increased marital adjustment at follow-up. Third, the influence of marital adjustment on life satisfaction was found to be stronger than the reverse, for women. Last, one individual's level of marital adjustment at the beginning of the study

predicted their spouse's marital adjustment two years later. These studies collectively emphasize the reciprocal nature of marital adjustment and overall life satisfaction, suggesting that improvements in one area are likely to positively influence the other.

Whereas marital adjustment correlates with increased life satisfaction, deficiencies in marital adjustment serve as a chronic source of interpersonal stress, a condition that significantly contributes to the development of depression. In the study conducted by Whisman and Uebelacker (2009), data from a population-based sample of middle-aged and older adult couples were analyzed to examine the association between marital discord and depressive symptoms over two years. Results of the study suggested a reciprocal, longitudinal relationship between marital discord and depressive symptoms among middle-aged and older adults, indicating not only initial levels of marital discord were predictive of subsequent depressive symptoms in individuals but also initial depressive symptoms predicted future marital discord. Besides, survey-based studies have demonstrated that marital tension and hostile spousal behaviors are associated with an increased risk of mortality and heart disease (De Vogli et al., 2007; Bulanda et al., 2016), as well as poor self-rated physical health (Liu & Umberson, 2008; Robles & Kiecolt-Glaser, 2003). As a result, studies underscore the significant impact of marital quality on both mental and physical health outcomes.

2.2. Conceptualization of Needs

The concept of "need" often conveys the meaning of something important, necessary, or essential to have or accomplish, as frequently defined in dictionaries. Once the definition of need is adapted to the context of psychology, it can be expressed as the most essential things required for an individual's healthy functioning and well-being. There are several theories that explain the phenomenon of need and contribute to understanding marital adjustment. In the following section, Murray's Psychogenic Needs Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's ERG Theory, and Self-Determination Theory are discussed.

2.2.1. Theoretical Background of Needs

In this section, various theoretical perspectives on human needs are explored to provide a comprehensive understanding of their role in psychological and relational well-being. Specifically, Murray's Theory of Psychogenic Needs, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Alderfer's E.R.G. Theory, and Self-Determination Theory are examined. By reviewing these perspectives, this section aims to establish a theoretical foundation for understanding the significance of need satisfaction in relationships.

2.2.1.1. Murray's Theory of Psychogenic Needs

Murray (1938) conducted the first systematic attempt to identify the range of human needs through in-depth studies of 51 male undergraduate students at Harvard University, as detailed in "Explorations in Personality." According to Murray, a need is a conceptual construct representing a physicochemical force within the brain that shapes individuals' perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors (Allen, 1982). Murray (1938, p. 144-146, p. 743-750) listed 20 manifest psychogenic needs including "abasement, achievement, affiliation, aggression, autonomy, counteraction, defendance, deference, dominance, exhibition, harmavoidance, infavoidance, nurturance, order, play, rejection, sentience, sex, succorance, and understanding". In addition to manifest psychogenic needs, he described eight latent needs such as "repressed abasement, repressed aggression, repressed cognizance, repressed dominance, repressed exhibitionism, repressed sex, repressed succorance, and seven other needs such as acquisition, blamavoidance, cognizance, construction, exposition, recognition, and retention".

Murray also emphasizes the distinction of primary versus secondary needs, as well as reactive versus proactive needs (Schultz & Schultz, 2009). Primary needs, also known as viscerogenic needs, originate from internal bodily conditions and encompass needs vital for survival. Secondary needs, also known as psychogenic needs, stem indirectly from primary needs, and they lack a specific origin within the body. They are termed secondary not due to their reduced significance but because they emerge subsequent

to primary needs. Moreover, reactive needs are triggered by a specific stimulus in the environment and are only activated when that particular object is present. For instance, the need for infavoidance emerges only in situations of failure, shame, humiliation, and ridicule (Xu et al., 2014). In contrast, proactive needs are not reliant on the presence of a specific object. They are innate needs that prompt appropriate behavior whenever they are activated, not related to environmental conditions. For example, hungry individuals seek out food to fulfill their needs; they do not wait for external stimuli (Schultz & Schultz, 2009).

Needs can be prioritized depending on the situation, individual, or environment. Unfulfilled needs can gain priority and direct behavior. Therefore, environmental factors are as important as needs in the emergence of behaviors (Wiggins & Broughton, 1985). Murray acknowledged that childhood experiences could influence the formation of specific needs and could trigger the activation of these needs later in life. He termed this influence "press" because an object or event in the environment exerts pressure to behave in a particular manner (Schultz & Schultz, 2009).

In summary, Murray proposed a model emphasizing the needs to understand human motivation. All needs are interconnected and interact with the environment to direct behavior. Murray maintained an optimistic perspective on human nature, emphasizing its forward orientation towards the future and the inherent capacity for growth and development.

2.2.1.2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

One of the most well-known theories that explain the needs underlying human behavior is *Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory*. Maslow (1954) perceives human nature as a harmonious integration of physiological and psychological needs, exerting continual pressure on the organism for release and gratification. Maslow (1943) introduced a hierarchical framework of five innate needs that activate and guide human

behaviors, encompassing physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization needs.

The first level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory consists of physiological needs such as nutrition, water, breathing, and sleep, which are vital for sustaining life and ensuring its perpetuation (Olson & Hergenhahn, 2010). In situations where all needs remain unfulfilled, the organism is primarily driven by physiological needs, and other needs may either become nonexistent or relegated to the background in the individual's hierarchy of priorities (Maslow, 1943). Once basic physiological needs are fulfilled, people become motivated by safety needs including physical security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from threatening circumstances such as fear, anxiety, and chaos, need for structure, order, law, and limits (Maslow, 1954). The needs for belongingness and love typically arises once physiological and safety needs are reasonably fulfilled. Such needs can manifest in various ways, including close relationships with friends, romantic partners, or spouses, as well as through social connections established within a community or group setting (Schultz & Schultz, 2009). Following the attainment of love and a sense of belonging, individuals may find themselves motivated by two aspects of the need for esteem. Specifically, they seek respect and esteem from themselves, in terms of feelings of self-worth; as well as from others, in terms of desire for recognition, status, importance, or appreciation (Maslow, 1943). Meeting the need for self-esteem enables individuals to feel confident in their abilities, worth, and competence, thus enhancing their effectiveness and productivity in various areas of life. Conversely, a lack of self-esteem leads to feelings of inferiority, helplessness, and discouragement, with little confidence in one's ability to cope (Schultz & Schultz, 2009). At the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization involving achieving self-fulfillment, realizing one's full potential, and aspiring towards creativity in its broadest sense (Maslow, 1954). Individuals who attain the level of self-actualization reach the pinnacle of humanity, fulfilling needs that others may only glimpse or never perceive (Feist & Feist, 2006).

Maslow's theory (1968) proposed a natural order and hierarchy of need fulfillment, starting from physiological needs, progressing through deficit needs (such as safety, esteem, love, and belonging), and ultimately reaching the growth or self-actualization needs (including creativity, autonomy, spontaneity, ego-transcendence, and peak experiences). Needs are fulfilled sequentially, and the satisfaction of lower-level needs is not only sufficient but also necessary for the progression to the next higher level of needs.

Maslow (1954) pointed out the distinction between lower-order deficit needs and higher-order growth needs. Deficit needs are typically perceived negatively as sources of annoyance, as they urge for the loss of tension. Their gratification results in relaxation and the reduction of tension, thereby preventing illness but not necessarily producing positive health. In contrast, growth needs are perceived positively as enjoyable and stimulating. Their gratification generates increased excitement rather than merely reducing tension, ultimately fostering a state of positive well-being rather than merely avoiding illness (Geller, 1982).

In summary, Maslow proposed that humans have an inherent tendency for growth. However, for their development to be healthy, needs — physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization — must be fulfilled. These needs are innate, meaning that characteristics such as uniqueness, creativity, empathy, and respect are inherent to the human species. The social environment and culture play a crucial role in fostering and nurturing these potentials within individuals. Consequently, both the behavior of the individual and the attitudes of others towards them play substantial roles in fulfilling their needs. Through this process, individuals whose needs are satisfied experience growth, well-being, vitality, and fulfillment.

2.2.1.3. Alderfer's E.R.G. Theory

Alderfer's E.R.G. Theory (1969, 1989), criticizing Maslow's theory in terms of the overlap between need categories and how need satisfaction is associated with desires,

proposed that human beings have three core needs, namely Existence, Relatedness, and Growth (i.e., E.R.G.). Existence needs include all the various forms of material and physiological desires such as salary, fringe benefits, and working conditions, as well as basic necessities like food and water (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002). Relatedness needs involve individuals' aspirations for connections with significant others such as family members, friends, coworkers, and even enemies, marked by a reciprocal exchange of thoughts and emotions. The fundamental essence of relatedness needs diverges from existence needs due to their dependence on mutual engagement; relatedness needs cannot be fulfilled without reciprocity (Schneider & Alderfer, 1973). Moreover, the fulfillment of relatedness needs does not necessarily lead to positive emotional states for those involved. The expression of negative emotions, such as anger and hostility, plays a crucial role in the dynamics of meaningful interpersonal relationships, just as the expression of warmth and intimacy does (Alderfer, 1969). Growth needs involve all needs that rely on the individual to have creative or productive effects on themselves and their environment. The fulfillment of these needs is derived from the individual's dealing with challenges that demand the full utilization of their existing capabilities or may require developing new skills. By meeting these growth needs, the individual achieves a high sense of wholeness and fulfillment as a human being (Schneider & Alderfer, 1973).

Although ERG theory is considered a variation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, evident differences are observed. The most notable difference stems from the way in which the two theories categorize needs. In comparison to Maslow's five-tier hierarchy of needs, the ERG theory, proposed by Alderfer, restructures these needs into three categories: existence, relatedness, and growth. Maslow's safety needs can be divided between Alderfer's existence and relatedness categories (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002). While the material aspects of safety (such as personal security, health, and property) correspond to existence needs, the psychological aspects of safety (like the security derived from trust and stable relationships) correspond to relatedness needs (Alderfer, 1989). Similarly, Maslow's esteem needs can also be divided between relatedness and growth in the ERG framework (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002). The component of esteem

that stems from the recognition and appraisal by others corresponds to the relatedness category, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal connections and external approval. On the other hand, the aspect of esteem that stems from one's self-assessment, regardless of external judgment, corresponds to growth needs, emphasizing personal development (Alderfer, 1989). Moreover, Maslow's framework assumes that love and belonging needs involve receiving positive emotions from others, whereas ERG theory expands this perspective by highlighting the importance of forming relationships that allow for the exchange of a comprehensive range of human emotions, including positive, mixed, and negative feelings (Alderfer, 1989).

In summary, the ERG theory represents a theoretical and empirical framework designed for examining the satisfaction and motivational aspects of human needs (Alderfer, 1972). The ERG theory considers diversity and complexity inherent in addressing human needs, recognizing that individuals may experience and seek to satisfy different types of needs simultaneously. This approach recognizes that the satisfaction of these needs can take place at different times, depending on individual circumstances and environment. Unlike more linear or hierarchical models of human needs, ERG theory accepts the idea that human motivation is dynamic and multifaceted, allowing for a flexible understanding of how needs guide behavior across various individuals and situations.

2.2.1.4. Self-Determination Theory

The approach foundational to this study for explaining needs, to be discussed further, is *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT). Self-determination is defined as the determination of behaviors by the individual's personal beliefs and value judgments rather than external factors (societal norms, group pressure, etc.), and making decisions on their own (Budak, 2000). In other words, individuals experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating their behavior (Deci et al., 1989). The choices made by the individual are determined by the behavior of the individual, not by external forces, pressures, and rewards.

Edward Deci initiated the first studies on self-determination theory, which deals with the concept of self-determination in detail, in the 1970s. Another prominent representative of the theory is Richard Ryan. The purpose of self-determination theory is to determine the conditions that ensure the healthy development of individuals, groups, and societies and to clearly define the factors that are effective in the process of growth, integration, and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the theory, it is emphasized that people are active organisms that have consistent self, have psychological development tendencies, and strive to integrate their lives and overcome existing obstacles (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 2002). In addition to these innate tendencies in shaping the behaviors of individuals, the characteristics of the environment they live in are also important. In the theory, the relationship between people's needs and their social environment and the consequences of this relationship are investigated (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The fact that the environment they live in is supportive of autonomy enables them to experience a sense of choice and to satisfy their basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985b; Williams et al., 2000; Deci et al., 2001). When psychological needs are not satisfied, the development of individuals is negatively affected. At the same time, a social environment that does not contribute to the satisfaction of needs leads to a decrease in the level of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Basic psychological needs are a natural aspect of being human. It concerns all people, regardless of their gender, group, ethnicity, or culture. If individuals satisfy these needs, they can fully function and develop. Therefore, basic psychological needs for well-being and vitality should be met throughout life (Sheldon et al., 1996).

The SDT specifies that there are three main psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness and that having those needs met by a romantic partner is related to more individual and relational well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2014; La Guardia et al., 2000; Patrick et al., 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2017). It is critical to understand these basic needs and their relevance to promote couples to support them (Cournoyer, et al., 2021).

Autonomy is considered as the individual's making their own choice and initiating their actions and experiences (Andersen, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). In other words, autonomy clarifies the degree to which people experience their behavior as volitional or as totally self-endorsed, rather than being urged, compelled, or seduced by forces external to the self (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). Autonomy includes the individual's complete acceptance, approval, and fully "standing behind" his/her behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p.97). When satisfied, individuals experience a sense of wholeness as their actions, thoughts, and feelings are self-endorsed and authentic. When frustrated, individuals experience a sense of pressure and conflict like feeling pushed in an unwanted direction (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020).

Autonomy is distinguished from concepts such as independence, separateness, and self-sufficiency in self-determination theory. Autonomous individuals would be, to some extent, dependent on important relationships and interdependent with related groups (Ryan et al., 2005). Independence does not indicate autonomy but, rather, indicates being separate and/or not relying on others (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001; Ryan & Lynch, 1989; Soenens et al., 2007). People can be either autonomously or heteronomously dependent, independent, or interdependent depending on the context and behaviors entailed (Ryan & Lynch, 1989). Indeed, the essence of autonomy is that one's actions are self-endorsed or aligned with one's interests and values (Reis et al., 2000). When acting autonomously, the behaviors are activated voluntarily, whereas a person experiences inconsistency and conflict while doing what is against his/her volition.

The second psychological need to be mentioned is competence, which refers to feeling efficient and confident in some behavior or goal (White, 1959). The competence includes perceptions that actions will bring desired results, the expectation that the person will be able to overcome significant challenges, and the belief that the person has necessary or sufficient abilities (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 2014). The competence of individuals is supported by the social environment, which provides positive and constructive feedback as well as optimally challenging tasks that are

difficult but not excessive. Competence needs satisfaction within relationships contributes to the quality of the relationships (Deci & Ryan, 2014, p. 69). The more competence needs fulfillment individuals experience in a relationship, the more satisfied they will be with the relationship and the better they will be in dealing with the unavoidable conflicts that will arise in the relationship.

Partners in reciprocal relationships are expected to mutually support one other's competence. La Guardia and Patrick (2008) suggest that competence support can be considered as helping each other to achieve goals or develop interests in areas that are personally important to partners, such as work or leisure activities, as well as performing instrumental tasks that have more direct relevance to daily functioning, such as household care. The definitions of what makes important relational processes healthy implicitly define competence support. La Guardia (2007) provides evidence of how emotion regulation is supported within couples to display how healthy relationship functioning is related to competence support. According to the aforementioned example in a relationship, a husband needs his wife to listen unconditionally, help him understand what he is feeling and why, and assist him in figuring out what to do with his feelings for him to effectively regulate his emotions (e.g., be aware, open, and disclose). If his wife was unavailable or unwilling to fully listen and respond to him, or if she took over and hijacked his attempts to fully engage his emotions (e.g., disallowing his self-expressions, and problem-solving for him), his competency would be threatened.

The third and last psychological need, relatedness, reflects the need to establish close and fulfilling relationships with other people. The need for relatedness is attributed to the experience of intimate, caring, and mutually supportive connections with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryan, 1995). People most typically feel relatedness when they feel cared for by others. Nevertheless, it is also about belonging and feeling important among others. Therefore, experiencing oneself as contributing to others in terms of relatedness is just as crucial as receiving from others (Deci & Ryan, 2014). In other words, the need for relatedness in the context of close relationships is

portrayed as one's perception of care and recognition by the partner, and perception of closeness and intimacy in the relationship (Schmahl & Walper, 2012).

Social environments provide relatedness need support when one interacts with others openly and authentically (Weinstein & DeHaan, 2014). Support for relatedness involves a genuine communication of care, respect, concern, focus, and unconditional support toward another person (La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). Research indicates that greater relatedness to others has been directly associated with higher levels of positive affect and intrinsic motivation (Ryan et al., 1994; Sheldon & Filak, 2008), engagement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Slater & Tiggemann, 2010; Williams et al., 2013), and perceived competence and well-being (Wilson & Bengoechea, 2010). Little (1998) asserted that intimacy and relatedness are central to having meaning in life.

To sum up, self-determination has been operationalized as the degree of satisfaction of basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness within one's relationship (La Guardia et al., 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000; 2001) explained that optimal functioning is promoted when partners need support in understanding their partner's interests, values, and perspectives (autonomy), considering their partner's capacities and limitations (competence), getting involved with, showing interest in, and conveying that their partner is significant and cared for unconditionally (relatedness). In contrast, optimal functioning is suffered when partners are excessively controlling, have unreasonable expectations, and are over-challenging.

Together, these four theories offer a comprehensive perspective on the multifaceted nature of human needs and how they drive behavior. Murray's Psychogenic Needs Theory highlights the role of specific psychological needs, such as achievement, affiliation, and power, in shaping individual actions. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs presents a sequential structure, where individuals aim to satisfy needs from basic physiological requirements up to self-actualization. Alderfer's ERG Theory refines this hierarchy into three core needs—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—allowing for greater flexibility in meeting multiple needs concurrently. Self-Determination

Theory emphasizes the fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, positing that fulfilling these needs is essential for overall well-being. Collectively, these theories emphasize the complex, layered nature of human needs as foundational drivers of behavior.

2.2.2. Empirical Studies of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction

Literature has pointed out that fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness within intimate relationships has significant implications for relationship satisfaction (La Guardia et al., 2000; La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). Patrick et al. (2007), in conducting separate studies on the role of need satisfaction in relationship functioning and well-being among couples, found that need satisfaction was positively related to self-esteem, positive affect, and vitality and was negatively related with negative affect; and conclude that the more one perceived needs being fulfilled by his or her partner, the greater was the relationship satisfaction and commitment and less perceived conflict and less defensive responses to conflict. Similarly, Naemi (2018) found that relatedness, autonomy, and competence, respectively, significantly predict resilience and marital satisfaction.

In another study, Kluwer and colleagues (2020) investigated the dynamics between the satisfaction of relatedness and autonomy needs and their impact on relationship maintenance behaviors (i.e., accommodation, defined as the ability of a partner to respond constructively, rather than destructively, to potentially harmful behaviors from the other partner). Across three separate studies involving different participant groups (N = 388, N = 241, and N = 220), the study revealed that the fulfillment of relatedness needs positively correlates with accommodation. Specifically, this positive relationship between relatedness and accommodation was particularly significant, when participants also reported high levels of autonomy, as opposed to low levels of autonomy. This finding emphasizes the significance of maintaining an individual sense of self (i.e., autonomy) while fostering close connections with a partner,

highlighting that a balance between these two needs is crucial for constructive relationship maintenance.

Ducat and Zimmer-Gembeck (2010) introduced a recent measurement tool designed to assess six key dimensions of partner behavior, which should be associated with the satisfaction of individual psychological needs, well-being, and personal development. Partner behaviors were categorized into three positive dimensions—warmth (provision of love and affection), autonomy support (encouragement of a partner's decisions), and structure (consistency and reliability), and three negative dimensions—rejection (ignoring or hostility towards a partner), coercion (control and demand), and chaos (unpredictability). In their study, results showed that emerging adults reported higher well-being and greater life fulfillment when their partners exhibited behaviors that were warm, supportive of autonomy, and structured. Conversely, behaviors characterized by rejection, coercion, and chaos were associated with lower life fulfillment, and well-being. Therefore, individuals who experience better well-being and life fulfillment tend to have partners who provide emotional support, listen, and support individual choices, and demonstrate predictability and dependability. In contrast, those who report lower levels of life fulfillment and well-being often have partners who are critical, unreliable, and unpredictable.

Eryılmaz and Doğan (2013) conducted a study to explore the mediating role of need satisfaction in the relationship between romantic relationship quality and subjective well-being among emerging adults. The results from this cross-sectional study indicated that emerging adults who experience high romantic relationship quality are more likely to satisfy their psychological needs. This satisfaction of needs subsequently leads to an increase in their subjective well-being. These findings indicate the importance of fulfilling psychological needs within romantic relationships as an important mechanism through which the quality of these relationships impacts overall subjective well-being.

Sheldon and Bettencourt (2002) evaluated five candidate measures of psychological need satisfaction (personal autonomy and interpersonal relatedness derived from self-determination theory, and group inclusion, personal distinctiveness, and group distinctiveness derived from optimal distinctiveness theory) as predictors of high positive and low negative mood within the group, intrinsic motivation for group activities, and high commitment to the group. One of the main findings of the study showed that associations among five candidate psychological needs were especially strong for autonomy, relatedness, and group inclusion. Additionally, the study revealed that all five need-satisfaction constructs were associated with the three positive outcomes (i.e., intrinsic motivation, commitment, and positive affect).

Ryan et al. (2005) conducted a study investigating factors related to individuals' willingness to rely on emotional support from others. A significant finding from their research is the positive correlation between emotional reliance and need satisfaction, suggesting that individuals who perceive their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness as being met within a relationship are more inclined to depend on that relationship for emotional support. Moreover, the study found that need satisfaction mediated the relationship between emotional reliance and well-being, suggesting that emotional reliance contributes to well-being by promoting feelings of relatedness, competence, and autonomy, which in turn, may reduce negative feelings such as depression, and anxiety, while enhancing life satisfaction, vitality, and self-esteem. Collectively, these studies point out the centrality of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering healthy, satisfying relationships and overall well-being. Consistent findings reveal that fulfilling these psychological needs within intimate contexts enhances relationship satisfaction, commitment, resilience, and subjective well-being, while reducing conflict, negative affect, and defensive behaviors. The interplay between autonomy, competence, and relatedness is critical, as their balanced satisfaction promotes constructive relationship maintenance, such as accommodation during conflicts. These insights emphasize the role of basic psychological need satisfaction as foundational mechanisms for both individual flourishing and relational health.

2.3. Relationship Motivation

Motivation, etymologically, refers to what “moves” individuals to do action. Theories of motivation focus more specifically on both what energizes and gives direction to behavior. Various theories of motivation have traditionally regarded the concept of motivation as a unified entity, that is, it has been researched in terms of the amount of strength but has not typically been distinguished for types, qualities, or orientations.

Unlike other approaches to motivation, the SDT emphasizes that there are different types and sources of motivation that affect the quality and dynamics of behavior. Rather than simply seeing motivation as a unitary phenomenon, the SDT claims that certain types of motivation are volitional, reflecting one’s interests or values, while others are external, such as when people are forced or pressured into doing something they do not find of value (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Different motives are not just different in magnitude, but also in the phenomenal sources that activate them, the affects and experiences that therefore accompany them, and their behavioral consequences (Ryan & Deci, 2017). As a result, the SDT explicitly differentiates the concept of motivation to regard the various impacts of different types of motivation on relevant outcomes.

The self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985b, 1991, 2008) broadly describes motivation along a continuum, ranging from behaviors that are controlled and stem from outside pressure to autonomous behaviors, originating within the self. Control orientation refers to the tendency to orient toward how one “ought” to behave according to external or internal directives and is experienced as a sense of coercion and pressure. In contrast, an autonomy orientation refers to a tendency to initiate behavior based on interest and self-endorsed values; it is accompanied by a sense of selectivity, endorsement, and ownership of one’s behavior.

Varied types of motivation can be characterized in terms of the extent to which they represent autonomous versus controlled regulations. There are three general categories of motivation, including amotivation, extrinsic, and intrinsic (Ryan & Connell, 1989).

Amotivation reflects the relative absence of motivation. At the far left of the self-determination continuum is amotivation because there is no sense of purpose, and no expectation of being able to influence the environment (Ryan & Deci, 2017). People who are amotivated either do not act at all or perform without intent, just going through the motions.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, encompasses the continuum between amotivation and intrinsic motivation, depending on the extent to which autonomously they are regulated (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Extrinsic motivation is characterized by instrumental behavior, in which action is directed toward achieving the desired outcome that is separable from the activity itself. Extrinsic motivation is divided into four types, each representing different levels of experienced self-determination toward a certain regulation. External regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation are the types of extrinsic motivations that range from the lowest to the highest degrees of self-determination. The least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is external regulation, in which a person acts to get a reward or avoid punishment from others. Those who are externally regulated to spend time with their partners may only do so simply to gain favor from their partner or to avoid their partner's nagging or anger (Gagne & La Guardia, 2009). The second type of extrinsic motivation is named introjected regulation, the next point along the continuum, involving feeling compelled to behave to avoid negative feelings or to maintain conditional self-worth. It is a relatively controlled form of regulation in which behaviors are carried out to avoid guilt or anxiety or to get ego enhancements such as pride. Introjection, to put it another way, expresses regulation by contingent self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1995). Ego involvement is a classic form of introjection (Nicholls, 1984) in which people are motivated to exhibit the ability (or avoid failure) to retain feelings of worth. An example of introjected regulation is when individuals spend time with their partner because they feel obligated to do so and feel guilty if they do not fulfill their role of being a good relationship partner (Gagne & La Guardia, 2009).

Identified regulation is a more autonomous, or self-determined, form of extrinsic motivation. Identification refers to behavior that serves a personally endorsed value or goal. Individuals who engage in identified regulation take “ownership” for their actions and behave with a sense of purpose or choice. While the behavior is extrinsically motivated (i.e., it serves a specific value or goal), it is regarded as autonomous since the perceived locus of causality is the individual’s own endorsed value. Individuals who spend time with their spouse because the interactions fulfill some personally endorsed value, such as developing intimacy or sharing experiences, are an example of identified regulation (Gaine & La Guardia, 2009). Finally, integrated regulation refers to when the value served by a specific behavior is integrated with other values and goals of the self. Integration occurs when identified regulations are fully assimilated to the self, that is, they have been evaluated and brought into alignment with one's other values and needs but are still performed for some instrumental value (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Integrated regulation is considered the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation because it encompasses the experience of acting from an integrated set of personal values and goals. Integrated motivation actions share many characteristics with intrinsic motivation, but they are nonetheless classified as extrinsic since they are carried out to achieve separable outcomes rather than for their inherent enjoyment.

Intrinsic motivation is at the most self-determined (autonomous) end of the continuum and refers to performing a behavior for its own sake because it is inherently rewarding, satisfying, intriguing, or enjoyable (Deci & Ryan, 1991). In the context of romantic relationships, an example of intrinsic motivation is that individuals spend time with their spouses as they find their interactions with their spouses stimulating and exciting (Gaine & La Guardia, 2009).

Research to date has mostly focused on the efficacy of behavior as a function of autonomous and controlled orientations at the individual level (Hodgins et al., 1996; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). The results have indicated that the more autonomous people are, the higher individual well-being, as indicated by life satisfaction, vitality,

higher and more secure self-esteem, as well as a lower risk for depression, anxiety, and physical symptoms (Deci & Ryan 2002; Paradise & Kernis, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Yet, since most human behavior takes place in social settings, it is crucial to consider how motivational orientation affects interpersonal interactions.

2.3.1. Empirical Studies of Relationship Motivation

In the first significant study employing relationship motivation to examine romantic relationships, Blais et al. (1990) assessed the relative autonomy that married or cohabiting heterosexual couples experienced for maintaining their relationships. Blais and colleagues concluded that both partners' motivational style to maintain their couple relationship strongly predicted personal perceptions of relationship satisfaction. The more self-determined both partners' motivational styles, the more positive, ongoing dyadic behaviors (e.g., consensus, cohesion, and affectional expression), which in turn strongly predicted their happiness with the relationship. Based on this result, it can be concluded that being self-determined for engagement in marital or cohabiting romantic relationships appears to be an indicator of the relationships' quality. The significance of the study by Blais et al. (1990) is particularly notable for its approach to operationalizing autonomy within a relationship by categorizing the reasons why individuals are in a relationship. This approach differentiates between relatively autonomous reasons (e.g., enjoying shared fun and exciting times) and less autonomous reasons (e.g., staying in the relationship out of guilt). This distinction allows for a deeper understanding of how autonomous motivation influences relationship dynamics and adjustment.

A series of four studies by Knee et al. (2005) examined associations between relationship motivation, responses to relationship conflicts, and satisfaction after disagreements. Study 1 was a diary study conducted for 10 days in which participants completed short surveys after each disagreement with their romantic partners. Results showed that trait autonomy (i.e., feeling autonomous as a person) is associated with relational autonomy (i.e., feeling autonomous in one's relationship), which is in turn

associated with experiencing more satisfaction after disagreements. Study 2 was conducted to examine whether relationship autonomy mediated the associations between trait autonomy and responses to conflict. Results showed that feeling autonomous as a person leads one to have more open and less defensive responses to conflict, partly because it is conducive to feeling more autonomous toward the relationship. Study 3 was conducted to examine whether relationship autonomy predicts feeling more satisfied, less defensive, and more understanding about disagreements in a sample of couples. Results showed that the person's relational autonomy predicted less defensiveness and more understanding of the partner and, in turn, greater relationship satisfaction. In addition, the partner's relational autonomy also contributed significant variance to the person's being less defensive, and more satisfied. Study 4 involved romantic couples coming into the lab and discussing sensitive themes. Each participant completed the relational autonomy questionnaire before the discussions and consented to their discussion being videotaped. Subsequently, each participant's behavior was independently coded for signs of understanding and defensiveness. Analyses showed that both actors' and partners' relationship autonomy predicted more observed understanding and less observed defensiveness during the actual conflict. Overall, the series of studies emphasizes the crucial role of autonomy—both personal and relational—in managing conflicts and enhancing satisfaction within romantic relationships. The findings shed light on how autonomy has positive impacts on relationship dynamics, particularly in the context of disagreements, highlighting its importance for maintaining healthy and satisfying relationships.

Patrick et al. (2007) tested a model in which the association between overall need fulfillment and post disagreement relationship commitment was mediated by relationship motivation using a diary recording procedure with 120 undergraduate students. Results showed that those who experienced greater need fulfillment enjoyed more commitment (relative to others) following disagreements primarily because they tended to have more intrinsic or autonomous reasons for being in their relationship.

The study conducted by Gaine and La Guardia (2009) investigated the distinct roles of general motivations for maintaining a relationship (assessed by Couple Motivation Questionnaire; CMQ) and motivations towards specific relational activities (assessed by Motivations for Relational Activities; MRA) in predicting relationship well-being. The findings reveal that both CMQ and MRA make independent and significant contributions to relationship well-being, including commitment, intimacy, satisfaction, and vitality. Moreover, together CMQ and MRA powerfully improved the predictions of relationship functioning, accounting for approximately 80% of the variance in a general relationship well-being. However, these motivations were differentiated by their relationship to personality traits and attachment styles. The research indicated that motivations related to relational activities (MRA) may have stronger associations with personality traits and dynamics within relationships. For instance, a higher level of autonomous motivation for engaging in relationship activities is associated with lower levels of attachment avoidance, indicating a fear of intimacy. Conversely, a higher level of controlled motivation for these activities is linked to increased attachment anxiety, indicating a fear of rejection and abandonment. Although the CMQ is an important predictor of relationship well-being, it is negatively correlated with attachment avoidance but does not show a significant correlation with attachment anxiety or the Big Five personality traits. To sum up, this study underlines the importance of considering both general motivations for maintaining a relationship and specific motivations towards relational activities in understanding and predicting relationship well-being.

Furthermore, the literature indicates that people's behaviors in a particular domain are influenced by their general motivational dispositions as well as specific contextual motivations. This proposition has been examined in several recent studies. Knee et al. (2002) examined whether trait autonomy affects how couples cope with and respond to conflict in their relationship. Results showed that the more people are autonomous overall, the more they show positive reinterpretation and growth, active coping, planning, seeking of emotional support, acceptance, expression of emotion, attempts to understand the emotion, repair of emotion, and the less behavioral disengagement

and self-focus, while the more people are controlled overall, the more they denied problems in their relationship, expressed emotions through venting and used of religion as a coping strategy. Additionally, when partners were observed discussing discrepant points of view, the autonomy orientation was related to more positive interaction behaviors, including approach, clarification, and attempts to understand the partner, while the control orientation was related to exhibiting fewer of these positive interaction behaviors.

Weinstein et al. (2010) also examined the effects of priming autonomy or control orientations as a significant factor determining responsiveness, positivity, and productivity of dyads interacting in the performance of a shared task. Researchers focused on interaction quality and performance on creative tasks in pairs of participants who were meeting for the first time. Dyad members were recorded while they worked together on tasks that required creative thinking and cooperative interaction. Ratings of the recorded interactions revealed that dyads primed with autonomy were more emotionally and cognitively oriented to one another as well as more empathic and supportive of one another, indicating more openness and less defensiveness. Additionally, the dyads primed with autonomy were more engaged in the tasks, executed them more efficiently, and experienced greater closeness. Because motivational orientations were experimentally manipulated using a priming approach, the findings support the notion that more autonomy can have a causal impact on the quality of communication and closeness of interpersonal relationships.

Overall, the findings emphasize that autonomous motivation—acting out of personal choice and genuine desire—plays a central role in fostering healthy, satisfying romantic relationships. When individuals engage in relationships or relational activities autonomously, rather than due to external pressures or guilt, they exhibit more constructive behaviors during conflicts, such as openness, empathy, and understanding, leading to greater post-disagreement satisfaction. Autonomous motivation also strengthens relationship commitment, intimacy, and vitality, while reducing defensiveness and emotional detachment. Additionally, self-determined

motivation acts as a bridge between the fulfillment of psychological needs and overall well-being, promoting pro-partner orientations. Studies further suggest that autonomy-oriented individuals tend to approach conflicts with adaptive coping strategies, fostering positive interactions and cooperative problem-solving. Experimental evidence highlights that even situational priming of autonomy can enhance communication quality, task engagement, and emotional support between partners. Conversely, controlled motivations (e.g., fear of abandonment or obligation) correlate with poorer relational outcomes, such as anxiety, avoidance, and ineffective conflict responses. These insights collectively point out autonomous motivation as a critical driver of relational health, enabling couples to maintain balance, mutual respect, and sustained satisfaction.

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

Marriage represents a significant and foundational relationship, supporting the biological, psychological, and social needs of individuals. Contemporary perspectives view marriage as marked by freedom of choice, companionship, and equality. Beyond personal fulfillment, marriage provides emotional and social support, which enhances both partners' physical, mental, and social well-being. Marital adjustment, a crucial factor in marital studies, reflects a couple's compatibility and satisfaction within their relationship, commonly assessed through terms like marital satisfaction, happiness, and harmony. Researchers (Lively, 1969; Spanier, 1976) describe marital adjustment as dynamic, developing through shared experiences, low conflict, and mutual support. Empirical studies reveal numerous factors impacting marital adjustment, including sociodemographic factors like gender, age, marriage duration, and personal variables such as personality traits, attachment styles, and relationship beliefs. Positive marital adjustment has been shown to directly influence individual outcomes like life satisfaction and well-being, and reciprocally, individuals with higher life satisfaction often experience stronger marital adjustment. Conversely, marital discord is associated with negative mental and physical health outcomes, including increased risks for depression and mortality. These insights highlight the importance of examining the

underlying needs within a marital relationship to better understand the factors that influence marital quality and stability.

In psychological theory, needs are fundamental for healthy functioning, shaping how individuals relate to themselves and others. Murray's Psychogenic Needs Theory introduced a diverse range of psychological needs that guide behavior, whereas Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs established a sequential progression from basic physiological requirements to self-actualization. This model suggests that fulfilling each level of need provides a foundation for the next. Alderfer's ERG Theory, a refinement of Maslow's model, consolidates these needs into three core areas—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—allowing individuals to pursue several needs concurrently rather than sequentially. Building on this, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) identifies autonomy, competence, and relatedness as core psychological needs essential for well-being. Within intimate relationships, research has shown that satisfying these needs not only promotes individual resilience and life satisfaction but also strengthens relationship commitment and satisfaction. Thus, understanding these needs is central to enhancing both personal growth and relationship quality.

Beyond the needs themselves, the quality of motivation to fulfill them significantly impacts relationship dynamics. Traditional motivation theories often treat motivation as a singular concept, but SDT differentiates between autonomous (self-directed) and controlled (externally pressured) motivation, which uniquely affect how partners interact within a relationship. Autonomous motivation—acting out of genuine interest or personal values—is closely linked to relationship satisfaction and constructive conflict resolution. In contrast, controlled motivation, driven by external pressures or obligations, can lead to defensiveness and tension. Research supports that autonomous motivation fosters positive relationship behaviors, all of which are essential for maintaining a fulfilling and stable relationship.

In sum, the interplay between fundamental needs and the quality of motivation to meet them offers a comprehensive framework for understanding marital adjustment. When

autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied within a relationship through self-directed motivation, individuals are more likely to experience well-being and satisfaction, creating a positive foundation for the relationship's success. These findings highlight the vital role of both needs and motivation in shaping fulfilling and enduring marital relationships.



CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter presents the methodological framework of the study, describing the research design, participants, data collection instruments, procedures, and analytical techniques used. It begins with an overview of the study's overall design, followed by a detailed description of the participants and the criteria applied in their selection. The data collection instruments are then introduced, including the translation and adaptation processes of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale – Relationship Domain (BPNS-R) and the Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ), along with their confirmatory factor analyses, item analyses, and reliability assessments. The chapter also outlines the data collection procedure, elaborating on how the study was conducted. The variables examined in the research are defined, and the statistical methods applied in the data analysis are presented. Particular emphasis is placed on the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) as the primary analytical approach. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations, identifying potential challenges and factors that may affect the interpretation of the results.

3.1. Research Design

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between basic psychological needs satisfaction and marital adjustment in a sample of Turkish married couples, through the potential mediating role of relationship motivation. Depending upon the purpose of the study, the design of this study was correlational, which aims to study relationships among variables. In this study, a path analysis was

conducted to predict marital adjustment as an endogenous variable, the dimensions of basic psychological need satisfaction as exogenous variables, and relationship motivation as mediator variables. The Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM; Kenny, 1996) was used for analyzing dyadic data.

3.2. Participants

In the current study, the main data were collected from Turkish married couples. The sampling was based on the criteria that asked participants to be married for at least a year and participate in the study with their partners. The sample of the study consisted of 205 ($n = 410$) married couples. The data were collected using an online setting via Google Forms. At the beginning of the online survey, participants were asked to declare that they were voluntarily participating in the study. The study utilized convenience sampling, a non-probability technique that selects participants based on their availability and accessibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The participants' ages ranged from 22 to 67 years, with a mean of 37.17 years ($SD = 9.60$). Specifically, women's ages ranged from 22 to 66 years ($M = 36.29$, $SD = 9.12$), whereas men's ages ranged from 23 to 67 years ($M = 38.06$, $SD = 10.01$). Most of the participants were highly educated, with 63.9% holding a university degree and 17.5% holding graduate degrees. A significant proportion were employed as teachers (14.4%), while 9.3% worked as engineers, and 8.8% were judges/prosecutors. Additionally, 8.7% were lawyers, and 5.6% were either unemployed or homemakers. In terms of perceived socioeconomic status, most participants identified as middle-class (76.3%), while 19.5% considered themselves upper-class, and only a small percentage (4.1%) viewed their status as lower-class as illustrated in Table 3.1.

Along with demographics, the relational characteristics of the participants were also explored. The length of the marriages of the participants ranged from one year to 39 years ($M = 10.10$, $SD = 9.35$). Of the couples, a substantial percentage (38.0%) had no children, 63 (30.7%) had only one child, 50 (24.4%) had two children, and 28 (6.8%)

Table 3.1

Education Level and Perceived Socioeconomic Status of the Participants (N = 410)

	Women		Men		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
<i>Education</i>						
Elementary School	6	2.9	5	2.4	11	2.7
Secondary School	-	-	-	-	-	-
High school	18	8.8	18	8.8	36	8.8
Associate's degree	14	6.8	15	7.3	29	7.1
Undergraduate degree	134	65.4	128	62.4	262	63.9
Master's degree	25	12.2	33	16.1	58	14.1
Doctorate	8	3.9	6	2.9	14	3.4
Total	205	100	205	100	410	100
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>						
Low	9	4.4	8	3.9	17	4.1
Middle	159	77.6	154	75.1	313	76.3
High	37	18.0	43	21.0	80	19.5
Total	205	100	205	100	410	100

had three or more children. When asked how they decided to marry their spouse, the majority (74.9%) reported that they decided to get married after having been in a relationship for some time, 63 participants (15.4%) indicated that they were introduced by someone from their close circle but they decided to get married themselves, 31 participants (7.6%) described it as an arranged marriage, and 9 participants (2.2%) cited other factors, such as chance, coincidence, or family relations, as illustrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Relationship Characteristics of the Couples (N=410; 205 couples)

	f	%
<i>Number of children</i>		
No child	156	38.0
One child	126	30.7
2 children	100	24.4

Table 3.2 (continued)

	<i>f</i>	%
3 or more children	28	6.8
Total	410	100
<i>Type of marriage</i>		
Marriage by mutual consent after initiated with willpower	307	74.9
Marriage by mutual consent after being introduced by someone else	63	15.4
Arranged Marriage	31	7.6
Other	9	2.2
Total	410	100

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

This study is based on quantitative data. In the process of collecting data through an online survey, the instruments were transferred to Google Forms. The Demographic Information Form (see Appendix B) was utilized to gather data regarding the characteristics of the participants and the basic attributes of their marital unions. A total of three instruments were used to address the mediating role of relationship motivation in the relationship between satisfaction of basic psychological needs and marital adjustment in married couples. The three self-report scales utilized in the study are as follows: (1) Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale in Relationships (BPNS-R; (La Guardia et al., 2000) (see Appendix C) was used to assess the extent to which a person experiences basic need satisfaction when relating to his or her spouse, (2) Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ; Blais et al., 1990) (see Appendix D) was used to assess the couples' motivation within the relationship domain as suggested by self-determination theory, (3) The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS; Busby et al., 1995) (see Appendix E) was used to assess married couples' marital adjustment. Psychometric properties of each scale are presented in the following section. In addition, the adaptation studies carried out to adapt the instruments (BPNS-R and CMQ), which do not have a Turkish form, and to evaluate the psychometric properties of the scales are described below.

3.3.1. Translation and Adaptation Studies of the Instruments

The adaptation studies were conducted to adapt, and to test the validity and the reliability of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale in Relationships (BPNS-R) and Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ), which were used in the main study. Details about the participants' demographic characteristics, the data collection process, and assumption testing are provided below. Following this, the measurement tools were described, along with the results of the validity and reliability analyses conducted for each tool separately. The data collected during the translation and adaptation process were not utilized in the main study; instead, separate data were collected specifically for the main study.

3.3.1.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants of the Translation and Adaptation Studies

The research was conducted with individuals who are married. Only those who had been married for a minimum of one year were considered eligible to participate. Initially, the data were examined to confirm that participants satisfied the study's inclusion criterion. The characteristics of the 310 participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria are described by gender, age, level of education, marriage length, and number of children.

The sample of the study in the scope of scale adaptations comprised 310 married individuals (191 women and 119 men) aged between 24 and 64 ($M = 38.01$ ($SD = 9.01$)). Participants' level of education varied as; 16 (5.2%) elementary school, 17 (5.5%) secondary school, 30 (9.7%) high school, 18 (5.8%) associate's degree, 172 (55.5%) undergraduate, 45 (14.5%) master's degree, and 12 (3.9%) doctorate. To identify the features of the current sample, the participants were asked about the length of the marriage. The length of the marriages of the sample ranged from 1 to 45 years. As another descriptive information, 85 (27.4%) had no children, 126 (40.6%) had one child, 81 (26.1%) had two children, and 18 (5.8%) had three children. Descriptive characteristics of the participants were presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants of the Translation and Adaptation Studies (N = 310)

	<i>f</i>	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	191	61.6
Male	119	38.4
Total	310	100
<i>Education</i>		
Elementary school	16	5.16
Secondary school	17	5.48
High school	30	9.68
Associate's degree	18	5.81
Undergraduate degree	172	55.48
Master's degree	45	14.52
Doctorate	12	3.87
Total	310	100
<i>Number of Children</i>		
No child	85	27.42
One child	128	41.29
Two children	81	26.13
Three or more children	18	5.81
Total	310	100

3.3.1.2. Data Collection Procedure for Translation and Adaptation Studies of the Instruments

Several steps were taken before starting the data collection process. First, the necessary permissions were obtained from the authors of the scales to be adapted into the Turkish language. Subsequently, ethical approval (see Appendix A) was obtained by applying to the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee to conduct the current study. After obtaining their permission, the following procedures were followed for the data collection of the translation and adaptation study.

Convenience sampling method was employed to collect data from married individuals. In the scale adaptation study, data were collected via the online platform, Google

Forms. The announcements of the survey, which took approximately 10-15 minutes to fill out, were made through social networking sites. The participants were asked to forward the link to the surveys to acquaintances who had been married for at least one year. During the initial phase of data collection, participants were provided with a consent form detailing the research objectives and notified of their right to withdraw from participation at any stage. Participants were not asked any questions containing any identifying information to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. For the adaptation of the scales, data were collected from participants between March and July 2023.

3.3.1.3 Assumptions of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Prior to the analysis of the scale adaptation study, data were screened, and the assumptions of CFA including missing values, adequate sample size, outliers, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were tested (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Initially, the data of 310 participants were examined for missing values and incorrect entries. Collecting data via Google Forms ensured that responses to all items were mandatory, so missing values or incorrect entries were not detected. At the beginning of the data collection process, participants were informed that they could leave the study if they were not willing to answer the questions in the consent form.

To conduct CFA, there are several suggestions regarding adequate sample size. Hair et al. (2017) suggested that an $N/p \geq 10$ ratio should be obtained for an adequate sample size (N: number of participants, and p: number of items). When considered in terms of this criterion, the current data met an adequate sample size since $(310)/(9)=34.44$ for BPNS-R and $(310)/(21)=14.76$ for CMQ exceeded 10. Moreover, Hoelter (1983) and Kline (2011) suggested that the sample size should be at least 200 to meet the adequate sample size criterion. In the current study, this criterion has been met with a sample size of 310. Based on these considerations, it can be concluded that the sample size requirement was fulfilled for the current data.

After the evaluation of the adequate sample size, the normal distribution of data was examined. Hair et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of the normal distribution as a fundamental assumption in statistical analysis and structural equation modeling, highlighting its significance in representing the distribution shape of individual metric variables and its alignment with the normal distribution of the benchmark for statistical methods. To investigate normality, statistical methods of skewness and kurtosis were applied using Amos 24. As the values of skewness and kurtosis approach zero, the data is considered normally distributed. Kline (2023) argued that an absolute skewness value exceeding 3, and a kurtosis value exceeding 10 might indicate a potential problem, with values exceeding 20 suggesting a more substantial problem. Thus, it was recommended that absolute skewness values should remain below 3, and kurtosis values should remain below 10 to ensure data robustness. Moreover, Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) asserted that the deviation from normality in terms of skewness and kurtosis typically does not make a substantive difference in the analysis outcomes when sample sizes exceed 200. For the current data of CMQ, the skewness values varied between -1.20 and 2.07; kurtosis values varied between -.79 and 3.13. For the current data of BPNS-R, the skewness values varied between -.93 and .43; kurtosis values varied between -.99 and .08. Hence, the results of the normality analyses indicated that the sample of the current study has a normal distribution.

Afterwards, univariate and multivariate outliers were evaluated using IBM SPSS v27. Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) asserted that z scores of cases that exceed the range between -3.29 and +3.29 ($p < .001$, two-tailed test) are labeled as univariate outliers. Since the z scores of cases for BPNS-R were between -2.83 and 1.36, and the z scores of cases for CMQ were between -2.81 and 1.18; there were no univariate outliers. To identify multivariate outliers in the current study, Mahalanobis distances were calculated using linear regression in IBM SPSS v27, followed by the calculation of the Chi-square values (Kline, 2023; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The results indicated that there were four cases for BPNS-R, and six cases for CMQ. All the analyses were performed twice, once with and without the outliers, to determine whether their presence interfered with the results of the study. Since the analyses indicated no

significant differences between the two data sets, outliers were retained to maintain the generalizability of the results.

Linearity and multicollinearity were also checked. Residual plots and scatterplots were utilized to assess the linearity assumption, and visual inspection confirmed that the assumption of linearity was guaranteed for both scales. Afterward, the multicollinearity was checked by using bivariate correlation coefficients, tolerance, and variance inflation factor (VIF) values. The multicollinearity problem arises when the independent variables demonstrate high levels of correlation with each other (Hair et al., 2017; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The criterion recommended in the literature suggests that correlation coefficients should not exceed .90 (Hair et al., 2017), while VIF values should be below 10, and tolerance values should exceed .20 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). In the current study, VIF and tolerance values were within expected ranges for both scales, indicating no evidence of multicollinearity.

In confirmatory factor analysis, a variety of model fit indices are utilized, which are classified including comparative (or incremental), absolute, and noncentrality-based fit indices (Brown, 2006; Kline, 2023). Each category is designed to serve a distinct function and assists in assessing various aspects of the model performance. Incremental fit indices, also referred to as comparative (Miles & Shevlin, 2007) or relative fit indices (McDonald & Ho, 2002), evaluate the chi-square value against a baseline model, typically a null hypothesis with no correlations between observed variables. Well-known indices such as the Normed Fit Index (NFI) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) are included in this category. Following Bentler and Bonnett's (1980) recommendation, this study established the threshold for the NFI and the TLI at values greater than 0.90 to indicate a good model fit.

In contrast to incremental fit indices, absolute fit indices evaluate the fit of a theoretical model directly against the sample data without using a comparison model as a baseline (McDonald & Ho, 2002). This category includes the Chi-square test (χ^2), χ^2/df -ratio, and Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). In this context, a χ^2 value close

to zero is indicative of a better fit. While various criteria for the χ^2/df ratio have been proposed by researchers, this study adheres to Kline's (2023) recommendation, setting the cutoff point at 3. Consequently, a χ^2/df ratio of less than 3 is considered indicative of a good model fit. Additionally, Hu and Bentler's (1999) suggestion was followed for the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), with a value of less than 0.08 being preferred.

Noncentrality-based indices, such as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) or the Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), adjust for a model's perfect fit by setting the chi-square equal to the model's degrees of freedom, rather than zero (Stone, 2021). In this study, an RMSEA between 0.08 and 0.10 was interpreted as indicating a mediocre fit, while a below 0.08 was considered indicative of a good fit, following the guidelines proposed by MacCallum and colleagues (1996). Additionally, a CFI value of 0.95 or higher was recognized as indicative of a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

3.3.1.4. Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale – Relationship Domain (BPNS-R)

This scale addresses the need satisfaction in one's particular relationships (e.g., spouse, best friend, mother). The scale was developed by La Guardia et al. (2000), and it consists of 9 questions. It includes three items in each for autonomy, competence, and relatedness sub-scales. Participants are rated on a 7-point Likert scale on how well their basic needs are met when they are with specific target figures— namely, mother, father, romantic partner, best friend, roommate, and a significant adult. A sample item of the autonomy subscale is: “When I am with my partner I feel free to be who I am”, a sample item of the relatedness subscale is: “When I am with my partner I feel a lot of closeness and intimacy”, and a sample item of the competence subscale is “When I am with my partner, I feel like a competent person.”. The scores to be obtained from the scale range from 9 to 63. In particular, items 4, 6, and 9 are reverse-coded by subtracting the person's response from 8. A higher score represents a higher basic psychological need satisfaction in the relationship.

In the study of La Guardia et al. (2000), participants rated on a 7-point Likert scale on how well their basic needs are met when they are with specific target figures- namely, mother, father, romantic partner, best friend, roommate, and significant adult. Reliability for ratings of the six attachment figures for overall need satisfaction were .91, .94, .88, .85, .90, and .90, respectively. In their study, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to verify that the items loaded on the three anticipated factors. The three-factor solution demonstrated an adequate fit to the data, evidenced by a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.10 and a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.96. Chi-square analyses indicated that the three-factor model was significantly superior to a one-factor model or any of the three possible two-factor models.

3.3.1.4.1. Translation Process of BPNS-R

Necessary permissions were obtained from Dr. Richard Ryan, the developer of the scale, for its adaptation into the Turkish language. When adapting measurement tools developed in one country to a new language and culture, the primary objective is to ensure equivalence between the original scale and its version in the target language. In this adaptation process, the recommendations by Borsa, et al. (2012), and Hambleton and Li (2005) for adapting psychological measurement tools to different cultures were followed.

First, the original scale was translated into Turkish by two professionals and the researcher, all proficient in English. One translator was an assistant professor in Psychological Counseling and Guidance, and the other was a researcher in Curriculum and Instruction. After completing the translations, the translators and the researcher reviewed and evaluated the translations together. The form to be used in the pilot application was finalized after consulting two experts in Guidance and Psychological Counseling and the Turkish language.

The Turkish translation of the questionnaire was then back-translated into English by an English teacher and compared with the original form, confirming that the translated

version retained the same content as the original. Subsequently, the form was reviewed by an independent expert in psychological counseling, and feedback was incorporated. After making minor grammatical revisions, the Turkish version of the scale was completed. The final version was then reviewed by an experienced Turkish literature teacher to check the structure and wording of the items. Corrections in wording, sentence structure, and punctuation were considered, resulting in the final form of the scale.

This version of the scale was piloted with a small group of 20 married individuals. Feedback was gathered to evaluate whether the scale items were clear and understandable. Following this pilot testing and evaluation, the final form of the scale was established for use in the validity and reliability study of the measurement tool.

3.3.1.4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of BPNS-R

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the construct validity of the Turkish form of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship Domain (BPNS-R), which is originally three-dimensional. The path diagram of the three-factor model obtained from the CFA is shown in Figure 3.1.

CFA results revealed that the Turkish form of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship Domain (BPNS-R) retained a three-factor structure consistent with the original scale, with scale items distributed accordingly. The goodness of fit indices for this hypothetical model were $\chi^2 = 48.337$, $p < .01$, $df = 24$, $\chi^2/df = 2.014$, SRMR = 0.02, NFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.98, CFI = 0.95, and RMSEA = 0.07. For fit indices, χ^2/df ratio being between 2-5, NFI and TLI values being greater than 0.90, CFI value being greater than 0.95, and SRMR and RMSEA being less than .08 indicate an acceptable fit (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023; MacCallum et al., 1996). Based on these criteria, the analysis results indicate an acceptable model fit. Standardized factor loadings ranged between 0.34 and 0.94,

indicating acceptable results as they exceeded the cutoff point of 0.30 suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2019).

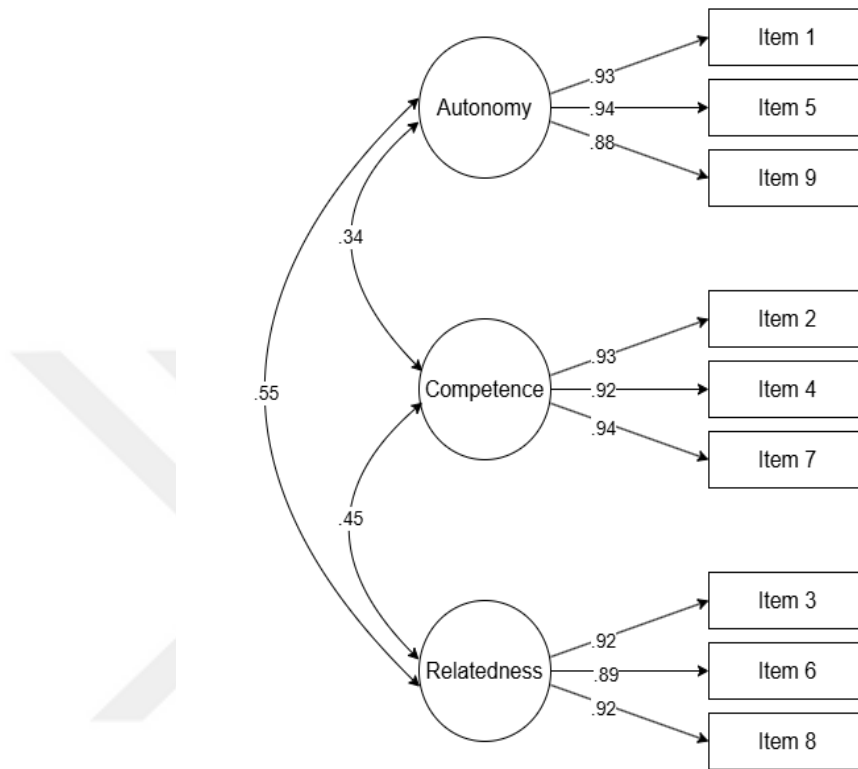


Figure 3.1 Confirmatory factor analysis for the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship Domain (BPNS-R)

3.3.1.4.3. Item Analysis of BPNS-R

To evaluate the discrimination of the scale items, mean scores were compared between the lower and upper groups. Specifically, total scores for the subscales and the entire scale were calculated, and participants were ranked from the lowest to highest scores. The upper 27 % group ($n = 84$) and the lower 27 % group ($n = 84$) were then identified. An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether each item in the subscales, subscale total scores, and overall scale mean scores showed a significant

difference between the lower and upper groups. The findings are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4
BPNS Item Analysis Results

Subscales	Item Number	Lower 27%		Upper 27%		<i>t</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Autonomy	1	3.04	1.09	6.95	.21	32.27*
	5	3.31	1.10	7.00	.00	30.82*
	9	3.12	1.05	7.00	.00	34.00*
Total Autonomy Scores		9.66	3.07	20.54	.65	31.81*
Competence	2	3.27	.65	6.81	.40	42.77*
	4	3.14	.58	6.98	.11	59.34*
	7	3.18	.41	6.79	.41	40.81*
Total Competence Scores		9.80	1.89	20.19	.77	46.62*
Relatedness	3	3.56	.88	6.76	.43	29.91*
	6	3.45	.87	6.80	.40	31.96*
	8	3.71	.94	6.69	.46	26.04*
Total Relatedness Scores		10.95	2.53	20.04	.81	31.31*
Total Scale Scores		34.37	6.86	56.92	1.29	29.60*

* $p < .001$

As shown in Table 3.4, the differences between the mean scores of the upper 27 % and lower 27 % groups for all scale items, sub-dimensions, and the entire scale were statistically significant ($p < .001$). These differences favored the upper 27 % group, indicating that the BPNS items differentiated participants who scored high from those who scored low across all three dimensions.

3.3.1.4.4. Reliability Analysis of BPNS-R

The reliability of the measurement tool was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega reliability coefficients. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were found to be 0.94 for the autonomy subscale, 0.95 for the competence subscale, 0.93

for the relatedness subscale, and 0.90 for the total scale. Similarly, the McDonald's omega coefficients were 0.94 for the autonomy subscale, 0.95 for the competence subscale, 0.93 for the relatedness subscale, and 0.87 for the total scale.

3.3.1.5. Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ)

The Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ) was developed by Blais and colleagues (1990) to assess six types of motivation within the couples' relationship domain, as postulated by self-determination theory. Individuals rate the extent to which each item corresponds to their reasons for living with their spouse, using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (exactly). The items were developed through a two-step process: First, open responses were collected in a pilot study with 48 married or cohabiting undergraduate students, who answered the question, "Why do you presently live with your spouse?" Second, items were constructed based on the content analysis of these responses and the conceptual meanings of different forms of motivation. The generated items were evaluated for face validity by two graduate students familiar with the conceptual distinctions of the various forms of motivation assessed by CMQ. Additionally, two experts in couple therapy verified the ecological relevance of the items. Each scale consists of four items, except for external regulation and introjected regulation, which have two and three items, respectively.

In line with self-determination theory, the CMQ assesses amotivation (e.g., "There is nothing to motivate me in maintaining my relationship with my partner"; Cronbach's alpha = .88; weighted -3), external regulation (e.g., "Because my partner could not cope with a separation"; 2 items, intercorrelation = .33; weighted -2), introjected regulation (e.g., "Because I would feel very guilty if I left him/her"; Cronbach's alpha = .58; weighted -1), identified regulation (e.g., "Because life with my partner gives me opportunities to learn to better express my opinions"; Cronbach's alpha = .72; weighted +1), integrated regulation (e.g., "Because he/she is the person I choose to help me accomplish important projects"; Cronbach's alpha = .67; weighted +2); intrinsic motivation (e.g., "Because I find the times spent with my partner very

stimulating and satisfying"; Cronbach's alpha = .82; weighted +3). An overall index of motivation for the relationship was calculated by multiplying each item on the scale by the weight of the sub-dimension in questionnaire. Higher scores on the scale indicate more autonomous or intrinsic relationship motivation. The internal reliability of the scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, was found to be 0.76.

3.3.1.5.1. Translation Process of CMQ

For the current study, permission was requested from Dr. Marc Blais to translate the instrument into Turkish. Dr. Blais provided the English-French items of the scale and gave permission to translate and use the Couple Motivation Questionnaire in this study.

In this adaptation process, the guidelines proposed by Borsa et al. (2012), and Hambleton and Li (2005) for adapting psychological measurement tools to different cultural contexts were followed. Initially, the original scale was translated into Turkish by three professionals and the researcher, all of them were proficient in English. One translator was an assistant professor in Psychological Counseling and Guidance, while the other two were researchers in Curriculum and Instruction. Following the translations, the translators and the researcher collaboratively reviewed and evaluated the translations. Specifically, item 5, for which no consensus was initially reached on its translation, was thoroughly discussed. For this item, also present in the French version of the scale (*Parce que ma vie de couple est un des moyens que je valorise pour participer à de nouvelles activités*), an opinion was received from an individual whose native language is Turkish and who has advanced proficiency in French. The form intended for the pilot application was finalized after consultation with two experts in Guidance and Psychological Counseling and the Turkish language.

The Turkish translation of the questionnaire was subsequently back translated into English by an English teacher and compared with the original version to ensure content equivalence. An independent expert in psychological counseling then reviewed the

form, and their feedback was incorporated. After minor grammatical adjustments, the Turkish version of the scale was completed. The final version was subsequently reviewed by an experienced Turkish literature teacher to assess the structure and wording of the items. Corrections in wording, sentence structure, and punctuation were made, resulting in the finalized form of the scale.

This version was piloted with a small group of 20 married individuals. Feedback was collected to determine whether the scale items were clear and understandable. Based on this pilot testing and subsequent evaluation, the final version of the scale was established for use in the validity and reliability study of the measurement tool.

3.3.1.5.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of CMQ

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the construct validity of the Turkish form of the Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ), which is originally six-dimensional. The path diagram of the six-factor model obtained from the CFA is shown in Figure 3.2.

CFA results revealed that the Turkish form of the Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ) retained a six-factor structure consistent with the original scale, with scale items distributed accordingly. The goodness of fit indices for this hypothetical model were $\chi^2/df = 2.86$, RMSEA = 0.078, CFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.04, NFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.94. For fit indices, χ^2/df ratio being between 2-5, NFI and TLI values being greater than 0.90, CFI value being greater than 0.95, and SRMR and RMSEA being less than .08 indicate an acceptable fit (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023; MacCallum et al., 1996). Based on these criteria, the analysis results indicate an acceptable model fit. Standardized factor loadings ranged between 0.64 and 0.96, indicating acceptable results as they exceeded the cutoff point of 0.30 suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2019).

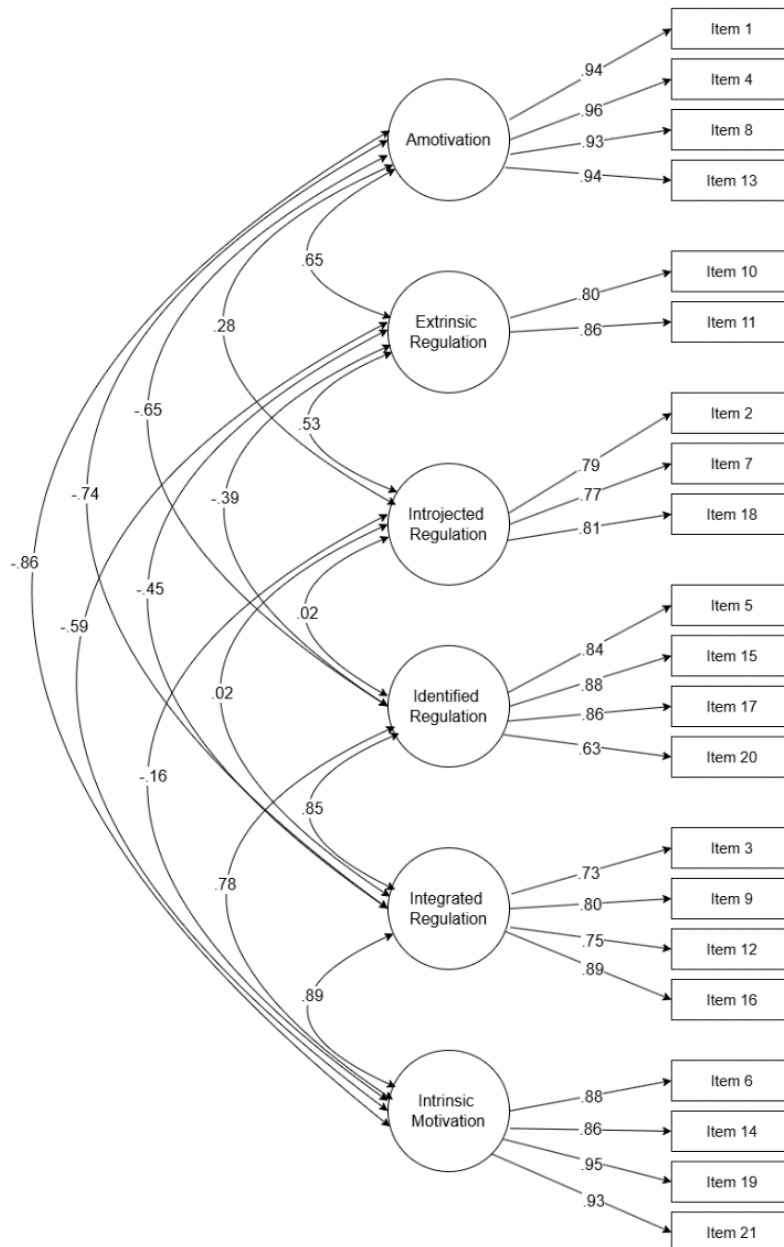


Figure 3.2 Confirmatory factor analysis for the Couple Motivation Questionnaire (CMQ)

3.3.1.5.3. Item Analysis of CMQ

To assess the discrimination of the scale items, mean scores were compared between the lower and upper groups. Specifically, total scores for the subscales and the entire

scale were calculated, and participants were ranked from the lowest to highest scores. The upper 27 % group ($n = 84$) and the lower 27 % group ($n = 84$) were then identified. An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether each item in the subscales, subscale total scores and overall scale mean scores showed a significant difference between the lower and upper groups. The findings are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5
CMQ Item Analysis Results

Subscales	Item Number	Lower 27 %		Upper 27 %		<i>t</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Amotivation	1	1.00	.00	4.20	1.68	17.50*
	4	1.00	.00	3.77	1.75	14.51*
	8	1.00	.00	4.04	1.70	16.33*
	13	1.00	.00	4.05	1.85	15.11*
Total Amotivation Score		4.00	.00	15.61	6.89	15.45*
External Regulation	10	1.00	.00	4.56	1.04	31.21*
	11	1.00	.00	4.58	1.13	29.00*
Total External Score		2.01	.11	8.82	1.94	32.12*
Introjected Regulation	2	1.07	.26	4.87	1.03	32.86*
	7	1.29	.46	5.29	1.16	29.49*
	18	1.49	.50	4.88	.90	30.24*
Total Introjected Score		4.45	1.13	14.39	2.39	34.50*
Identified Regulation	5	2.82	1.03	6.16	.72	24.29*
	15	2.85	1.10	6.73	.45	29.87*
	17	3.13	.99	6.94	.24	34.25*
	20	2.42	1.01	6.57	.50	33.86*
Total Identified Score		12.17	3.89	24.80	1.96	26.59*
Integrated Regulation	3	1.87	.79	6.25	.67	38.71*
	9	2.49	1.10	6.70	.46	32.32*
	12	1.79	.79	6.36	.48	45.16*
	16	2.87	1.11	6.88	.33	31.89*
Total Integrated Score		10.23	3.72	24.88	1.60	33.14*
Intrinsic Motivation	6	2.60	1.22	7.00	.00	33.00*
	14	2.62	1.11	7.00	.00	36.25*

Table 3.5 (continued)

Subscales	Item Number	Lower 27 %		Upper 27 %		<i>t</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Intrinsic Motivation	19	2.99	1.36	7.00	.00	27.08*
	21	2.74	1.19	7.00	.00	32.73*
		11.67	4.91	27.71	.46	29.82*
Total Scale Scores		62.94	8.63	95.10	5.92	28.15*

* $p < .01$

As shown in Table 3.5, the differences between the mean scores of the upper 27 % and lower 27 % groups for all scale items, sub-dimensions, and the entire scale were statistically significant ($p < .01$). These differences favored the upper 27 % group, indicating that the CMQ items differentiated participants who scored high from those who scored low across all six dimensions.

3.3.1.5.4. Reliability Analysis of CMQ

The reliability of the measurement tool was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega reliability coefficients. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were found to be .97 for the amotivation subscale, .82 for the external regulation subscale, .83 for the introjected regulation subscale, .87 for the identified regulation subscale, .88 for the integrated regulation subscale, .95 for the intrinsic motivation subscale, and .95 for the total scale. Similarly, the McDonald's omega coefficients were found to be .97 for the amotivation subscale, .83 for the introjected regulation subscale, .87 for the identified regulation subscale, .88 for the integrated regulation subscale, .95 for the intrinsic motivation subscale, and .96 for the total scale.

3.3.2. The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)

The original Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), consisting of 32 items, was developed by Spanier (1976). These items are categorized into four dimensions: dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and affectional expression. To

determine whether the DAS measured the same general construct, correlational analyses were conducted with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (MAT, 1959), the most frequently used scale. The resulting coefficients were .86 for married participants and .88 for divorced participants. The total scale reliability analysis revealed Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .96 for the entire scale, with coefficients of .90, .94, .86, and .73 for dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and affectional expression, respectively.

However, subsequent studies have critiqued the DAS regarding its nature, questioning whether it serves as a unidimensional global measure or a multidimensional instrument (Busby et al., 1995). Although the original definition of dyadic adjustment was inherently multidimensional, empirical research failed to validate the DAS subscales. For example, Spanier and Thompson's (1982) factor analysis showed that items in the consensus, satisfaction, and cohesion subscales loaded fairly well, though the positive and negative items of the satisfaction subscale did not group. Additionally, two of the four items in the affectional expression subscale had small factor loadings. A study comparing distressed and non-distressed couples also found issues with the validity of the dyadic satisfaction and affectional expression subscales (Crane et al., 1990).

As a result, Busby et al. (1995) revised the scale, reducing the number of items to 14, with all items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "most of the time" to "never". Scores on this revised scale (RDAS) range from 14 to 70, with higher total scores indicating better marital adjustment. The RDAS comprises three subscales: dyadic satisfaction (e.g., "Do you ever regret that you married?" and "How often do you and your partner quarrel?"), dyadic cohesion (e.g., "How often do you work together on a project?" and "How often do you calmly discuss something?"), and dyadic consensus (e.g., "consensus on making major decisions" and "consensus on career decisions"). Unlike the DAS, the RDAS demonstrated acceptable levels of construct validity through several factor analyses. The correlation coefficient between DAS and RDAS was very high ($r = .97$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, the correlation

coefficient between RDAS and MAT was .68 ($p < .01$). The Guttman split-half reliability coefficient for the RDAS was .94 (Busby et al., 1995).

The Turkish adaptation of the revised scale was conducted by Gündoğdu (2007), and reliability coefficients were measured as .80 for dyadic satisfaction, .74 for dyadic cohesion, .80 for dyadic consensus, and .87 for the whole scale with a sample of 584 married females and males. Subsequently, Bayraktaroğlu and Çakıcı (2017) re-examined the psychometric properties of the scale. They found that Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the RDAS were .88, .80, .80, and .74 for the total score, satisfaction, consensus, and cohesion subscales, respectively. The correlation of the scale with the Marital Problem-Solving Scale (Baugh et al., 1982) used for criterion-related validity was calculated as .69 ($p < 0.01$). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scale were found to be .80 for dyadic satisfaction, .78 for dyadic cohesion, .80 for dyadic consensus, and .88 for the total scale. These results support that the RDAS is a reliable and valid measurement tool for assessing marital adjustment.

3.3.3. Demographic Information Form

The researcher created a Demographic Information Form (see Appendix B) to collect data regarding the demographic and relational characteristics of the participants. The form includes questions about demographic information such as age, gender, education level, occupation, income, and whether they have children as well as relational characteristics, including how the participants met their partners, and the length of their marriage.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure for the Main Study

To initiate data collection, approval was obtained from the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee (see Appendix A). The data collection process was completed between November 2023 and July 2024. The sample for this study was recruited a convenience sampling method with at least one year of marital experience criterion. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with both

partners in each married couple required to participate. Data were collected via an online survey, creating a Google Forms link, which included the necessary questionnaires, and announced through various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. This approach aimed to ensure a diverse and comprehensive sample of married couples, capturing a range of marital durations, thereby providing a robust foundation for the study's validity and reliability.

To ensure the privacy of participants' responses, several measures were implemented. The consent form provided detailed instructions for participants to fill out the questionnaires separately from their partners, thereby preventing them from seeing each other's answers. Participants were able to access the research link via their cell phones or laptops, which helped to maintain the confidentiality of their responses. In addition, participants were not required to provide their names or family names, further protecting their anonymity. Instead, each couple was asked to use a common pseudonym along with their marriage date. This method ensured that the researchers could pair the responses from each couple without compromising their privacy.

The estimated time to complete the forms was approximately 20-30 minutes. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point if they chose to do so. This ensured that participants felt comfortable and in control throughout the data collection process.

3.5 Description of the Variables

In this section, the study variables are described and operationally defined. The proposed model in the current study aims to investigate the mediating role of relationship motivation in the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment. Specifically, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are identified as the exogenous (predictor) variables. Relationship motivation serves as the mediating variable, while marital adjustment is the endogenous (outcome) variable.

Autonomy: In this study, autonomy was measured using the total score obtained from the Autonomy Subscale of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship domain. The scores range from a minimum of 3 points to a maximum of 21 points, with higher scores indicating greater autonomy.

Competence: In this study, competence was measured using the total score obtained from the Competence Subscale of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship domain. The scores range from a minimum of 3 points to a maximum of 21 points, with higher scores indicating greater competence.

Relatedness: In this study, competence was measured using the total score obtained from the Relatedness Subscale of the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale - Relationship domain. The scores range from a minimum of 3 points to a maximum of 21 points, with higher scores indicating greater relatedness.

Relationship Motivation: In this study, relationship motivation was measured using the total score obtained from the Couple Motivation Questionnaire. The scores range from a minimum of -441 points to a maximum of 441 points, with higher scores indicating greater autonomous relationship motivation.

Marital Adjustment: In this study, marital adjustment was measured using the total score obtained from the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The scores range from a minimum of 14 points to a maximum of 70 points, with higher scores indicating greater marital adjustment.

3.6 Data Analyses of the Main Study

The main aim of the current study was to test the mediating effect of relationship motivation in the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment. In order to reach this aim, the mediating role of relationship

motivation between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment was investigated in married couples through the Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM).

To achieve this purpose, a series of steps were implemented to analyze the data. Initially, procedures for data screening and cleaning were applied to the raw data. Following this, assumptions regarding missing data, sample size, outliers, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were examined. Subsequently, descriptive statistics were performed to provide detailed information about the demographic and relational characteristics of the participants. Moreover, bivariate correlations were investigated by calculating Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Finally, the mediating role of relationship motivation in the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment was examined via path analyses using APIMeM analyses (Kenny, 1996). All the preliminary analyses were done with IBM SPSS v27. Confirmatory factor analysis and dyadic path analyses were conducted with AMOS 24.

3.6.1 Overview of the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM)

The actor–partner interdependence model (APIM) has gained significant recognition and has become the preferred method for analyzing dyadic data, where both members of a pair are assessed on the same outcome variables. In APIM, the analysis involves two sets of variables measured for each member: predictor variables, labeled as X, and outcome variables, labeled as Y. Within this framework, the paths from an individual's X to their own Y are known as *actor effects*, while the paths from an individual's X to their partner's Y are known as *partner effects*.

This model is particularly important for studying various relational dynamics, such as those between romantic partners (Lampis et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2017), parent-child pairs (Van der Wal et al., 2024), coaches and athletes (Jackson & Beauchamp, 2010),

or colleagues (Liu, 2009). Understanding the nature of a relationship requires considering both the actor effect and the partner effect (Kenny & Cook, 1999). This dual consideration is essential because an individual's behavior and characteristics within a relationship are influenced by their partner's behavior and characteristics (Kenny et al., 2006). In this context, a dyad is defined as an interpersonal system in which the data from both individuals are interconnected in certain respects and should be analyzed simultaneously. Dyadic data are inherently non-independent, with the responses of individuals being correlated in various ways. The APIM offers a framework for analyzing such non-independent dyadic data, providing a comprehensive approach to understanding how partners influence each other's experiences and outcomes (Kashy & Kenny, 1999).

In recent years, the assessment of mediations in dyadic data has become more common, with the Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) being a notable extension of APIM used to examine these mediations (Ledermann & Macho, 2009). This model is particularly useful for exploring how various factors mediate the relationship between actor and partner effects (Ledermann et al., 2011). Within the framework of APIMeM, this research aims to evaluate the mediating role of relationship motivation between basic psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), and marital adjustment, considering both actor and partner effects. This expanded model provides deeper insights into the complex dynamics of dyadic relationships, emphasizing the importance of mutual influences in understanding individual and relational well-being.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

In addition to its potential contributions to literature, the current study also presents some limitations. The primary limitation is the susceptibility of the findings to common method bias due to the reliance on self-report measurement tools. Participants were asked to assess their satisfaction of basic psychological needs, their marital adjustment, and their motivation within their relationships. For some participants,

confronting their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, their degree of adjustment to their marriage, and their relationship motivation may have been challenging. Given the intimate and private nature of the study's questions, there was a risk that participants might withhold certain personal information or provide socially desirable answers.

Second, the study employed convenience sampling technique, which is non-random sampling method. This poses a challenge to the external validity of the research, referring to the degree to which the study's findings can be generalized to a broader population (Fraenkel et al., 2011). While this sampling method is advantageous for reaching targeted populations with specific characteristics, they inherently limit control over the sampling process. Consequently, this lack of randomization can affect the representativeness of the sample, potentially restricting the ability to generalize the study's results to a wider population.

Third, this study utilized an online survey for data collection, allowing couples to participate using their smartphones or computers. The survey, hosted on Google Forms, was designed to prevent multiple responses from the same device. While online surveys offer several benefits, they also have limitations. One significant drawback is the reduced accessibility for certain populations, particularly those with limited internet access or those less inclined to engage with online forms. Additionally, the lack of a researcher to provide real-time assistance or clarify questions could affect the reliability of the data. Without direct interaction, participants might misunderstand or misinterpret survey questions, potentially compromising the accuracy of their responses.

Lastly, although the present study employed the Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) framework, its cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw conclusions about the causal relationships among basic psychological need satisfaction, relationship motivation, and marital adjustment. The snapshot nature of

cross-sectional data only provides a single point in time, preventing the establishment of causality and the directionality of these interactions.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings from the statistical analyses conducted in the main study. The chapter begins with an explanation of the preliminary analyses, which include data screening for missing values, sample size adequacy, and the assessment of assumptions necessary for further analyses, such as normality, influential outliers, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, distinguishability of the dyad members, and nonindependence. Following this, descriptive statistical analyses were presented, including calculations of mean, standard deviation, partner differences, and bivariate correlations among the study variables. The chapter then proceeds to test the hypotheses using dyadic path modeling (APIMeM). It concludes with a summary of the results, highlighting the key points of the study.

4.1 Preliminary Analyses

In the preliminary analyses, assumptions including the inspection of missing data, sample size adequacy, univariate and multivariate outliers, univariate and multivariate normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, distinguishability, and Nonindependence were checked. Initially, the data were screened to ensure accuracy and appropriateness for conducting path analysis within the Actor-Partner Interdependence framework. To examine all items, SPSS v27 (IBM Corp., 2020) was utilized, employing frequency tables and inspecting minimum and maximum values for data accuracy. Missing values and data entry errors were checked before further analysis. Due to the answer requirement option in Google Forms, the dataset contained no missing values or entry errors. Subsequently, reversed items were recoded, thereby preparing the dataset for the additional assumption checks necessary for the analyses.

4.1.1 Sample Size Adequacy

There are several established guidelines for determining an appropriate sample size for assessing a model. According to Hoelter (1983) and Kline (2023), a minimum of 200 participants is recommended for conducting path analyses to ensure robust and reliable results. Furthermore, Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) provide a specific formula for calculating an adequate sample size, suggesting that $N > 50 + 8m$, where N represents the number of participants, and m represents the number of independent variables in the model. Additionally, Stevens (2009) suggests having 15 subjects per predictor variable. In the current study, data were collected from 205 couples, resulting in a total sample size of 410 participants. This sample size satisfies all the aforementioned criteria for sample size adequacy.

4.1.2 Univariate and Multivariate Outliers

Following the investigation of sample size adequacy, the detection of univariate and multivariate outliers was conducted. To identify univariate outliers in this study, standardized Z scores were evaluated. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2019), univariate outliers are identified by Z-score values falling outside the range of -3.29 to +3.29, indicating unusual values on a single variable. On the other hand, Stevens (2009) suggests that for larger samples ($n > 100$), the cutoff criteria should be expanded to -4.00 and +4.00. In this study, there were 13 cases with Z-scores lower than -3.29 for variables. Given the large sample size of this study, the cutoff criteria proposed by Stevens (2009) were applied, and consequently, no univariate outliers were detected.

To identify multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis distances were examined as recommended by Kline (2023) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2019). The analysis revealed 8 cases with Mahalanobis distances exceeding the chi-square critical value, indicating potential multivariate outliers. To assess whether the presence of these outliers interfered with the study's results, all analyses were conducted twice, once including the outliers and once excluding them. The comparison of results showed no

significant differences between the two datasets. Therefore, the outliers were retained in the dataset to preserve the variation within the sample.

4.1.3 Univariate and Multivariate Normality

Univariate and multivariate normality were examined for the current dataset. To assess the univariate normality assumption, the values of skewness and kurtosis were evaluated. Kline (2023) suggests that skewness values exceeding 3, and kurtosis values exceeding 20 indicate a non-normal distribution. The results of the normality analyses for this study indicated that the skewness and kurtosis values fell within the expected ranges – the skewness values varied between -.96 and .23; kurtosis values varied between -1.01 and .30, suggesting a normal distribution for all variables. Additionally, visual inspections of histograms and Q-Q plots were conducted. These visual inspections confirmed a perfect normal distribution for variables such as marital adjustment and relationship motivation. However, the distributions for autonomy, competence, and relatedness did not exhibit perfect normality but were still within acceptable ranges.

To evaluate multivariate normality, Mardia's (1970) coefficient, which assesses multivariate normality through multivariate kurtosis, was utilized. According to Bentler (2006) and Ullman (2006), normalized coefficients higher than 3.00 indicate non-normality. In the current study, Mardia's coefficient was found to be 6.80, indicating a significant deviation from normality. Using Maximum Likelihood estimation with non-normally distributed data can lead to misinterpretations. Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) suggest data transformation as a method to handle non-normality; however, this technique can introduce interpretative issues and may distort the original responses of participants. Consequently, it was decided to proceed with the non-normally distributed data to maintain the integrity of the original dataset. To address the effects of non-normal distribution without transforming the data, bootstrapping was employed. Bootstrapping, described by Kline (2023) as a computer-based method of resampling, helps mitigate the impact of non-normal distribution by

providing more accurate estimations of standard errors for non-normal distributions. This approach allows for robust statistical analyses while preserving the original data.

4.1.4 Linearity and Homoscedasticity

Residual plots were thoroughly examined to assess the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity. Upon visual inspection, these plots exhibited an almost elliptical shape. This shape indicates that the dependent variable maintained a consistent level of variance across the entire range of independent variables, thereby satisfying the linearity assumption (Stevens, 2009). Additionally, bivariate scatterplots were scrutinized and showed no systematic patterns, further indicating that the variances of the variables were evenly and homogeneously distributed throughout the dataset (Hair et al., 2017). This homogeneous distribution of variances confirmed that the assumption of homoscedasticity was also met.

4.1.5 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity refers to a situation where two or more independent variables are correlated more than expected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Bivariate correlation coefficients, tolerance value, and variance inflation factor (VIF) were investigated to check the multicollinearity. To assess multicollinearity, multiple criteria from the literature were employed. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2019), correlation coefficients should be less than .90 to avoid multicollinearity. Additionally, Kline (2023) and Menard (1995) recommend that VIF values should be below 10, and tolerance values should be above .20. For the current dataset, evaluation of multicollinearity was conducted using these criteria. In this study, none of the correlation coefficients exceeded the .90 threshold, with values ranging from .28 to .82, within the acceptable limits. All VIF values were less than 10, ranging from 1.44 to 4.03, below the critical value. Additionally, the tolerance values were also within the acceptable range, between .29 and .69, all exceeding the .20 threshold. Therefore, the results did not indicate any issues with multicollinearity.

4.1.6 Distinguishability of the Dyad Members

Distinguishability refers to dyadic members having clearly defined roles based on non-arbitrary variables, such as sex or social roles (Kenny et al., 2006). For instance, in heterosexual couples, partners can be differentiated by gender; in sibling pairs, by birth order; and in teacher-parent pairs, by their specific roles. Conversely, in indistinguishable or exchangeable dyads, members cannot be naturally distinguished, as in same-sex friendships, identical twins, or same-gender couples. The data in this study were gathered from heterosexual married couples, specifically focusing on wives and husbands within each dyad. Consequently, the dyad members are treated as distinguishable in the context of this study.

4.1.7 Nonindependence

Nonindependence is often defined as the proportion of variance explained by the dyad, indicating how scores from linked individuals are more similar to each other than to scores from unlinked individuals (Kenny, et al., 2006). This similarity in linked scores measures the strength of nonindependence. According to Kenny et al. (2006), nonindependence can arise from several sources: *compositional effects*, where dyad members are similar even prior to pairing; *partner effects*, where one individual's traits or actions impact their partner's outcomes; *mutual influence*, where one person's outcomes directly affect the other's and vice versa, showing reciprocity or feedback; and *common fate*, where both members are exposed to the same external factors. Understanding these sources is crucial for accurately interpreting dyadic data. In a standard dyadic design, the correlation between two scores on the same variable from two members of a dyad is used to assess nonindependence. Since the current data set includes husbands and wives who are considered as distinguishable members, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated. Results indicated that both partners' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .50, p < .05$), competence need satisfaction ($r = .57, p < .05$), relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .54, p < .05$), relationship motivation ($r = .72, p < .05$), and marital adjustment ($r = .54, p < .05$) were correlated within dyads, showing nonindependence in each of the variables.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

This section provides descriptive information about the variables of the main study. Initially, it presents the means, standard deviations, and potential partner differences among the variables. Following this, the section introduces bivariate correlations, including both actor and partner correlation results.

4.2.1 Means, Standard Deviations, and Partner Differences on the Main Study Variables

First, the descriptive statistics for the main variables of the study, namely autonomy need satisfaction, competence need satisfaction, relatedness need satisfaction, relationship motivation, and marital adjustment, are presented in Table 4.1. Subsequently, to examine potential partner differences among these variables, paired samples t tests were conducted.

As seen in Table 4.1, the mean scores obtained from married couples for autonomy need satisfaction were 15.83 ($SD = 4.04$) for wives and 11.11 ($SD = 3.47$) for husbands. Paired samples t-test results revealed that there was a significant partner difference in autonomy need satisfaction, $t(204) = 17.85$, $p < .001$, with wives reporting more autonomy need satisfaction ($M_{\text{wives}} = 15.83$ and $M_{\text{husbands}} = 11.11$) as compared to their husbands.

For competence need satisfaction, the mean scores were 16.30 ($SD = 3.91$) for wives and 14.48 ($SD = 3.78$) for husbands. Paired samples t-test results revealed that there was a significant partner difference in competence need satisfaction, $t(204) = 7.31$, $p < .001$, with wives reporting more competence need satisfaction ($M_{\text{wives}} = 16.30$ and $M_{\text{husbands}} = 14.48$) as compared to their husbands.

For relatedness need satisfaction, the mean scores were 12.35 ($SD = 4.73$) for wives and 15.24 ($SD = 3.81$) for husbands. Paired samples t-test results revealed that there was a

significant partner difference in relatedness need satisfaction, $t(204) = -9.42, p < .001$, with husbands reporting more relatedness need satisfaction ($M_{\text{wives}} = 15.24$ and $M_{\text{husbands}} = 12.35$) as compared to their wives.

Regarding mediator variable relationship motivation, the mean scores were 70.67 ($SD = 38.46$) for wives and 46.83 ($SD = 50.31$) for husbands. Paired samples t-test results revealed that there was a significant partner difference in relationship motivation, $t(204) = 9.89, p < .001$, with wives reporting more relationship motivation ($M_{\text{wives}} = 70.67$ and $M_{\text{husbands}} = 46.83$) as compared to their husbands.

Last, the mean scores of the endogenous (dependent) variable marital adjustment were 55.52 ($SD = 10.13$) for wives and 43.80 ($SD = 11.50$) for husbands. Paired samples t-test results revealed that there was a significant partner difference in marital adjustment, $t(204) = 16.19, p < .001$, with wives reporting more relationship motivation ($M_{\text{wives}} = 55.52$ and $M_{\text{husbands}} = 43.80$) as compared to their husbands.

Table 4.1

Partner Differences on the Main Study Variables

	Wives (N=205)		Husbands (N=205)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Autonomy NS	15.83	4.04	11.11	3.47	17.85*
Competence NS	16.30	3.91	14.48	3.78	7.31*
Relatedness NS	12.35	4.73	15.24	3.81	-9.94*
Relationship Motivation	70.67	38.46	46.83	50.31	9.89*
Marital Adjustment	55.52	10.13	43.80	11.50	16.19*

* $p < .001$

4.2.2. Bivariate Correlations

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships among the main variables of the current study. The variables of Wives'

Autonomy Need Satisfaction (W_Autonomy), Husbands' Autonomy Need Satisfaction (H_Autonomy), Wives' Competence Need Satisfaction (W_Competence), Husbands' Competence Need Satisfaction (H_Competence), Wives' Relatedness Need Satisfaction (W_Relatedness), Husbands' Relatedness Need Satisfaction (H_Relatedness), Wive's Relationship Motivation (W_Motivation), Husbands' Relationship Motivation (H_Motivation), Wive's Marital Adjustment (W_Mar_Adj), and Husbands' Marital Adjustment (H_Mar_Adj) were included in the correlation analyses.

4.2.2.1 Bivariate Correlation Results of Actors

The bivariate correlation results between the exogenous variables (autonomy need satisfaction, competence need satisfaction, and relatedness need satisfaction), the mediator variable (relationship motivation), and the endogenous variable (marital adjustment) are presented in Table 4.2 Overall, significant correlations of actors were observed among the exogenous, endogenous, and mediator variables, with moderate to strong correlation strengths. The correlations between the variables were in the expected directions for both wives and husbands. Furthermore, no signs of multicollinearity were detected in either sample.

In terms of actor correlations, wives' autonomy need satisfaction was significantly correlated with wives' competence need satisfaction ($r = .71, p < .01$), wives' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .55, p < .01$), wives' relationship motivation ($r = .48, p < .01$), and wives' marital adjustment ($r = .56, p < .01$). Husbands' autonomy need satisfaction was significantly correlated with husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .59, p < .01$), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .57, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .49, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .30, p < .01$).

Wives' competence need satisfaction was significantly correlated with wives' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .60, p < .01$), wives' relationship motivation ($r = .52,$

$p < .01$), and wives' marital adjustment ($r = .63, p < .01$). Likewise, husbands' competence need satisfaction was significantly correlated with husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .82, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .57, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .33, p < .01$).

Wives' relatedness need satisfaction was significantly correlated with wife's relationship motivation ($r = .48, p < .01$), and wife's marital adjustment ($r = .59, p < .01$). Husbands' relatedness need satisfaction was significantly correlated with husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .63, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .40, p < .01$). Another significant correlation was found between wives' relationship motivation and their marital adjustment ($r = .74, p < .01$) in parallel with the results of husbands' relationship motivation and their marital adjustment ($r = .52, p < .01$).

4.2.2.2 Bivariate Correlation Results of Partners

Bivariate correlations of partners were also investigated. Overall, significant correlations among exogenous, endogenous, and mediator variables were identified with moderate to strong correlation strength. Wives' autonomy need satisfaction was significantly correlated with husbands' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .50, p < .01$), husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .46, p < .01$), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .55, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .50, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .29, p < .01$).

Wives' competence need satisfaction was correlated with husbands' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .57, p < .01$), husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .57, p < .01$), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .64, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .53, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .33, p < .01$). Wives' relatedness need satisfaction was correlated with husbands' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .49, p < .01$), husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .45, p < .01$),

.01), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .54, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .49, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .28, p < .01$).

Wives' relationship motivation was correlated with husbands' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .42, p < .01$), husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .41, p < .01$), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .50, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .72, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .48, p < .01$). Wives' marital adjustment was correlated with husbands' autonomy need satisfaction ($r = .45, p < .01$), husbands' competence need satisfaction ($r = .47, p < .01$), husbands' relatedness need satisfaction ($r = .60, p < .01$), husbands' relationship motivation ($r = .73, p < .01$), and husbands' marital adjustment ($r = .54, p < .01$).

Table 4.2
Bivariate Correlations Between Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.W_Autonomy	1									
2.W_Competence	.71*	1								
3.W_Relatedness	.55*	.60*	1							
4.W_Motivation	.48*	.52*	.48*	1						
5.W_Mar_Adj	.56*	.63*	.59*	.74*	1					
6.H_Autonomy	.50*	.57*	.49*	.42*	.45*	1				
7.H_Competence	.46*	.57*	.45*	.41*	.47*	.59*	1			
8.H_Relatedness	.55*	.64*	.54*	.50*	.60*	.57*	.82*	1		
9.H_Motivation	.50*	.53*	.49*	.72*	.73*	.49*	.57*	.63*	1	
10.H_Mar_Adj	.29*	.33*	.28*	.48*	.54*	.30*	.33*	.40*	.52*	1

* $p < .01$

4.3 The Results of the Main Hypotheses

The aim of the current study is to investigate the mediating role of relationship motivation in the relationship between basic psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), and marital adjustment in a sample of Turkish married couples. Since the results were evaluated in terms of the actor-partner

effects, the APIMeM framework for distinguishable partners (i.e., wives and husbands) was utilized for data examination through Amos 24. Before these analyses were conducted, paired samples t-tests results were obtained to determine partner differences between the variables in the study; Pearson-product coefficients were also evaluated to identify the bivariate correlations among the variables.

The proposed model suggested that relationship motivation will mediate the relationship between psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and marital adjustment. To assess the research question of the study, a saturated model was generated. The goodness of fit of the model was $\chi^2(6) = 33.57$, $p > .05$, CFI = .98, GFI = .97, SRMR = .06. It was seen that CFI and GFI values were all above 0.95, indicating an acceptable fit. SRMR value was also below the threshold of 0.08, which was another indication of a good fit. Kenny et al. (2015) discovered through their simulation studies that the RMSEA value may suggest a poor fit in models with low degrees of freedom. They also reported that this phenomenon can occur even when the chi-square results are not significant. Consequently, it was concluded that in situations where the model's degrees of freedom are low, the RMSEA value alone is insufficient for evaluating model fit, particularly when the sample size is not excessively large. In light of this information, it is seen that the degrees of freedom for the model are low ($df = 6$). In addition, considering that the sample size is not too large and other fit indices indicate a good fit, it is accepted that the model has a good fit.

To examine the amount of variance explained by this study's hypothesized model, squared multiple correlations (R^2) were calculated. The squared multiple correlations indicate the explained portion of variance by predictors for each dependent variable. According to the data obtained, 35.2% of the variance in the relationship motivation of husbands was explained by the predictors given in the model. The results also indicated that 23.6% of the variance in the relationship motivation of wives' was explained by the predictors given in the model. Higher values indicate that the predictors account for a greater portion of the variance in that particular variable,

suggesting a stronger relationship between predictors and the outcome. In the given model, while the wives' marital adjustment was the best-explained variable (66.4%), the husbands' marital adjustment explained 26.7% of the variance among the listed variables.

The regression coefficient was analyzed following Cohen's guidelines to determine the strength of the correlation for the identified significant pathways. According to Cohen (1988), a standardized regression coefficient ranging from 0.10 to 0.30 is categorized as weak, values between 0.30 and 0.50 are classified as moderate, and coefficients above 0.50 signify strong effects. Similarly, McCartney and Rosenthal (2000) emphasized that widely accepted conventions suggest that coefficient values around 0.10 indicate a small effect, while values near 0.30 are indicative of a moderate effect.

To evaluate the mediation effect of relationship motivation between basic psychological needs satisfaction and marital adjustment, a specific guideline was followed. According to Maassen and Bakker (2001) and MacKinnon et al. (2000), a mediation model can result in partial mediation, complete mediation, or inconsistent mediation. Complete mediation occurs when there is a significant indirect effect through the mediator, but no direct effect is present. Partial mediation arises when both direct and indirect effects exist, and they share the same direction. Inconsistent mediation appears when both direct and indirect effects are present, but they have opposite signs. Therefore, in the current analysis, both indirect and direct effects were examined to determine whether the mediation in the proposed model is complete, partial, or inconsistent.

4.3.1. Actor Effects

Actor effects were evaluated by determining the direct and indirect effects for wives and husbands. Actor direct effects were examined among autonomy need satisfaction,

competence need satisfaction, relatedness need satisfaction, relationship motivation, and marital adjustment.

The direct actor effect of their autonomy need satisfaction showed a significant and positive effect on their relationship motivation for husbands ($\gamma = .16, p < .01$) with a small effect size. Husbands have therefore more self-determined relationship motivation when they experience autonomy need satisfaction in their relationship. However, the autonomy need satisfaction did not show a significant actor effect on wives' relationship motivation. Furthermore, the competence need satisfaction of wives contributed to their relationship motivation significantly and positively ($\gamma = .29, p < .01$) with a small effect size. Women who experience competence need satisfaction tend to have more self-determined relationship motivation in their relationships. However, the competence need satisfaction did not show a significant actor effect on husbands' relationship motivation. In addition, relatedness need satisfaction of wives predicted their relationship motivation significantly and positively ($\gamma = .17, p < .01$), which demonstrated a small effect. Likewise, husbands' relatedness need satisfaction had a significant actor effect on their relationship motivation ($\gamma = .37, p < .01$) with moderate effect. Both husbands and wives exhibit greater self-determined motivation in their relationships when they perceive their need for relatedness as being fulfilled. In summary, wives' relationship motivation was significantly predicted by their competence and relatedness need satisfaction, whereas husbands' relationship motivation was significantly predicted by their autonomy and relatedness need satisfaction.

Autonomy need satisfaction did not have a significant actor effect on marital adjustment for wives and husbands. Competence need satisfaction demonstrated a positive and statistically significant direct actor effect on marital adjustment for wives ($\gamma = .19, p < .01$), indicating a small effect size. For husbands, no such actor effect was observed. A similar pattern was detected in the relationship between relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment. Relatedness need satisfaction showed a positive and statistically significant direct actor effect on marital adjustment for wives

($\gamma = .17, p < .01$), with a small effect size. For husbands, relatedness need satisfaction was not a significant predictor of marital adjustment. In summary, while competence and relatedness need satisfaction were positively related to marital adjustment for wives, autonomy need satisfaction did not have a significant impact. In contrast, none of the psychological needs satisfaction were significant factors in predicting marital adjustment for husbands. Relationship motivation also showed a significant and positive actor effect on marital adjustment for wives ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and husbands ($\beta = .30, p < .001$).

In the evaluation of actor effects, the indirect effect of relationship motivation as a mediator was analyzed separately for wives and husbands. For wives, the competence need satisfaction's effect on marital adjustment was found to be significantly, positively, and partially mediated through relationship motivation ($\gamma = .10, p < .01, [CI .04, .18]$). In other words, when wives' competence needs are fulfilled within the relationship, it enhances their relationship motivation, which, in turn, leads to greater marital adjustment. For wives, the relatedness need satisfaction's effect on marital adjustment was found to be significantly, positively, and partially mediated through relationship motivation ($\gamma = .06, p < .01, [CI .02, .12]$). In other words, when wives' relatedness needs are fulfilled within the relationship, it enhances their relationship motivation, which, in turn, leads to greater marital adjustment.

For husbands, the autonomy need satisfaction's effect on marital adjustment was found to be significantly, positively, and fully mediated through relationship motivation ($\gamma = .05, p < .01, [CI .01, .12]$). In other words, when husbands' autonomy needs are fulfilled within the relationship, it enhances their relationship motivation, which, in turn, leads to greater marital adjustment. For husbands, the relatedness need satisfaction's effect on marital adjustment was found to be significantly, positively, and fully mediated through relationship motivation ($\gamma = .11, p < .05, [CI .03, .25]$). In other words, when husbands' relatedness needs are fulfilled within the relationship, it enhances their relationship motivation, which, in turn, leads to greater marital adjustment.

4.3.2. Partner Effects

The direct partner effect of autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction did not predict marital adjustment significantly for both wives and husbands. Relationship motivation showed a significant and positive partner effect on marital adjustment for wives ($\beta = .29, p < .01$) and husbands ($\beta = .22, p < .01$). In the evaluation of partner effects, the indirect effect of relationship motivation as a mediator was analyzed separately for wives and husbands. Wives' competence need satisfaction on husbands' marital adjustment was significantly, positively, and partially mediated by the relationship motivation of wives ($\gamma = .06, p < .05, [CI .04, .18]$). Wives' relatedness need satisfaction on husbands' marital adjustment was significantly, positively, and fully mediated by the relationship motivation of wives ($\gamma = .04, p < .05, [CI .01, .10]$). In other words, wives' satisfaction with competence and relatedness needs significantly influenced their husbands' marital adjustment through the wives' relationship motivation. This indicates that the positive effects of wives' competence and relatedness needs satisfaction on their husbands' marital adjustment are explained by the enhanced relationship motivation of the wives, indicating the critical role of relationship motivation as a mediator in these partner dynamics.

For husbands, autonomy need satisfaction on wives' marital adjustment was significantly, positively, and fully mediated by the relationship motivation of husbands ($\gamma = .05, p < .01, [CI .01, .10]$). In addition, husbands' relatedness need satisfaction on wives' marital adjustment was significantly, positively, and fully mediated by the relationship motivation of husbands ($\gamma = .11, p < .01, [CI .04, .22]$). In other words, husbands' autonomy and relatedness need satisfaction positively influenced their wives' marital adjustment through the husbands' relationship motivation. All analyzed actor and partner effects, along with their corresponding values, are presented in Table 4.3.

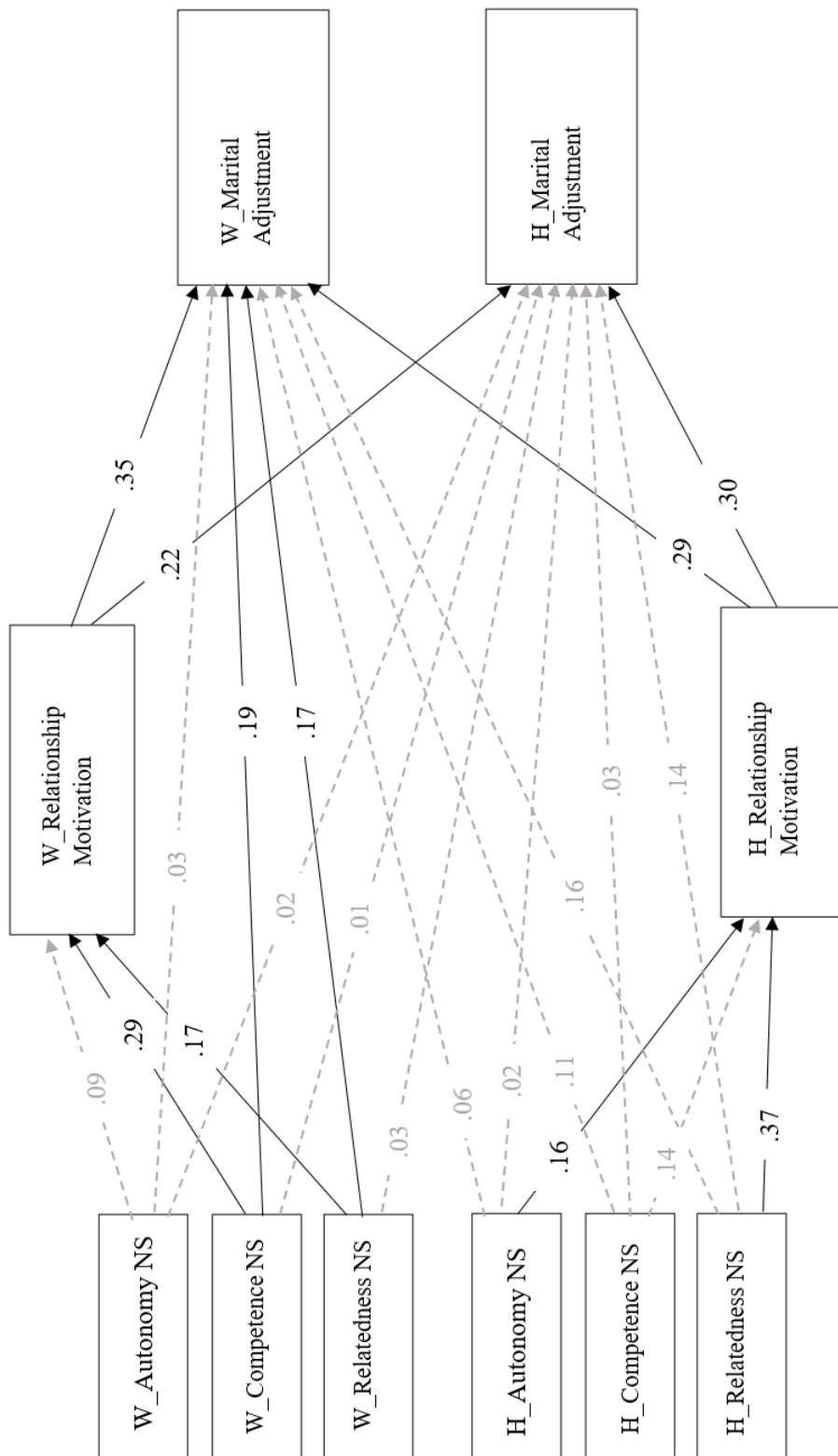


Figure 4.1 Diagram of the structural model

Table 4.3

Actor and Partner Effects among Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction, Relationship Motivation, and Marital Adjustment

Effects	B	SE	γ	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
<u>Actor Effects</u>							
Autonomy → R. Motivation							
Wives	.85	.67	.09	1.23	.21	-.06	.27
Husbands	2.13	.82	.16	2.60	.01	.03	.27
Competence → R. Motivation							
Wives	2.67	.73	.29	3.66	.00	.11	.46
Husbands	1.70	1.07	.14	1.59	.11	-.06	.32
Relatedness → R. Motivation							
Wives	1.32	.50	.17	2.64	.01	.05	.29
Husbands	4.62	1.06	.37	4.36	.00	.19	.56
R. Motivation → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.09	.15	.35	.60	.001	.21	.49
Husbands	.07	.02	.30	3.50	.001	.08	.54
Autonomy → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.07	.14	.03	.49	.62	-.09	.17
Husbands	.05	.27	.02	.19	.84	-.16	.19
Competence → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.46	.17	.19	2.71	.00	.13	.37
Husbands	.08	.33	.03	.24	.80	-.22	.18
Relatedness → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.35	.11	.17	3.18	.00	.07	.28
Husbands	.40	.36	.14	1.12	.26	-.07	.33
<u>Partner Effects</u>							
R. Motivation → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.06	.01	.29	4.83	.00	.15	.44
Husbands	.07	.03	.22	2.68	.01	.02	.40
Autonomy → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.17	.15	.06	1.09	.27	-.17	.52
Husbands	.00	.25	.02	.32	.75	-.21	.18
Competence → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.29	.19	.11	1.57	.11	-.26	.37
Husbands	.03	.29	.01	.09	.92	-.15	.18
Relatedness → Marital Adjustment							
Wives	.40	.21	.14	1.96	.06	.00	.31
Husbands	.09	.19	.03	.48	.62	-.21	.13

Table 4.4

Indirect Actor and Partner Effects among Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction, Relationship Motivation, and Marital Adjustment

Effects	B	γ	p	LLCI	ULCI
<u>Actor Indirect</u>					
W_Autonomy → W_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.08	.03	.19	-.02	.11
W_Competence → W_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.24	.10	.00	.04	.18
W_Relatedness → W_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.12	.06	.00	.02	.12
H_Autonomy → H_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.15	.05	.01	.01	.12
H_Competence → H_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.12	.04	.10	-.01	.14
H_Relatedness → H_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.33	.11	.00	.03	.25
<u>Partner Indirect</u>					
W_Autonomy → W_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.06	.02	.16	-.01	.09
W_Competence → W_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.18	.06	.01	.01	.15
W_Relatedness → W_Motivation → H_Mar Adj	.09	.04	.01	.01	.10
H_Autonomy → H_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.13	.05	.00	.01	.10
H_Competence → H_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.10	.04	.13	-.01	.12
H_Relatedness → H_Motivation → W_Mar Adj	.27	.11	.00	.04	.22

4.4 Reporting Results Based on Study Hypotheses

In this part, the results of the current study hypotheses were explained in detail. The main research question of the present study is “To what extent does relationship motivation mediate the relationship between basic psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy, competence and relatedness), and marital adjustment of married couples?” The hypotheses were analyzed in light of the main research question of the study.

Actor Effects:

H1a discussed the actor effect in the association of autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives’ and husbands’ autonomy need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was rejected for both wives and husbands.

H1b discussed the actor effect in the association of competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives' and husbands' competence need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was confirmed for wives ($\gamma = .19, p < .01$), whereas it was rejected for husbands.

H1c discussed the actor effect in the association of relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives' and husbands' relatedness need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was confirmed for wives ($\gamma = .17, p < .01$), whereas it was rejected for husbands.

H2a addressed the actor effect in the relationship between autonomy need satisfaction and their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands: *Wives' and husbands' autonomy need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own relationship motivation.* This hypothesis was rejected for wives, whereas it was confirmed for husbands ($\gamma = .16, p < .01$).

H2b addressed the actor effect in the relationship between competence need satisfaction and their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands: *Wives' and husbands' competence need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own relationship motivation.* This hypothesis was confirmed for wives ($\gamma = .29, p < .01$) whereas it was rejected for husbands.

H2c addressed the actor effect in the relationship between relatedness need satisfaction and their own relationship motivation for both wives and husbands: *Wives' and husbands' relatedness need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own relationship motivation.* This hypothesis was confirmed for both wives ($\gamma = .17, p < .05$) and husbands ($\gamma = .37, p < .01$).

H3a discussed the mediating effect of relationship motivation between autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *The actor effect of autonomy need satisfaction on*

marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands. This hypothesis was rejected for wives, whereas it was confirmed for husbands ($\gamma = .05, p < .01$) with full mediation.

H3b discussed the mediating effect of relationship motivation between competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *The actor effect of competence need satisfaction on marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.* This hypothesis was confirmed for wives ($\gamma = .10, p < .01$) with partial mediation, whereas it was rejected for husbands.

H3c discussed the mediating effect of relationship motivation between relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *The actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on marital adjustment will be mediated by individuals' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.* This hypothesis was confirmed for both wives ($\gamma = .06, p < .01$) with partial mediation, and husbands ($\gamma = .11, p < .05$) with full mediation.

Partner Effects:

H4a addressed the mediating effect of partners' relationship motivation between partners' autonomy need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment: *The relationship between individuals' partners' autonomy need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.* This hypothesis was confirmed for wives ($\gamma = .05, p < .01$) with full mediation, whereas it was rejected for husbands.

H4b addressed the mediating effect of partners' relationship motivation between partners' competence need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment: *The relationship between individuals' partners' competence need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for*

both wives and husbands. This hypothesis was rejected for wives, whereas it was confirmed for husbands ($\gamma = .06, p < .05$) with full mediation.

H4c addressed the mediating effect of partners' relationship motivation between partners' relatedness need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment: *The relationship between individuals' partners' relatedness need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment will be mediated by their partners' relationship motivation for both wives and husbands.* This hypothesis was confirmed for both wives ($\gamma = .11, p < .01$) with partial mediation, and husbands ($\gamma = .04, p < .05$) with full mediation.

H5a discussed the partner effect in the association of autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives' and husbands' partners' autonomy need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was not supported by the results for either wives or husbands.

H5b discussed the partner effect in the association of competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives' and husbands' partners' competence need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was not supported by the results for either wives or husbands.

H5c discussed the partner effect in the association of relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment: *Wives' and husbands' partners' relatedness need satisfaction will be positively associated with their own marital adjustment.* This hypothesis was not supported by the results for either wives or husbands.

4.5 Summary of the Results

The study tested several hypotheses to examine how relationship motivation mediates the relationship between basic psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy,

competence, and relatedness) and marital adjustment in married couples. Hypotheses were tested for actor and partner effects on both wives and husbands.

The analysis of actor effects revealed differences between wives and husbands in how psychological need satisfaction influences marital adjustment and relationship motivation. While autonomy need satisfaction did not have a significant actor effect on marital adjustment for either group, competence and relatedness need satisfaction were positively associated with marital adjustment for wives, but not for husbands. Autonomy need satisfaction was positively related to relationship motivation for husbands, but not for wives. On the other hand, competence need satisfaction was positively related to relationship motivation for wives, but not for husbands. Relatedness need satisfaction was an important predictor of relationship motivation for both groups. Mediation analyses showed that relationship motivation played a crucial role, mediating the effect of relatedness need satisfaction on marital adjustment for both groups. The mediating effect of relationship motivation between autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment was significant only for husbands, while the mediating effect between competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment was significant only for wives.

For partner effects, the results showed the importance of relationship motivation in explaining how one partner's psychological needs influence the other partner's marital adjustment. Relatedness need satisfaction was mediated by relationship motivation, positively impacting on marital adjustment for both wives and husbands. However, competence need satisfaction had a mediated effect only for husbands, not for wives. In addition, autonomy need satisfaction had a mediated effect only for wives, not for husbands. Direct partner effects of psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) on marital adjustment were not observed.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter consists of three main sections, including a comprehensive assessment of the results of the study. In the first section, the results are discussed in relation to the existing literature and theoretical frameworks that address both actor and partner effects. The second section presents theoretical and practical implications obtained from the findings. Lastly, the third section outlines recommendations for further research to enhance the understanding of marital relationships.

5.1. Discussion of the Findings

Marital relationships are often characterized by their inherent complexity, shaped by the continuous interplay between individual experiences and shared relational processes (Sharpe, 2004; Singer et al., 2015). Understanding the factors that contribute to marital adjustment requires a holistic perspective that encompasses both intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. Grounded in self-determination theory, this study examined the role of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in shaping marital adjustment, with a particular focus on relationship motivation as a mediating factor. The findings reveal the interactions of these components within the context of married couples, providing beneficial insights into the mechanisms that facilitate marital adjustment.

The dyadic approach, which allows simultaneous investigation of relationship (partner) and individual (actor) effects, is a significant strength of this study. This framework recognizes how couples affect one another's experiences and actions as

well as individual characteristics that shape marital quality. Incorporating both points of view provide a more comprehensive understanding of marital dynamics and highlight the interdependence fundamental in close relationships. This framework is particularly valuable for identifying both direct and indirect pathways through which individual needs and motivations translate into relational outcomes.

The findings emphasize the significance of both need satisfaction and relationship motivation as fundamental aspects of marital adjustment. While autonomy, competence, and relatedness are essential for individuals to feel fulfilled and capable within their relationships, relationship motivation determines the degree of engagement and investment in maintaining relational quality. The interaction of these components not only determines individual experiences within the marriage but also has deeper impacts on their relationship overall. The actor and partner effects identified in the study are discussed, explaining how these dynamics interact in marital relationships together with the implications for theory and practice.

5.1.1 Discussion of Actor Effects

Hypothesis 1a, b, and c aimed to examine the association between basic psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and marital adjustment, considering actor effects for both wives and husbands. The results provide important information about how these needs function within marital dynamics, revealing significant partner differences that align with and challenge existing literature.

H1a proposed that there would be a positive relationship between autonomy need satisfaction and one's own marital adjustment. However, this hypothesis was rejected for both wives and husbands. This suggests that individual satisfaction with autonomy in the marital context may not directly translate into marital adjustment. This finding seems to contradict the findings of Öz-Soysal et al. (2024), who reported that emerging adults experiencing autonomy need satisfaction exhibited higher levels of perceived romantic relationship quality. As emerging adulthood is a period of identity

exploration in which autonomy may play a more central role in relationship quality, this discrepancy may be explained by differences in the relationship stage. In contrast, within marital relationships, especially in long-term unions, autonomy might be less predictive of marital quality due to the increasing importance of interdependence and mutual support.

Another possible explanation is that cultural values may shape variations in individuals' expectations and desires within close relationships (Ryan et al., 2005). The satisfaction of autonomy needs may not serve as a primary driver of marital adjustment, particularly in collectivist cultures and interdependent marital structures. Instead, excessive emphasis on autonomy may even be perceived as emotional distance or disengagement in a collectivist culture (Aydın, 2020; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Furthermore, the role of autonomy may differ depending on the specific relational dynamics within marriage. Prioritizing personal autonomy may be seen as a lack of commitment in contexts where interdependence and collective decision-making are emphasized. This is consistent with research suggesting that in collectivist settings, satisfaction in close relationships often stems from interdependence and shared responsibility rather than individual independence (Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2022). In addition, emotional support and shared values may be more important than autonomy needs as determinants of marital adjustment for partners in long-term relationships.

Another cornerstone of SDT, competence reflects individuals' need to perceive themselves as effective and capable in managing obstacles and reaching goals. Competence is particularly important in relational settings because managing interpersonal challenges and fulfilling relational roles require confidence and skill. In this study, competence need satisfaction emerged as a significant predictor of marital adjustment for wives (H1b). This finding is consistent with Patrick et al. (2007, Study 1), who demonstrated that competence need satisfaction was associated with a range of positive outcomes for individual and relational well-being. Competence was uniquely and positively related to individual well-being, as it correlated with higher self-esteem, greater positive affect, and increased vitality, while being uniquely related

to lower levels of negative affect. In relational contexts, competence need satisfaction was positively related to relationship satisfaction and constructive conflict resolution, including more understanding responses, and was uniquely related to lower levels of perceived conflict and defensiveness. It is important to note that the aforementioned study primarily involved individuals in romantic relationships. The average age of the participants was 22 and approximately 80 % of the participants were women. Rather than focusing on married individuals or couples, the study focused on college students who were in the dating period. Additionally, much of the existing literature has examined these associations without explicitly considering gender differences. Therefore, given the limited data on the dynamics of married couples, the current study aimed to contribute to filling this gap by expanding knowledge in this area. In this study, women, in particular, may derive greater marital adjustment from perceiving themselves as competent partners, caregivers, and contributors to the household, reinforcing the association between competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment. In contrast, the absence of a significant effect on husbands raises questions about gendered expectations in marital relationships. Some studies suggest that traditional masculinity norms emphasize external achievements and social status over relational competence (Hearn et al., 2023). As a result, husbands might not necessarily tie their sense of competence to marital adjustment as strongly as wives do.

Relatedness need satisfaction, as conceptualized within Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985a), encompasses the sense of connection, mutual understanding, and emotional intimacy that individuals experience in their close relationships. The hypothesis suggesting a significant positive actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on an individual's own marital adjustment (H1c) is grounded in existing theoretical and empirical frameworks. In this study, relatedness need satisfaction emerged as a significant predictor of marital adjustment for wives. The need for relatedness is often referred to as intimacy (Reis & Patrick, 1996; Reis & Shaver, 1988) or belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) in close relationship studies. Reis and Patrick (1996) defined intimacy as encompassing feelings of being understood, cared for, and validated. Their research demonstrates that these elements of intimacy

contribute to optimal psychological well-being and relationship functioning. Research on marital communication has shown that feeling validated by a partner is related to higher levels of relationship satisfaction (Gottman, 1994), while feeling cared for by a partner is associated with a stronger sense of relationship security (Collins & Miller, 1994). Considering the results as a whole, these findings and theoretical perspectives provide a strong foundation for understanding the positive actor effect of relatedness need satisfaction on marital adjustment. The fulfillment of relatedness needs, through experiences of intimacy, validation, and care, not only fosters individual psychological well-being but also enhances one's perception of marital quality. Thus, the significant role of relatedness need satisfaction in shaping marital dynamics highlights its importance as a core determinant of relational functioning within close relationships.

The greater association between women's basic psychological need satisfaction and marital adjustment compared to men's deserves mention. Although research often does not separately examine results for men and women, this finding is consistent with existing literature. Patrick et al. (2007, Study 2) found that the association between overall need fulfillment and understanding responses to conflict was significant for women but not for men. Specifically, actor need fulfillment was positively related to understanding responses in conflict situations for women but showed no significant effect for men. This pattern was consistent across sub-dimensions for autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. This suggests that women's marital adjustment may be more sensitive to the fulfillment of these psychological needs. A possible explanation is that society and cultural norms may emphasize relational and emotional connection as more central to women's roles within marriage (Brown et al., 2015; Eagly & Koenig, 2006). Although the majority of female participants in this study had a role in professional working life (only 10.7% reported being a housewife), gender roles still seem to shape their self-concepts (Gardner & Gabriel, 2004). According to the results of the phenomenological study conducted by Çağırkan (2023) in İzmir, which examined the perceptions of gender roles of women from different generations, traditional gender roles place more responsibility on women for domestic labor and childcare regardless of the generation gap. Working women in particular are forced to

undertake tasks such as contributing to the household economy and continuing domestic labor to maintain household organization. Similarly, research conducted by Paçacıoğlu (2018) reveals that there has been no significant change in family responsibilities such as housework and childcare despite the increasing rate of women working outside the home. Additionally, the results of the TÜİK family structure survey (2021), which provides data on who usually does the housework in the household, show that women mostly undertake childcare (94.4%), laundry and dishwashing (even with a machine, 85.6%), cooking (85.4%), and daily tidying and cleaning of the house (85.4%). Moreover, in Türkiye, the identity dimension that women consider most important in defining themselves is family rather than education and occupation (Gezici, 2002). Therefore, it seems that women are more likely to develop relational and interdependent self-concepts, leading them to be more engaged in and attentive to relational dynamics in the family (Acitelli et al., 1999), which in turn makes their marital adjustment more closely tied to the satisfaction with their psychological needs, particularly for competence and relatedness needs.

The present findings offer an examination of how the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs—central tenets of SDT—differentially predict relationship motivation among married wives and husbands (H2a, H2b, & H2c). The gender-specific actor effects observed here highlight the complex interplay between psychological needs and sociocultural frameworks that shape relational dynamics. Fulfillment of basic psychological needs is essential for optimal functioning. When individuals experience higher levels of need fulfillment, they are more likely to exhibit greater intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Knee et al., 2013). Research increasingly shows that intrinsic motivation flourishes in environments that foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Knee & Browne, 2023). Empirical evidence demonstrating how fulfilling basic psychological needs fosters the development of self-determined motivation primarily comes from studies conducted within various social contexts of individuals, including their parents, teachers, employers, coaches, and broader social networks (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Niemiec et al., 2006; Roth et al., 2009). For instance, developmental research indicates that children raised in social

environments that nurture their basic psychological needs tend to exhibit greater autonomous motivation across various tasks and activities in their lives (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). Over time, their intrinsic motivation is either sustained or strengthened (Deci & Ryan, 1980), and they are more likely to internalize extrinsic motivations (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989), enabling them to approach even less appealing yet developmentally significant tasks with a sense of autonomy (Grolnick et al., 1991). While much of the research has focused on general motivational orientations, SDT also emphasizes that contexts supporting the fulfillment of needs can foster intrinsic motivation within a relationship domain (Ryan, 1995). The rejection of H2a for wives—where autonomy need satisfaction did not significantly predict their relationship motivation—contrasts with SDT’s claims but aligns with emerging research highlighting gendered dynamics in need prioritization. While autonomy is central to self-determined motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017), its role in relational contexts may differ by gender. This finding may reflect the tension between autonomy and traditional gender norms that emphasize women’s roles mostly as caregivers and relational harmonizers, which aligns with the findings of H2b and H2c. Cross and Madson’s (1997) model of interdependent self-construal posits that women often prioritize connection and responsiveness to others’ needs over self-directed agency. In marital contexts, wives may perceive autonomy—defined as volitional action aligned with personal values—as conflicting with communal goals, which may weaken its motivational influence. For instance, a wife’s desire to pursue individual autonomy might provoke guilt if framed as neglecting familial duties (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999), weakening the link between autonomy satisfaction and relational motivation. For husbands, the confirmed positive association suggests that autonomy need fulfillment, such as experiencing volition and choice within the relationship, enhances their motivation to invest in the partnership. Conversely, the nonsignificant finding for wives may reflect societal norms that frame women’s relational roles as interdependent (Aktaş, 2013; Cross & Madson, 1997). Women’s motivation may be less dependent on autonomy, as cultural norms prioritize communal goals over personal agency (Gabriel & Gardner, 1999).

Similarly, the significant association between competence need satisfaction and relationship motivation for wives, but not husbands (H2b), also emphasizes the role of gendered socialization in determining the importance of specific psychological needs. For wives, competence may reflect perceived efficacy in nurturing the relationship, a role often culturally prescribed to women (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Empirical work supports that women's self-concept is more tied to relational competence (Sanchez et al., 2012), potentially explaining why feeling capable of maintaining the partnership enhances their motivation toward a relationship. Societal narratives often equate women's relational competence with successful caregiving, conflict resolution, and emotional labor (Bear & Glick, 2017). When wives perceive themselves as skilled in these domains, their motivation to invest in the relationship likely intensifies, as it validates their culturally prescribed role. Husbands' lack of a significant association, however, suggests that competence in relational contexts may be less central to their self-concept. For husbands, competence in broader domains (e.g., career achievement, physical ability, or financial investment) may overshadow relational competence, diminishing its salience in this context. Men may not perceive relational competence as essential for maintaining their motivation in a relationship, as their value in relationships is often framed around autonomy, financial provision, or instrumental support rather than relational competence (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

The confirmation of H2c, which found a significant positive association between relatedness need satisfaction and relationship motivation for both wives and husbands, emphasizes the central role of relatedness in fostering the reasons for being in the relationship. According to SDT, relatedness—the fundamental human need to feel connected, valued, and emotionally supported—serves as a universal driver of motivation across various domains, particularly in intimate relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The fact that both men and women exhibit higher relationship motivation when their relatedness needs are met aligns with this theoretical framework and highlights the intrinsic value of emotional closeness in sustaining marital bonds. Unlike autonomy and competence, which showed gender asymmetries in their impact on relationship motivation, relatedness appears to be important for both men and

women. This finding suggests that despite differences in socialization and gender expectations, both husbands and wives are motivated to maintain their relationships when they feel emotionally connected and valued by their partners.

While relatedness need satisfaction significantly predicted relationship motivation for both genders, the effect size was larger for husbands than for wives. This asymmetry raises important questions about gender differences in the experience and impact of relatedness in marital relationships. Research suggests that men, more than women, often rely on their romantic partners as their primary source of emotional support (Proulx et al., 2007; Simon, 2002). Unlike women, who typically maintain broader social support networks (e.g., close friends, and relatives), men are more likely to depend on their spouses for emotional intimacy and connection (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Taylor et al., 2000). As a result, when men experience higher relatedness need satisfaction, it may have a stronger motivational impact on maintaining their relationship. Additionally, traditional masculinity norms often discourage men from openly expressing emotions or seeking emotional support outside their romantic relationships (Levant & Richmond, 2016). In this context, feeling connected and emotionally supported within the relationship may play a significant role in shaping men's relationship motivation. When men's relatedness needs are met, they may feel a greater sense of security and fulfillment, reinforcing their motivation in the relationship. While relatedness is important for both genders, women may not experience as strong a motivational boost from relatedness satisfaction because their motivation towards relationships tends to be shaped by multiple factors. As prior findings indicate (H2b), women's relationship motivation is also significantly influenced by competence need satisfaction, suggesting that women may feel motivated in relationships when they perceive themselves as effective and capable partners, rather than solely through emotional connection.

One of the key hypotheses of this study is to examine the mediating role of relationship motivation in the association between autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment (H3a, 3b, and 3c). The satisfaction of basic

psychological needs in various social environments has been shown to not only promote autonomous motivation but also, in turn, enhance performance and well-being (Deci et al., 1994; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). Balaguer et al. (2008) found that in athlete-coach relationships, the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs predicted self-determined motivation, which subsequently led to higher levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction. While numerous studies have examined the relationship between need satisfaction, self-determined motivation, and their impacts on positive individual, educational, and performance outcomes in non-reciprocal relationships, research focusing on these dynamics within reciprocal relationships appears to be considerably limited.

The hypothesis (H3a) that relationship motivation would mediate the link between autonomy need satisfaction and marital adjustment was rejected for wives but confirmed for husbands, with full mediation. This outcome aligns with SDT's emphasis on autonomy as a critical driver of self-regulated behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2017), but it also highlights gender-specific mechanisms in marital contexts. For husbands, autonomy need satisfaction does not directly contribute to marital adjustment but rather exerts its influence entirely through relationship motivation. This full mediation indicates that autonomy in itself may not be inherently beneficial for marital adjustment unless it translates into enhanced motivation within the relationship. Consistent with the husbands' results, theoretical models propose a hierarchical framework wherein trait autonomy shapes domain-specific motivation, which then influences relevant outcomes (Vallerand, 1997). Knee's (2005) research supports this model, showing in Study 1 that autonomous individuals report greater self-determined motivation within relationships, predicting higher post-conflict satisfaction, and in Study 2 that personal autonomy fosters open communication during disagreements by enhancing relationship-specific autonomy. Similarly, Goodboy et al. (2022) concluded that autonomously motivated individuals typically sustain their marriages through intrinsic valuation of the relationship, which subsequently promotes the adoption of constructive relationship-maintenance strategies. The rejection of this hypothesis for wives suggests that autonomy need

satisfaction does not influence marital adjustment, even indirectly through relationship motivation. This finding aligns with the broader trend observed in previous hypotheses (H1a, H2a), where autonomy need satisfaction did not play a significant role in shaping marital or relational outcomes for wives. The absence of a mediating effect could reflect the possibility that wives do not perceive autonomy as a central determinant of marital well-being, or that other relational factors exert stronger influences on their marital adjustment. One possible explanation for this gender difference lies in the broader societal expectations surrounding autonomy. Men are often socialized to value self-sufficiency, and personal agency, which may explain why autonomy fulfillment enhances their relational motivation and, consequently, their marital adjustment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In contrast, women's socialization often emphasizes communal roles, caregiving responsibilities, and relational interdependence (Cross & Madson, 1997), potentially diminishing the importance of autonomy as a predictor of their marital adjustment. When autonomy does not align with relational goals, it may fail to enhance motivation within the relationship, making it an ineffective predictor of marital adjustment for wives.

The hypothesis (H3b) that relationship motivation would mediate the link between competence need satisfaction and marital adjustment was confirmed for wives with partial mediation but rejected for husbands. This result suggests that for wives, competence need satisfaction contributes to marital adjustment both directly and indirectly through relationship motivation. For wives, the direct effect of competence need satisfaction on marital adjustment implies that feeling competent within the relationship has inherent benefits for marital adjustment, as discussed in H1b. The indirect pathway through relationship motivation further reinforces this association, suggesting that when women feel competent in their relationships, they are more motivated to engage in and sustain relational efforts, leading to higher marital adjustment. Furthermore, the absence of a significant mediating effect for husbands suggests that competence alone may not drive relationship motivation in the same way it does for wives. Previous hypotheses results (H2a, H2c) indicate that men's

relationship motivation is more strongly linked to autonomy and relatedness rather than competence.

The hypothesis (H3c) that relationship motivation would mediate the link between relatedness need satisfaction and marital adjustment was confirmed for both wives and husbands. In marital contexts, satisfying relatedness need fosters emotional intimacy, trust, and mutual support, which are critical for marital adjustment (Patrick et al., 2007; Rempel et al., 1985). In addition, SDT emphasizes that the quality of motivation driving relational behaviors—not just need satisfaction itself—determines adaptive outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Self-determined motivation enhances relationship quality because it aligns with one's authentic self, promoting persistence, creativity, and resilience during challenges (Knee et al., 2005). When individuals experience relatedness satisfaction, they are more likely to internalize relationship goals autonomously, viewing efforts to maintain the partnership as self-congruent rather than externally imposed (Hadden et al., 2014). This internalization process explains why relationship motivation acts as a mediator: relatedness fulfillment fosters a self-determined drive to invest in the relationship, which in turn strengthens marital adjustment. In line with the results of this research, Patrick et al. (2007, Study 3) highlighted that, among the three psychological needs, fulfilling the need for relatedness may play a critical role in romantic partnerships. Their study revealed that individuals who feel a stronger sense of relatedness with their partners are more likely to stay in the relationship for intrinsic reasons, which, in turn, contributes to healthier relational outcomes—particularly satisfaction and commitment—even after conflicts arise.

The finding that mediation was partial for wives but full for husbands implies that while relationship motivation plays a significant role in both genders, wives' marital adjustment may also be influenced by additional factors beyond relationship motivation. This gendered pattern aligns with SDT's assertion that internalization processes are shaped by cultural and contextual factors (Chirkov et al., 2003). While both genders benefit from self-determined motivation, women's marital adjustment

appears less "gatekept" by motivation due to overlapping societal and intrinsic relational demands, whereas men's adjustment relies more critically on self-determined motivation.

5.1.2 Discussion of Partner Effects

Hypothesis H4a, which posited that partners' autonomy need satisfaction would predict their own marital adjustment through their partner's relationship motivation, was supported for wives but not for husbands. This finding suggests that when husbands have high autonomy need satisfaction, wives are more likely to experience greater marital adjustment, but this process operates through the mediation of the husband's relationship motivation. The fact that this mediating effect was not present for husbands may indicate that autonomy need satisfaction in wives does not play a comparable role in influencing husbands' marital adjustment. This gender difference suggests that autonomy may play a different relational role for men and women. When these results are considered together with actor effects (H3a), it can be observed that husbands' autonomy need satisfaction affects both their own and their wives' marital adjustment through their relationship motivation. It can be concluded that husbands may derive a strong sense of identity and self-worth from autonomy, and when they feel autonomous, they are more likely to engage in constructive relationship behaviors such as emotional responsiveness and support provision (Anderson, 2020; Hadden et al., 2015). Moreover, traditional gender roles and cultural expectations may shape the degree to which autonomy translates into relational benefits. In many societies, men are expected to be providers and decision-makers, and their relational outcomes are often closely tied to perceptions of agency and self-direction (Loscocco & Spitze, 2007; Nock, 2001). When husbands experience high autonomy need satisfaction, they may feel more confident and engaged in their relationships, which enhances relationship motivation and, consequently, marital adjustment for both partners. Thus, when husbands feel autonomous and intrinsically motivated in their relationships, their wives may perceive a more positive and engaging marital environment, leading to greater marital adjustment.

The results of H4b indicated that wives' competence need satisfaction indirectly contributed to husbands' marital adjustment, fully mediated by their relationship motivation. In contrast, these effects were not observed for wives' marital adjustment, suggesting a gendered dynamic in how competence satisfaction operates within marital relationships through relationship motivation. When these results are considered together with actor effects (H3b), it can be observed that wives' competence need satisfaction affects both their own and their husbands' marital adjustment through their relationship motivation. This suggests that competence is not just an individually experienced need for wives but can have a relational impact when it increases self-determined motivation for engaging in the relationship. This partner mediation effect emphasizes the interconnected nature of marital systems, as posited by interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978), where one partner's psychological states and behaviors reflect through the relationship to shape the other's experiences. However, the gender differences in these findings suggest that competence may function differently for men and women within marital relationships. In this case, when wives feel competent, they may display higher levels of investment in the relationship, increased responsiveness, and a greater willingness to engage in problem-solving discussions—all of which enhance their husbands' marital adjustment (Johnson et al., 2005; Overall et al., 2010; Reis et al., 2004).

The impact of wives' need for competence need satisfaction on their spouses' marital adjustment through relationship motivation can also be understood in the context of family dynamics. Most participants in this study had at least one child, meaning they were also responsible for parenting. Taking on parental roles can affect the dynamics of a marriage. Research suggests that after becoming parents, couples often adopt more traditional household roles, even in modern societies (Kluwer, 2010). This shift typically places women in caregiving and domestic responsibilities. When women feel capable in these roles—managing parenting, household tasks, and their marriage—they develop a stronger motivation to stay committed to the relationship. Therefore, a woman's sense of competence may be a key factor influencing marital dynamics, as highlighted by the study's findings.

The confirmed mediating role of partners' relationship motivation in the association between partners' relatedness need satisfaction and their own marital adjustment for both wives and husbands, as posited in Hypothesis H4c, offers an important contribution to the literature on marital dynamics and self-determination theory. When these results are considered together with actor effects (H3c), greater relatedness need satisfaction within a marriage, experienced by one partner, has been shown to activate autonomy-driven motivational processes—rather than controlling or amotivated processes—enhancing not only the individual's own marital adjustment but also contributing to their partner's marital adjustment. Emerging evidence in the literature indicates that relational well-being is rooted in relationship dynamics that effectively support the basic psychological needs of both partners. This support fosters self-determined motivation for being in the relationship, which in turn enhances the couple's ability to engage in challenges, disagreements, and conflicts in constructive ways (Knee & Browne, 2023). Such dynamics promote greater mutual understanding, reduce defensiveness, and encourage supportive behaviors between partners (Blais et al., 1990; Hadden et al., 2015; Knee et al., 2005; Patrick et al., 2007). The current findings are further reinforced by Hadden et al. (2015), who demonstrated that relatedness need fulfillment enhances a partner's relationship satisfaction by fostering compassionate goals, defined as intentions to support others for their own sake, without seeking gains for the self. Their work complements the present mediation model by illustrating that specific motivational orientations, such as compassion, serve as relational catalysts that translate relatedness need satisfaction into positive relational outcomes. While the current study focused on relationship motivation as a mediator, Hadden et al.'s (2015) emphasis on compassionate goals highlight the importance of altruistic intentions in dyadic processes.

A particularly notable aspect of the findings is the difference in mediation pattern for husbands and wives. For husbands, the mediation was full, meaning that their wives' relatedness need satisfaction only influenced their marital adjustment through relationship motivation. In contrast, for wives, the mediation was partial, indicating

that while relationship motivation played a significant role, additional mechanisms may also contribute to the effect. This aligns with research showing that women often engage in broader emotional and social processes to evaluate marital quality, such as equity in household responsibilities, emotional security, improved communication, enhanced perceptions of relational stability, communal coping, the quality of conflict resolution, or relational empathy (Carlson et al., 2016; Frisco & Williams, 2003; Javadi et al., 2021; Neff & Karney, 2005; 2008; Offer, 2014). For instance, women's marital adjustment has been related not only to their partners' relationship motivation but also to external support systems, shared parenting roles, or emotional reciprocity. For husbands, however, relationship motivation appears to be the primary mechanism through which their wives' relatedness need satisfaction influences their marital adjustment.

Interestingly, the direct partner effect of autonomy, competence, and relatedness need satisfaction on marital adjustment (H5a, H5b & H5c) was not supported for either husbands or wives. This suggests that autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs satisfaction in one partner do not independently contribute to the other partner's marital adjustment without the mediating role of relationship motivation. These findings emphasize the necessity of motivational dynamics in translating basic psychological needs satisfaction into marital outcomes (La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). Methodologically, the non-significant findings align with studies showing that partner effects often require contextual triggers (e.g., stress, conflict) to manifest. For instance, a partner's competence need satisfaction may only predict marital adjustment during caregiving challenges, not in stable conditions. Furthermore, the current study's analyses simultaneously examine autonomy, competence, relatedness need satisfaction, and marital adjustment as reported by both spouses within the couple dyad, rather than assessing these variables separately. By adopting this approach, the study uniquely evaluates the relative contributions of each basic psychological need in a manner not previously examined. This methodology not only aligns more closely with spouses' lived experiences but also provides empirical evidence for the critical role of gender role in explaining the link between autonomy, competence, relatedness need satisfaction, and marital adjustment among Turkish couples.

5.2 Implications for Theory and Practice

This section presents the implications for theory, followed by the implications for practice.

5.2.1 Implications for Theory

The findings of this study provide strong theoretical support for the applicability and extension of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in the context of marital relationships. While SDT has been extensively studied in domains such as work, education, sports, and physical activity, its exploration in close relationships —particularly within the marital context— is relatively limited. Moreover, much of the existing study in this area has focused on young, unmarried couples, leaving a gap in understanding how SDT operates within long-term committed relationships. This study, by working with married individuals and collecting data from both members of the couple, addresses a significant gap in literature and contributes to the understanding of SDT within the marital context.

The gendered pathways revealed in the study suggest that basic psychological needs may manifest differently depending on societal and relational roles. For instance, while autonomy did not directly influence marital adjustment for either spouse, it played a critical indirect role for husbands, whose sense of autonomy within the relationship strengthened their motivation to engage in the partnership, thereby enhancing marital adjustment. This aligns with SDT's emphasis on autonomy as a catalyst for self-determined motivation but reveals that, in marital contexts, its impact is mediated through relational motivation rather than direct individual outcomes. Conversely, wives' marital adjustment was directly tied to satisfaction of competence and relatedness, suggesting that societal expectations around caregiving and emotional labor may make these needs more salient for women in sustaining marital adjustment. These differences emphasize how gender roles shape the expression and fulfillment of psychological needs.

The absence of direct partner effects, combined with the presence of mediated partner pathways, introduces a layer to SDT by integrating principles of interdependence. For instance, a partner's basic psychological need satisfaction did not directly improve the other's marital adjustment, but it did so indirectly by fostering the relationship motivation. This implies that psychological needs in marriage function dyadically—individual need fulfillment enhances one's own motivation, which then becomes a relational resource that benefits both spouses. Such findings bridge SDT with interdependence theory, illustrating how motivation acts as a channel, allowing individual need satisfaction to extend its influence across the broader relationship system.

The consistent role of relatedness need satisfaction as a predictor of both actor and partner effects further emphasizes its centrality in marital contexts. Specifically, relatedness was not only a key driver of their own motivation and marital adjustment for participants but also indirectly shaped their partners' marital adjustment through their motivational states. This highlights the idea that emotional connection in marriage serves a dual function: it satisfies a fundamental human need while simultaneously promoting a motivated and reciprocal commitment in the relationship. This dual nature positions relatedness as both a personal and relational construct within SDT, expanding its theoretical framework to encompass mutual benefits in marital relationships.

Another theoretical implication of this study is its focus on basic psychological need satisfaction within relationships (BPNS-R), rather than in a general context (BPNS). While previous studies have examined basic psychological need satisfaction broadly, this research specifically examines how each of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs are met within a marital relationship. This allows for a deeper understanding of how these needs influence relationship motivation and marital adjustment. By employing a relationship-specific motivation measure rather than a general motivation orientation, this study refines SDT's application in the domain of close relationships and enhances the theoretical understanding of its mechanisms

within marriage. Additionally, the adaptation of both the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction in Relationships Scale and the Couple Motivation Scale into Turkish ensures cultural relevance and provides a validated framework for future research in Turkish contexts.

By employing dyadic design and analyzing both actor and partner effects, this study advances the theoretical application of SDT in marital relationships. The findings demonstrate that relationship motivation plays a crucial role in translating psychological need satisfaction into marital adjustment, particularly for relatedness. The results also highlight that gender differences exist in how these needs operate within marriage, which is important for understanding relationship dynamics at both the individual and couple levels.

5.2.2 Implications for Practice

The findings of this study offer significant practical implications for marital counseling, psychoeducation, and interventions aimed at enhancing marital well-being. First, the results emphasize the importance of addressing basic psychological needs within the relationship context, but with attention to gender-specific pathways. Given that competence and relatedness need satisfaction were found to be significant predictors of wives' marital adjustment, interventions should focus on fostering a sense of efficacy and connection within the marital relationship. Programs that help wives feel competent in their roles within the marriage, as well as those that strengthen emotional bonds between partners, may contribute to greater marital adjustment. Counselors could focus on empowering wives to recognize their contributions to the relationship and fostering emotional intimacy through shared activities or communication exercises. For husbands, the findings indicate that autonomy and relatedness needs satisfaction influences marital adjustment only when it enhances their relationship motivation. This suggests that interventions targeting husbands should focus on fostering self-determined motivation within marriage by supporting their autonomy and relatedness in a way that is aligned with relational commitment.

The mediating role of relationship motivation highlights the importance of promoting intrinsic motivation in marriage. Rather than solely focusing on external rewards or obligations, couples could benefit from strategies fostering open dialogues about each partner's motivations—why they value the relationship and how they envision its future—could enhance motivation and, in turn, marital adjustment. Counselors may encourage couples to engage in activities that enhance their intrinsic motivation to invest in their marriage, such as open communication, shared decision-making, and mutual support in personal growth. For instance, a husband's sense of relatedness not only benefits his own marital adjustment but also improves his wife's marital adjustment through his increased motivation. This calls for interventions that promote mutual awareness of how individual needs and behaviors contribute to the relational ecosystem, such as psychoeducation on dyadic coping or collaborative goal setting.

The results also emphasize the fundamental role of relatedness in marital adjustment. This suggests that relationship interventions should prioritize strengthening emotional intimacy and connectedness. Encouraging partners to engage in meaningful conversations, express appreciation, and actively support each other's emotional needs may enhance the overall quality of the marital relationship. Additionally, since relatedness need satisfaction was found to have partner effects, fostering a deeper emotional connection in one partner may have positive effects on the other partner's marital adjustment. Moreover, the centrality of relatedness for both spouses implies that therapies emphasizing emotional connection, such as emotionally focused therapy (EFT) or attachment-based approaches, could be highly effective. However, practitioners should remain mindful of cultural contexts, as the study's Turkish sample may reflect norms around marital roles that differ from other settings. Tailoring interventions to align with cultural expectations while challenging restrictive gender norms could optimize outcomes.

The findings also have implications for addressing traditional gender roles in marriage. The fact that competence need satisfaction influenced wives' marital adjustment but not husbands' suggests that societal expectations around caregiving and household

responsibilities may shape how psychological needs function in marriage. Psychoeducation programs regarding relationships could focus on promoting an equitable division of household labor, encouraging mutual recognition of each partner's contributions, and empowering both partners to feel competent in multiple aspects of their relationship.

Lastly, given that autonomy need satisfaction did not have a direct impact on marital adjustment for either partner, it may be beneficial to reconsider how autonomy is framed within marital relationships. Rather than viewing autonomy as independence from one's spouse, couples may benefit from an understanding of autonomy as the ability to make self-determined choices within a supportive and interdependent relationship. Relationship counselors could help couples navigate the balance between personal autonomy and relational connectedness, ensuring that both partners feel a sense of agency while maintaining emotional closeness. A holistic perspective that considers both individual growth and the relational context is crucial for promoting long-term marital adjustment and well-being. Integrating these insights into practice could help professionals more effectively support couples in achieving stronger, more fulfilling relationships.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing marital adjustment; however, several limitations highlight directions for further research. Firstly, the data for this study were collected in an online environment, which, while convenient and efficient, presents certain constraints. For instance, online surveys may limit the depth of participant engagement or exclude individuals who lack access to or familiarity with digital tools. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating mixed methods, such as combining online data collection with in-person interviews.

This study also utilized a convenience sampling strategy to gather data from married couples. However, this non-random sampling method has difficulties in describing the

broader population. Given that the participants in this study constitute a homogeneous group, particularly in terms of education and employment status, it is recommended to adopt random sampling methods in future research to reflect more demographic and sociocultural diversity.

The sample of this study included individuals who have been married for 1 to 45 years, which provides a broad range of relationship experiences but does not fully describe the stages of development in a marriage. Considering the effect of marital length on marital adjustment, longitudinal studies are recommended to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how marital adjustment develops over time. Such studies may provide specific explanations about the dynamic nature of the marriage and provide information about how psychological need satisfaction and relationship motivation affect the quality of the relationships at various stages of marriage.

Additionally, this study employed a cross-sectional design to examine the relationship between need satisfaction, relationship motivation, and marital adjustment. While this research design is useful in investigating relationships among variables, it limits the ability to infer causality or examine underlying processes in depth. Future research could use qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing marital adjustment for individuals and couples. Such methodologies may shed light on how couples engage within their relationship, and how they interpret their own and their partner's behaviors by uncovering their perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs about relational dynamics.

Although the participants of this study had a high level of education and nearly 90% of the women participants were in the workforce, it is seen that the satisfaction of psychological needs has an impact on marital adjustment consistent with traditional gender roles. Future research is recommended to evaluate the effects of gender equality policies (equal wages, parental leave, etc.) that may cause this effect on the variables in this study.

Major life events, such as becoming parents or experiencing infertility, can also profoundly impact marital dynamics. Depending on how they are managed, these types of situations can present new obstacles to the relationship or reinforce the relationship between spouses. The important developments in couples' life should be taken into consideration when examining the relational outcomes. Recognizing the effects of these circumstances would help practitioners to customize interventions for couples dealing with particular difficulties.

Finally, while this study focused on relationship-specific need satisfaction and motivation, future research should explore how motivations in other domains of life, such as career ambitions, personal growth, or social connections, impact close relationship processes. Investigating these broader motivational influences could provide a more comprehensive view of how individuals' overall life goals and aspirations shape their relational dynamics. By addressing these areas, future studies can build on the findings of this research, offering deeper insights into the complex interplay of factors that contribute to marital adjustment and the well-being of couples over time.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER	 ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
DUMLUYINAR BULVARI 06060 ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TÜRKİYE T : +90 312 210 22 91 F : +90 312 210 79 59 www.iletim.mtu.edu.tr	
28 ŞUBAT 2023	
Konu:	Değerlendirme Sonucu
Gönderen:	ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)
İlgi:	İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu
Sayın Prof.Dr. Zeynep SÜMER	
Danışmanlığınızı yürüttüğünüz Seçil Seymenler Gülsoy'un "EVLİLİK UYUMU İLE TEMEL PSİKOLOJİK İHTİYAÇ DOYUMU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİDE İLİŞKİ MOTİVASYONUNUN ARACI ROLÜ: İKİLİ ANALİZ" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek 0142-ODTÜİAEI sayı ile onaylanmıştır.	
Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.	
Prof. Dr.  KAZAK BERUMENT Başkan	
Prof. Dr. İ. Semih AKÇOMAK Üye	Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut Üye
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ Üye	Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR Üye
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya OZCAN KABASAKAL Üye	Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ Üye

B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

KİŞİSEL BİLGİ FORMU

Cinsiyetiniz: ☐ Kadın ☐ Erkek

Yaşınız: _____

Eğitim durumunuz (En son mezun olduğunuz okul derecesini işaretleyiniz.):

- ☐ İlkokul
- ☐ Ortaokul
- ☐ Lise
- ☐ Önlisans / Yüksekokul
- ☐ Lisans / Üniversite
- ☐ Yüksek Lisans
- ☐ Doktora

Mesleğiniz: _____

Eğitim düzeyinizi, hane gelirinizi ve mesleki saygınlığınızı düşünerek kendinizi hangi sosyoekonomik düzeye ait görüyorsunuz?

- ☐ Düşük
- ☐ Orta
- ☐ Yüksek

Evlilik Süreniz (Yıl, Ay): _____

Evlenme şeklinizi aşağıdaki seçeneklerden hangisi en iyi şekilde tanımlar?

- ☐ Görücü usulü
- ☐ Kendimiz tanışıp anlaşarak
- ☐ Görücü usulü tanıştırlıp kendi kararımızla
- ☐ Diğer: _____

Çocuk Sayınız:

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 +

**C. SAMPLE ITEMS OF THE BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED
SATISFACTION SCALE – IN RELATIONSHIP DOMAIN (BPNS-R)**

TEMEL PSİKOLOJİK İHTİYAÇ DOYUMU ÖLÇEĞİ-İLİŞKİ ALANI

Hiç Doğru Değil _____ Biraz Doğru _____ Tamamen Doğru
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Özerklik Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

1. Eşimle birlikteyken, kendim gibi olmakta özgür hissedirim.

Yeterlik Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

2. Eşimle birlikteyken, kendimi yeterli hissedirim.

İlişkili Olma Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

6. Eşimle birlikteyken, genellikle ilişkimizde mesafeler olduğunu hissedirim.

**D. SAMPLE ITEMS OF THE COUPLE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE
(CMQ)**

ÇİFT MOTİVASYON ÖLÇEĞİ

Hiç Katılmıyorum _____ Tamamen Katılıyorum
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Motivasyonsuzluk (Amotivation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

13. Eşimle ilişkiyi sürdürmem için beni motive eden hiçbir şey yok.

Dışsal Düzenleme (External regulation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

11. Çünkü eşim ayrılıkla başa çıkamaz.

İçselleştirilmiş Düzenleme (Introjected regulation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

7. Çünkü onu terk edersem kendimi çok suçlu hissederim.

Tanımlanmış Düzenleme (Identified regulation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

17. Çünkü ilişki duyularımı ve özel anları biriyle paylaşmamı sağlıyor.

Bütünleşmiş Düzenleme (Integrated regulation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

12. Çünkü eşim önemli projeleri başarmama yardım etmesi için seçtiğim kişidir.

İçsel Motivasyon (Intrinsic motivation) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

21. Çünkü eşimle geçirdiğim zamanları çok ilham verici ve tatmin edici buluyorum.

**E. SAMPLE ITEMS OF THE REVISED DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE
(RDAS)**

YENİLENMİŞ ÇİFT UYUM ÖLÇEĞİ

Görüş Birliği (Consensus) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

3. Temel kararların alınması

Hiçbir zaman anlaşamayız (1)	Nadiren anlaşırız (2)	Bazen anlaşırız (3)	Oldukça sık anlaşırız (4)	Çoğu zaman anlaşırız (5)
------------------------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------

Doyum (Satisfaction) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

9. Evlendiğiniz için pişmanlık duyar mısınız?

Hiçbir zaman (1)	Nadiren (2)	Bazen (3)	Oldukça Sık (4)	Çoğu Zaman (5)
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Uzlaşım (Cohesion) Alt Boyutu Soru Örneği:

13. Ne sıklıkla bir iş üzerinde birlikte çalışırsınız?

Hiçbir zaman (1)	Nadiren (2)	Bazen (3)	Oldukça Sık (4)	Çoğu Zaman (5)
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F. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, Seçil Seymenler Gülsoy tarafından Prof. Dr. Zeynep Sümer danışmanlığındaki doktora tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın temel amacı, öz-belirleme kuramı temelinde, evli çiftlerde temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi, ilişki motivasyonunun potansiyel aracı rolü aracılığıyla incelemektir.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Bu çalışmaya katılabilmek için en az 1 yıldır evli olmanız, sizin ve eşinizin çalışmaya katılmaya gönüllü olmanız gerekmektedir. Sizden herhangi bir kimlik bilgisi istenmemektedir. Çalışmada yer alan bütün soruları yanıtlamanız yaklaşık 15 dakikanızı alacaktır.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik veya çalıştığınız kurum/bölüm/birim belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak, sadece araştırmacılar tarafından

değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Çalışma, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Seçil Seymenler Gülsoy (E-posta:) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda bırakıp çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin anonim olarak bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

☐ Evet

G. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Seçil SEYMENLER GÜLSOY

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	Dokuz Eylül University, Guidance and Psychological Counseling	2017
BS	Ege University, Guidance and Psychological Counseling	2013
High School	Fatma Saygın Anatolian High School, İzmir	2009

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2013-2015	Neziha Bal İlkokulu, Balıkesir	School Counselor
2015-2018	Manisa Celal Bayar University, Department of Educational Sciences	Research Assistant
2018-2024	METU, Department of Educational Sciences	Research Assistant
2024-Present	Manisa Celal Bayar University, Department of Educational Sciences	Research Assistant

PUBLICATIONS

Published Journal Articles Indexed by SCI, SSCI, and AHCI

Seymenler Gülsoy, S., Siyez, E., Esen, E., Baran, B., & Siyez, D. M. (2023). Predictors of self-reported sexually transmitted infections among Turkish university students. *JDDG - Journal of the German Society of Dermatology*, 21(7), 751-758. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ddg.15107>

Siyez, D. M., Esen, E., Seymenler, S., & Ozturk, B. (2022). Development of wellness scale for emerging adults: Validity and reliability study. *Current Psychology*, 41(3), 1404-1413. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-00672-w>

Articles Published in Other Journals

Esen, E., Seymenler, S., & Siyez, D. M. (2021). Romantic love myths questionnaire: The study of adaptation to Turkish, validity, and reliability. *Nesne Psikoloji Dergisi*, 9(19), 69-82. <https://doi.org/10.7816/nesne-09-19-06>

Siyez, D. M., Esen, E., Baran, B., Seymenler, S., Kağnıcı, D. Y., & Siyez, E. (2018). Development of the Attitudes Toward Infertility Scale (ATIS): Validity and reliability study. *Çukurova Medical Journal*, 43, 173-180. <https://doi.org/10.17826/cumj.403064>

Siyez, D. M., Seymenler, S., Esen, E., Siyez, E., Kağnıcı, D. Y., & Baran, B. (2018). Investigating knowledge levels of university students about infertility. *Turkish Journal of Urology*, 44(2), 153-161. <https://doi.org/10.5152/tud.2018.78861>

Siyez, D. M., Seymenler, S., Kağnıcı, Y., Esen, E., Siyez, E., & Baran, B. (2018). Investigating university students' attitudes towards infertility in terms of socio-

demographic variables. *Health Psychology Report*, 6(4), 351-360.
<https://doi.org/10.5114/hpr.2018.77181>

Seymenler, S., & Siyez, D. M. (2018). Infertility counseling. *Psikiyatride Güncel Yaklaşımlar*, 10(2), 176-187. <https://doi.org/10.5114/10.18863/pgy.358095>

Books & Book Chapters

Seymenler Gülsoy, S. (2021). Humanistic approaches. In T. M. Çaykuş & D. M. Siyez (Eds.), *Counseling children and adolescents: Connecting theory, development, and diversity* (pp. 141-161). Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.

Refereed Congress/Symposium Publications in Proceedings

Seymenler, S., & Kara, A. (2019, July 26-28). The motivational aspects of career decision self-efficacy in emerging adulthood: Striving for goals. *6th International Conference on Research in Behavioral Social Sciences*, London, United Kingdom, 74.

Seymenler, S., & Eken, E. (2018, March 2-3). Positive psychology in school-based career counseling. *14th International Conference on Social Sciences*, Frankfurt, Germany.

Siyez, D. M., Seymenler, S., Kağnıcı, D. Y., Baran, B., Esen, E., Öztürk, B., & Siyez, E. (2017, August 7-8). Investigating university students' knowledge levels about infertility. *20th Euro Congress Psychiatrists and Psychologists*, Rome, Italy.

Baran, B., Siyez, D. M., Kağnıcı, D. Y., Seymenler, S., Esen, E., Öztürk, B., & Siyez, E. (2017, August 17-18). Determination of the needs for development of an infertility

psycho-educational program and the design of a website about infertility for university students. *20th Euro Congress Psychiatrists and Psychologists*, Rome, Italy.

Siyez, D. M., Esen, E., Seymenler, S., & Ozturk, B. (2017, May 12-14). Beliren yetişkinler için iyilik hali ölçeği'nin geliştirilmesi: Geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması. *2. Avrasya Pozitif Psikoloji Kongresi*, İstanbul, Turkey, 83-84.

Seymenler, S., Esen, E., Ozturk, B., & Siyez, D. M. (2017, May 12-14). Öğretmen adaylarında kariyer arzusunu yordayıcı değişkenler olarak duygusal zeka, özgecilik ve demografik değişkenler. *2. Avrasya Pozitif Psikoloji Kongresi*, İstanbul, Turkey, 225-226.

Seymenler, S., & Siyez, D. M. (2015, October 7-9). Beliren yetişkinler için kariyer arzusu ölçeği'nin Türkçe uyarlaması: Geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışmaları. *XII. Ulusal Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Kongresi*, Mersin, Turkey.

Supported Projects

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H. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

TEMEL PSİKOLOJİK İHTİYA DOYUMU İLE EVLİLİK UYUMU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİDE İLİŞKİ MOTİVASYONUNUN ARACI ROL: İKİLİ ANALİZ

1. Giriş

İnsan yaşam dngs, bireyin kişisel ve sosyal gelişiminde kritik geişleri simgeleyen önemli dnm noktalarıyla şekillenmektedir. Bu aşamalar arasında okula başlama, ergenlik dnemi, eğitim hayatının tamamlanması, iş hayatına atılma, evlilik ve ebeveynlik yer almaktadır. Bu aşamalardan evlilik ve aile kurma, bireyin yaşamında derin bir deęişimi temsil eder ve yetişkinliğe geişin temel göstergelerinden biri olarak görlmektedir. Evlilik, bireylerin uzun vadeli bir ilişkinin parası olmasını saęlayarak sevgi, destek, sadakat, gvenlik ve fiziksel iyilik hali gibi unsurları ierir (Wilson & Oswald, 2005; Knoester & Booth, 2000; Previti & Amato, 2003; Lawrence ve ark., 2019). Evliliğin psikolojik ve fiziksel saęlık üzerindeki olumlu etkileri geniş aplı araştırmalarla ortaya konulmuştur (Carr ve ark., 2014; Kamp Dush ve ark., 2008; Stutzer & Frey, 2006; Wadsworth, 2016; Waite ve ark., 2009; Bookwala, 2005; Miller ve ark., 2013; Umberson ve ark., 2006). Bunun yanı sıra, evli bireylerin yaşam tatminlerinin, evli olmayan bireylere kıyasla daha yksek olduęu gzlemlenmiştir (Dupre ve ark., 2009). Yakın zamanda yapılan geniş lekli bir araştırma, evli olmayan bireylerin depresif semptomlar yaşama olasılıęının daha yksek olduęunu gstermektedir (Zhai ve ark., 2024).

Evlilik uyumu, evlilik kalitesini lmek iin kullanılan en önemli kavramlardan biri olup memnuniyet, baęlılık ve uzlaşı gibi unsurları iermektedir (Spainer, 1976;

Spainer & Cole, 1976). Arařtırmalar, kiřilik  zellikleri, baėlanma stilleri, iletiřim kalıpları ve duygusal d zenleme gibi fakt rlerin evlilik uyumunu řekillendirdiėini ortaya koymaktadır (Chen ve ark., 2007; Kelly ve ark., 2003;  zmen & Atik, 2010; Rusu ve ark., 2019).  z-Belirleme Kuramı (Deci & Ryan, 2000)  er evesinde ele alındığında, temel psikolojik ihtiya ların karřılanmasının evlilik uyumunda kritik bir rol oynadıėı  ne s r lmektedir (Patrick ve ark., 2007). Bu kuram, bireylerin  zerklik, yeterlik ve iliřkili olma gibi    temel psikolojik ihtiya ının karřılanmasının iyi oluřlarını desteklediėini belirtmektedir (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2014). Bu ihtiya ların karřılanması bireylerin daha az  atıřma yařamasını, daha etkili  atıřma   zme becerileri sergilemesini ve daha g  l  bir baėlılık hissetmesini saėlamaktadır (La Guardia ve ark., 2000; Ryan ve ark., 2005; Uysal ve ark., 2012). Buna karřın, psikolojik ihtiya ların karřılanmaması, iliřki stresi, kaygı,  fke ve uyumsuz  atıřma kalıpları ile baėlantılıdır (Chen ve ark., 2015; Hanne, 2024; Pirrone ve ark., 2023; Vansteenkiste ve ark., 2020; Warburton ve ark., 2020). Patrick ve ark. (2007) tarafından yapılan  alıřmalar, temel psikolojik ihtiya ların evlilik iliřkileri baėlamında nasıl iřlediėini,  zerklik, yeterlik ve iliřkili olma doyumunun iliřki kalitesi ve  atıřma y netimi  zerindeki olumlu etkilerini ortaya koymuřtur.  zellikle iliřkili olma, en g  l   ng r c  deėiřkenlerden biri olarak tespit edilmiřtir.

Bazı iliřkiler belirli psikolojik ihtiya lara  ncelik tanıyabilir, ancak saėlıklı bir evlilik i in  zerklik, yeterlik ve iliřkili olma ihtiya larının dengeli bir řekilde desteklenmesi gerekmektedir (La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). Bu ihtiya lardan biri s rekli olarak karřılanmadığında hem bireyin iyi oluřu hem de  iftin iliřkisel iřleyiři olumsuz etkilenmektedir. Temel psikolojik ihtiya ların karřılanma d zeyi, evlilik uyumunu doėrudan etkilemekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda iliřki motivasyonu aracılıėıyla da řekillendirebilir.  z-Belirleme Kuramı baėlamında, iliřki motivasyonu bireylerin romantik iliřkilerine dahil olma nedenlerini ifade eder ve iřsel olarak  zerk motivasyon ile dıřsal baskılar nedeniyle geliřen kontrol odaklı motivasyon arasında deėiřkenlik g sterir (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2008; Knee ve ark., 2013).  zerk motivasyon, bireylerin sevgi ve kiřisel deėerler gibi iřsel nedenlerle iliřkide kalmasını

ifade ederken, kontrol odaklı motivasyon ise dışsal baskılar veya toplumsal beklentiler nedeniyle ilişkinin sürdürülmesini içermektedir (Deci & Ryan, 2014).

Araştırmalar, ilişkiye özgü özerkliğin, kişilerarası dinamiklerin esnek ve savunmacı olmayan bir yaklaşımla yönetilmesine katkı sağladığını göstermektedir (Ryan, 2023). Özerklik yönelimli bireyler, partnerlerinin farklı bakış açılarına daha açık olmakta ve çatışmaları karşılıklı büyüme fırsatları olarak değerlendirmektedir (Koestner & Levine, 2023). Bu bireyler, olumlu davranışları sürdürme ve olumsuz duyguları en aza indirme eğilimindedir (Knee ve ark., 2002). Buna karşılık, kontrol odaklı bireyler çatışmalar karşısında kaçınma ve inkâr gibi savunmacı stratejiler kullanmaktadır (Hodgins ve ark., 2006; Weinstein & Hodgins, 2009). Patrick ve ark. (2007), temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları karşılanan bireylerin ilişkilerini sürdürmeye yönelik daha yüksek öz-belirlenimli motivasyon sergilediklerini ve bunun daha yüksek çatışma sonrası tatmin ve bağlılık ile sonuçlandığını göstermiştir.

Öz-belirlenimli motivasyon ile optimal ilişki gelişimi arasındaki bir diğer önemli mekanizma, partner odaklı yönelimlerdir. Bu süreçte, öz-belirlenimli motivasyonun partnerin ihtiyaçlarına yönelik empatiyi ve aktif desteği teşvik ettiği görülmektedir (Ryan, 2023). İlişki Motivasyonu Kuramı çerçevesinde değerlendirildiğinde, bireylerin partnerlerinin bakış açılarına olan ilgisi artmakta ve empati kurma eğilimleri güçlenmektedir (Deci & Ryan, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Yapılan çalışmalar, özerklik yönelimli çiftlerin daha fazla empati ve iş birliği sergilediklerini ve partnerlerinin bakış açılarına daha duyarlı olduklarını göstermektedir (Weinstein ve ark., 2010; Hadden ve ark., 2015).

Öz-Belirleme Kuramı ve İlişki Motivasyonu Kuramına göre motivasyonun kalitesi, özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının karşılanma düzeyiyle belirlenmektedir. Vallerand ve Losier (1999) tarafından geliştirilen motivasyonel model, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumunun bireyin motivasyonunu etkilediğini ve bunun ilişki sonuçlarını doğrudan şekillendirdiğini göstermektedir. Partnerlerin birbirlerinin

psikolojik ihtiyalarını desteklemeleri, evlilik uyumunu artırmaktadır. Mevcut alıřma, iliřki motivasyonunun temel psikolojik ihtiya doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki iliřkiye aracılık eden bir deėiřken olarak nasıl iřlediėini incelemeyi amalamaktadır.

1.2 Arařtırmanın Amacı

Mevcut alıřmanın amacı, temel psikolojik ihtiya doyumu (özerklik, yeterlik ve iliřkili olma) ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki iliřkiyi, iliřki motivasyonunun olası aracı rolü baėlamında Türk evli çiftler üzerinde incelemektir.

1.3 Arařtırma Soru ve Hipotezleri

Önerilen modele göre, alıřma ařaėıdaki arařtırma sorusunu ele almaktadır:

Arařtırma Sorusu: İliřki motivasyonu, temel psikolojik ihtiya doyumu (özerlik, yeterlik ve iliřkili olma) ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki iliřkiye ne ölçüde aracılık etmektedir?

Bu arařtırma sorusu doėrultusunda, alıřmada ařaėıda belirtilen hipotezler test edilecektir.

Aktör Etkileri:

Hipotez 1

H1a: Kadınların ve erkeklerin evlilik uyumu, özerklik ihtiyacı doymuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

H1b: Kadınların ve erkeklerin evlilik uyumu, yeterlik ihtiyacı doymuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

H1c: Kadınların ve erkeklerin evlilik uyumu, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

Hipotez 2

H2a: Kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonları, özerklik ihtiyacı doyumuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

H2b: Kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonları, yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

H2c: Kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonları, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumuyla anlamlı şekilde açıklanacaktır.

Hipotez 3

H3a: Aktör etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

H3b: Aktör etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

H3c: Aktör etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

Partner Etkileri:

Hipotez 4

H4a: Partner etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu ile özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

H4b: Partner etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin yeterli ihtiyaç doyumunu ile özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

H4c: Partner etkisi olarak ilişki motivasyonu, kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunu ile özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunu arasındaki ilişkiye anlamlı düzeyde aracılık edecektir.

Hipotez 5

H5a: Partner etkisi olarak kadınların ve erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunu, evlilik uyumuyla anlamlı şekilde ilişkili olacaktır.

H5b: Partner etkisi olarak kadınların ve erkeklerin yeterli ihtiyaç doyumunu, evlilik uyumuyla anlamlı şekilde ilişkili olacaktır.

H5c: Partner etkisi olarak kadınların ve erkeklerin ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunu, evlilik uyumuyla anlamlı şekilde ilişkili olacaktır.

1.4 Araştırmanın Önemi

Günümüzde birçok birey evliliğe yaşam boyu sürecek bir uyum beklentisiyle başlasa da evlilik çatışmaları ve boşanma oranlarının küresel ölçekte arttığı görülmektedir. Bu durum, toplumsal yapıda meydana gelen köklü değişimlerin bir sonucu olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Uzayan yaşam süreleri, değişen toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve hukuki reformlar, evliliğin yalnızca yasal ve toplumsal bir zorunluluk olmaktan çıkıp, bireylerin karşılıklı doyum sağlayabildiği sürece devam eden bir birliktelik olarak yeniden tanımlanmasına neden olmuştur (Brown & Lin, 2022; Pedulla & Thébaud, 2015; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2006). Geçmişte evlilikler çoğunlukla eşlerden birinin vefatı nedeniyle sona ererken, günümüzde boşanma, evliliklerin sona ermesindeki en yaygın neden haline gelmiştir (Pinsof, 2002). Skerrett (2015), günümüzde artık sadece "evli olmanın" bir ilişkiyi sürdürmek için yeterli bir neden olarak görülmediğini vurgulamaktadır. Türkiye’de de bu eğilim gözlemlenmekte olup, resmi istatistikler son

yirmi yılda boşanma oranlarının iki katına çıktığını göstermektedir (TÜİK, 2024). Bu gelişmeler, evliliklerin sadece yasal ya da toplumsal zorunluluklarla değil, bireysel ve ilişkisel faktörler temelinde nasıl sürdürülebileceğini anlamayı gerektirmektedir.

Evliliğin sona ermesi yalnızca çifti değil, aynı zamanda aile bireylerini ve toplumu da etkilemektedir (Lansford, 2009). Sağlam ve istikrarlı bir evlilik, sadece eşlerin iyi oluşu için değil, aynı zamanda çocukların sağlıklı gelişimi ve toplumsal istikrarın korunması açısından da kritik bir rol oynamaktadır (Amato, 2000). Bu bağlamda, evlilik uyumunu belirleyen faktörleri anlamak ve ideal bir evliliğin temel bileşenlerini incelemek giderek daha önemli hale gelmektedir.

Bu çalışmada, evlilik uyumunu etkileyen temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ele alınmaktadır. Özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması, bireylerin değerleri doğrultusunda seçim yapmalarını, duygularını ve düşüncelerini özgürce ifade etmelerini, evlilik sorumluluklarını yerine getirirken kendilerini yetkin hissetmelerini, eşleriyle sıcak ve yakın ilişkiler kurmalarını ve bu süreçte eşlerinden destek görmelerini sağlamaktadır (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Bu ihtiyaçların karşılanması kültürden kültüre değişiklik gösterebileceği için, aileye bağlılık ve toplumsal onayın ön planda olduğu Türkiye gibi toplumlarda evli bireylerin bu konudaki yaklaşımlarının, evlilik uyumu açısından önemli bir değişken olduğu düşünülebilir. Ancak, bu bağlamda yapılan araştırmalar oldukça sınırlıdır. Önceki çalışmalardan elde edilen bulgular, özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasının evlilik uyumu ile pozitif yönde ilişkili olduğunu ve bireylerin bu ihtiyaçları karşılandığında öznel iyi oluşlarının arttığını göstermektedir (Kulaber Demirci & Odacı, 2020). Türk çiftlerinin evlilik uyumu üzerindeki temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların etkisini ortaya koymak, gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalar için önemli bir temel oluşturacaktır. Ayrıca, bu ihtiyaçların karşılanmasının evlilik uyumunu nasıl etkilediğini incelemek, Öz-Belirleme Kuramının kültürler arası geçerliliğine katkı sunacaktır. Özellikle, hangi ihtiyaçların çiftlerin evliliklerinde daha belirleyici olduğunu ve ilişki dinamiklerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini belirlemek, alanyazına önemli bilgiler sağlayacaktır.

Öz-belirlenimli motivasyonun bireysel iyi oluş ve çeşitli olumlu çıktılarla ilişkili olduğu, önceki araştırmalarda gösterilmiştir. Bu çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğu, motivasyonun farklı yaşam alanlarındaki etkilerine odaklanmaktadır. Örneğin, akademik başarı ve öğrenme sürecinde motivasyon, bireylerin öğrenme sürecine daha fazla bağlı kalmalarını sağlamaktadır (Evans & Bonneville-Roussy, 2015; Vansteenkiste ve ark., 2018). Ayrıca, sağlıklı yaşam tarzı ve beslenme davranışlarıyla ilişkili olduğu (Pelletier ve ark., 2004), iş performansını olumlu yönde etkilediği (Güntert, 2015; Howard ve ark., 2016; Trépanier ve ark., 2013), psikoterapi süreçlerinde daha olumlu sonuçlar sağladığı (Zuroff ve ark., 2007) ve ebeveynlikte yüksek düzeyde tatmin ve yeterlik hissiyle bağlantılı olduğu görülmektedir (Jungert ve ark., 2015).

Bununla birlikte, bazı araştırmalar motivasyonun aracı değişken olarak işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymuştur. Örneğin, spor ve fiziksel aktivite alanında yapılan çalışmalar, motivasyonun psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile çeşitli sonuçlar arasındaki ilişkiye kısmen aracılık ettiğini göstermektedir (Ntoumanis, 2005; Sarrazin ve ark., 2002). Benzer şekilde, Milyavskaya ve Koestner (2011), motivasyonun ihtiyaç doyumu ve iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkiye kısmi aracılık ettiğini ve bu etkinin aile, arkadaşlık, iş, okul ve diğer yaşam alanlarında gözlemlendiğini belirtmiştir. Ancak, motivasyonun psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile ilişkisel sonuçlar arasındaki aracılık rolü, özellikle romantik ve evlilik ilişkileri bağlamında yeterince araştırılmamıştır. Bu çalışma, motivasyonun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki aracılık etkisini inceleyerek bu boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) kullanılmıştır. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalar genellikle korelasyon ve regresyon analizleriyle sınırlı kalırken (Bolluk Uğur & Çakmak Tolan, 2024; Chamorro ve ark., 2022; Rodoplu, 2019), güncel araştırmalar yakın ilişkilerde bireysel etkilerin yanı sıra partnerler arası etkileşimlerin de dikkate alınması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır (Kenny, 1996; Kenny & Cook, 1999). Bu nedenle, bu çalışma hem bireysel hem de partner etkilerini inceleyerek alanyazına önemli bir katkı sunmaktadır.

Çalışmada ayrıca, Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği – İlişki Alanı (La Guardia ve ark., 2000) ve Çift Motivasyon Ölçeği (Blais ve ark., 1990) Türkçeye uyarlanmıştır. Mevcut Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği (Deci & Ryan, 2000), daha önce Bacanlı ve Cihangir-Çankaya (2003) tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanmış olsa da bu çalışma genel yaşam bağlamında yapılmış ve üniversite öğrencileri ile sınırlandırılmıştır. Bu nedenle, ilişki bağlamına özgü ihtiyaç doyumunu değerlendiren ölçek, bu çalışma kapsamında Türkçeye kazandırılmıştır. Ayrıca, Türkçede ilişkisel motivasyonu ölçen herhangi bir ölçek bulunmamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın Türk evli çiftler üzerinde motivasyonun rolünü incelemek isteyen gelecekteki araştırmacılar için önemli bir ölçüm aracı sunması beklenmektedir.

Bu çalışma, ilişki motivasyonu, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki bağlantıları inceleyerek, evlilik danışmanlığı ve müdahale stratejilerine bilimsel bir zemin oluşturmayı hedeflemektedir. Bulguların, Türk çiftler için kültürel bağlamı dikkate alan uygulamalar geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunması beklenmektedir. Ayrıca, Öz-Belirleme Kuramının kültürler arası geçerliliğini test ederek, sağlıklı evlilikler üzerine yapılacak gelecekteki araştırmalara ışık tutacak önemli bulgular sunması amaçlanmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, kuram ve pratiği birleştirerek, çiftlerin sürdürülebilir evlilik ilişkileri geliştirmelerine yardımcı olmayı hedefleyen kültürel açıdan duyarlı bir çerçeve oluşturmayı amaçlamaktadır.

2.Yöntem

2.1 Araştırmanın Deseni

Bu çalışmanın amacı, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi, ilişki motivasyonunun olası aracılık rolü bağlamında Türk evli çiftlerden oluşan bir örneklem üzerinde incelemektir. Çalışmanın amacına bağlı olarak, değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri araştırmayı hedefleyen ilişkisel bir araştırma deseni benimsenmiştir. Bu çalışmada, evlilik uyumunun bağımlı değişken, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumunun boyutlarının bağımsız değişkenler ve ilişki motivasyonunun aracı değişken olarak öngörüldüğü bir yapısal eşitlik modeli oluşturulmuştur. Çiftler arası

verilerin analizinde Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM; Kenny, 1996) kullanılmıştır.

2.2 Örneklem

Bu çalışmanın verileri Türk evli çiftlerden toplanmıştır. Örneklem sürecinde, katılımcıların en az bir yıldır evli olmaları ve çalışmaya eşleriyle birlikte katılmaları gerekliliği temel kriter olarak belirlenmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemini 205 evli çiftten ($n = 410$) oluşmaktadır. Veriler, Google Forms aracılığıyla çevrimiçi ortamda toplanmıştır. Çevrimiçi anketin başlangıcında, katılımcılardan çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katıldıklarını beyan etmeleri istenmiştir. Örneklem seçiminde, katılımcılara ulaşma olasılığını artırmak amacıyla kolayda örneklem tekniği kullanılmıştır.

Katılımcıların yaşları 22 ile 67 arasında değişmekte olup, yaş ortalaması 37.17 yıl ($SS = 9.60$) olarak hesaplanmıştır. Kadın katılımcıların yaşları 22 ile 66 arasında değişirken, ortalama yaş 36.29 ($SS = 9.12$) olarak bulunmuştur. Erkek katılımcılar için yaş aralığı 23 ile 67 olup, ortalama yaş 38.06 ($SS = 10.01$) olarak belirlenmiştir. Katılımcıların büyük bir kısmı yüksek eğitim seviyesine sahiptir; %63.9'u üniversite mezunu, %17.5'i ise lisansüstü eğitim almıştır. Meslek dağılımına bakıldığında, %14.4'ü öğretmen, %9.3'ü mühendis, %8.8'i hakim veya savcı, %8.7'si avukat ve %5.6'sı işsiz ya da ev hanımı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Algılanan sosyoekonomik statü açısından, katılımcıların %76.3'ü kendisini orta sınıf, %19.5'i üst sınıf ve %4.1'i alt sınıf olarak tanımlamıştır.

Demografik bilgilerin yanı sıra, katılımcıların ilişkisel özellikleri de incelenmiştir. Evlilik süreleri 1 yıldan 39 yıla kadar değişmekte olup, ortalama evlilik süresi 10.10 yıl ($SS = 9.35$) olarak hesaplanmıştır. Çiftlerin %38'inin çocuğu yokken, %30.7'sinin bir çocuğu, %24.4'ünün iki çocuğu, %6.8'inin ise üç veya daha fazla çocuğu bulunmaktadır. Katılımcılara evlenme kararlarını nasıl verdikleri sorulduğunda, %74.9'u eşleriyle belirli bir süre ilişkileri olduktan sonra evlenmeye karar verdiklerini belirtmiştir. %15.4'ü, yakın çevrelerinden birinin kendilerini tanıştırdığını ancak

evlilik kararını kendilerinin verdiğini ifade etmiştir. %7.6'sı görücü usulü evlilik yaptığını, %2.2'si ise evliliğin tesadüfler, aile ilişkileri veya başka etkenler sonucunda gerçekleştiğini belirtmiştir.

2.3 Veri Toplama Araçları

Çalışmada, demografik bilgi formunun yanı sıra bireylerin evlilik ilişkilerindeki deneyimlerini değerlendirmek amacıyla üç öz-bildirim ölçeği kullanılmıştır: İlişkilerde Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği (BPNS-R; La Guardia ve ark., 2000), Çift Motivasyon Anketi (CMQ; Blais ve ark., 1990) ve Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeği (RDAS; Busby ve ark., 1995).

Demografik Bilgi Formu

Form, katılımcıların yaş, cinsiyet, eğitim düzeyi, meslek, sosyoekonomik düzey algıları ve çocuk sahibi olup olmadıkları gibi demografik bilgilerini içeren soruların yanı sıra, partnerleriyle nasıl tanıştıkları ve evlilik süreleri gibi ilişkisel özelliklerine yönelik soruları da içermektedir.

İlişkilerde Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği (BPNS-R)

Bu ölçek, bireylerin belirli ilişkilerinde (örneğin, eş, en yakın arkadaş, anne) temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumlarını değerlendirmektedir. La Guardia ve ark. (2000) tarafından geliştirilen ölçek, toplam 9 maddeden oluşmaktadır ve her biri özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma alt boyutlarına ait üçer madde içermektedir. Katılımcılar, belirli hedef kişilerle (anne, baba, romantik partner, en yakın arkadaş, oda arkadaşı ve önemli bir yetişkin) birlikte olduklarında temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının ne ölçüde karşılandığını değerlendirmek için 7 dereceli Likert tipi bir ölçek üzerinden yanıt vermektedir. Ölçekten elde edilebilecek toplam puan 9 ile 63 arasında değişmektedir. Özellikle 4, 6 ve 9. maddeler ters kodlanmakta olup, katılımcının yanıtı 8'den çıkarılarak puanlanmaktadır. Ölçekten elde edilen yüksek puanlar, bireyin ilişkisi

içerisinde daha yüksek düzeyde temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu yaşadığını göstermektedir.

La Guardia ve ark. (2000) tarafından yapılan çalışmada, katılımcılar temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumlarını anne, baba, romantik partner, en yakın arkadaş, oda arkadaşı ve önemli bir yetişkin gibi farklı kişiler bağlamında değerlendirmiştir. Altı farklı bağlanma figürü için genel ihtiyaç doyumu açısından ölçeğin güvenilirlik katsayıları sırasıyla .91, .94, .88, .85, .90 ve .90 olarak bulunmuştur. Çalışmada ayrıca, üç faktörlü yapıyı doğrulamak amacıyla doğrulayıcı faktör analizi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, RMSEA değerinin 0.10, CFI değerinin ise 0.96 olduğunu göstermiştir.

Bu çalışma kapsamında 310 evli bireyden toplanan veriler ile ölçeğin Türkçe uyarlama çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) sonuçları, Temel Psikolojik İhtiyaç Doyumu Ölçeği – İlişki Alanı (BPNS-R) Türkçe formunun, orijinal ölçekle tutarlı olarak üç faktörlü yapısını koruduğunu ve ölçek maddelerinin ilgili faktörlere uygun şekilde dağıldığını göstermiştir. Bu hipotetik modelin uyum iyiliği indeksleri, $\chi^2 = 48.337$, $p < .01$, $sd = 24$, $\chi^2/sd = 2.014$, SRMR = 0.02, NFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.98, CFI = 0.95 ve RMSEA = 0.07 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Ölçek maddelerinin ayırt ediciliğini değerlendirmek amacıyla, alt ve üst gruplar arasında ortalama puan karşılaştırmaları yapılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda, alt ölçekler ve genel ölçek için toplam puanlar hesaplanmış ve katılımcılar en düşükten en yükseğe doğru sıralanmıştır. Daha sonra, en düşük %27'lik grup ($n = 84$) ve en yüksek %27'lik grup ($n = 84$) belirlenmiştir. Alt ölçeklere ait her bir madde, alt ölçek toplam puanları ve ölçeğin genel ortalama puanlarının alt ve üst gruplar arasında anlamlı bir fark gösterip göstermediğini belirlemek için bağımsız örneklem t-testi uygulanmıştır. Ölçeğin tüm maddeleri, alt boyutları ve genel ölçek için üst %27'lik grup ile alt %27'lik grup arasındaki ortalama puan farklarının istatistiksel olarak anlamlı olduğu bulunmuştur ($p < .001$). Bu farklar üst %27'lik grup lehine olup, BPNS-R ölçek maddelerinin, üç boyutun tamamında yüksek puan alan katılımcılar ile düşük puan alan katılımcıları ayırt edebildiğini göstermektedir.

Ölçüm aracının güvenilirliği, Cronbach's alfa ve McDonald's omega güvenilirlik katsayıları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Cronbach's alfa katsayıları, özerklik alt ölçeği için 0.94, yeterlik alt ölçeği için 0.95, ilişkili olma alt ölçeği için 0.93 ve genel ölçek için 0.90 olarak bulunmuştur. Benzer şekilde, McDonald's omega katsayıları özerklik alt ölçeği için 0.94, yeterlik alt ölçeği için 0.95, ilişkili olma alt ölçeği için 0.93 ve genel ölçek için 0.87 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Çift Motivasyon Ölçeği (CMQ)

Çift Motivasyon Ölçeği, Blais ve çalışma arkadaşları (1990) tarafından Öz-Belirleme Kuramı çerçevesinde çiftlerin ilişkisel motivasyonlarını değerlendirmek amacıyla geliştirilmiştir. Bu ölçek, bireylerin eşleriyle birlikte yaşamalarına ilişkin nedenlerini altı farklı motivasyon türü kapsamında değerlendirmektedir. Katılımcılar, her bir maddenin kendileri için ne ölçüde geçerli olduğunu 1 (hiç) ile 7 (tamamen) arasında değişen Likert tipi bir ölçekle puanlamaktadır. Ölçek maddeleri iki aşamalı bir süreçle geliştirilmiştir. İlk olarak, 48 evli veya birlikte yaşayan çiftte “Eşinizle şu anda birlikte yaşamamanın nedenleri nelerdir?” sorusu yöneltilmiş ve açık uçlu yanıtlar toplanmıştır. Daha sonra, bu yanıtlar içerik analizi ile değerlendirilerek ve motivasyonun farklı türlerine ilişkin kavramsal anlamları dikkate alınarak ölçek maddeleri oluşturulmuştur. Geliştirilen maddeler, motivasyonun çeşitli biçimlerini değerlendirme konusunda bilgi sahibi olan iki lisansüstü öğrenci tarafından görünüş geçerliği açısından değerlendirilmiştir. Ek olarak, ilişki terapisi alanında uzman iki profesyonel, ölçek maddelerinin çiftler bağlamındaki ekolojik geçerliliğini onaylamıştır.

Ölçek, motivasyonsuzluk (amotivation), dışsal düzenleme (external regulation), içselleştirilmiş düzenleme (introjected regulation), tanımlanmış düzenleme (identified regulation), bütünleşmiş düzenleme (integrated regulation) ve içsel motivasyon (intrinsic motivation) olmak üzere altı farklı motivasyon türünü değerlendirmektedir. Ölçekte her alt boyut dört maddeden oluşurken, dışsal düzenleme iki madde, içselleştirilmiş düzenleme ise üç madde içermektedir. İlişki motivasyonuna yönelik genel bir indeks, alt ölçeklerin ağırlıklı puanları kullanılarak hesaplanmıştır. Daha

yüksek puanlar, daha özerk veya içsel motivasyon düzeyini göstermektedir. Ölçeğin iç tutarlılığı Cronbach's alfa katsayısı ile ölçülmüş ve 0.76 olarak bulunmuştur.

Bu çalışma kapsamında 310 evli bireyden toplanan veriler ile ölçeğin Türkçe uyarlama çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) sonuçları, Çift Motivasyon Ölçeğinin Türkçe formunun, orijinal ölçekle tutarlı olarak altı faktörlü yapısını koruduğunu ve ölçek maddelerinin ilgili faktörlere uygun şekilde dağıldığını göstermiştir. Bu hipotetik modelin uyum iyiliği indeksleri, $\chi^2/sd = 2.86$, RMSEA = 0.078, CFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.04, NFI = 0.92 ve TLI = 0.94 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Ölçek maddelerinin ayırt ediciliğini değerlendirmek amacıyla, alt ve üst gruplar arasında ortalama puan karşılaştırmaları yapılmıştır. Tüm ölçek maddeleri, alt boyutlar ve genel ölçek için üst %27'lik grup ile alt %27'lik grup arasındaki ortalama puan farklarının istatistiksel olarak anlamlı olduğu bulunmuştur ($p < .01$). Bu farklar üst %27'lik grup lehine olup, CMQ ölçek maddelerinin, yüksek puan alan katılımcılar ile düşük puan alan katılımcıları üç boyutun tamamında ayırt edebildiğini göstermektedir.

Ölçüm aracının güvenilirliği, Cronbach's alfa ve McDonald's omega güvenilirlik katsayıları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Cronbach's alfa katsayıları, motivasyonsuzluk alt ölçeği için 0.97, dışsal düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.82, içselleştirilmiş düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.83, tanımlanmış düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.87, bütünleşmiş düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.88, içsel motivasyon alt ölçeği için 0.95 ve ölçeğin genel güvenilirliği için 0.95 olarak bulunmuştur. Benzer şekilde, McDonald's omega katsayıları, motivasyonsuzluk alt ölçeği için 0.97, içselleştirilmiş düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.83, tanımlanmış düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.87, bütünleşmiş düzenleme alt ölçeği için 0.88, içsel motivasyon alt ölçeği için 0.95 ve genel ölçek için 0.96 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeği (RDAS)

Orijinal Çift Uyum Ölçeği (DAS), Spanier (1976) tarafından geliştirilmiş olup, 32 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Ölçek maddeleri, çift memnuniyeti, çift bağlılığı, çift uzlaşması ve duygusal ifade olmak üzere dört alt boyutta kategorize edilmiştir. DAS'nin aynı genel yapıyı ölçüp ölçmediğini belirlemek amacıyla, en yaygın kullanılan ölçeklerden biri olan Locke-Wallace Evlilik Uyum Ölçeği (MAT, 1959) ile korelasyon analizleri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Elde edilen korelasyon katsayıları, evli bireyler için .86, boşanmış bireyler için ise .88 olarak bulunmuştur. Ölçeğin güvenilirlik analizi, tüm ölçek için Cronbach's alfa katsayısını .96 olarak göstermiştir. Alt ölçeklere ilişkin güvenilirlik katsayıları ise çift memnuniyeti için .90, çift bağlılığı için .94, çift uzlaşması için .86 ve duygusal ifade için .73 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Ancak, daha sonraki çalışmalar DAS'nin doğasına yönelik eleştirilerde bulunmuş, ölçeğin tek boyutlu küresel bir ölçüm mü yoksa çok boyutlu bir araç mı olduğu konusunda tartışmalara yol açmıştır (Busby ve ark., 1995). Çift uyumunun orijinal tanımı çok boyutlu olsa da ampirik araştırmalar DAS alt ölçeklerinin geçerliliğini tam olarak destekleyememiştir. Örneğin, Spanier ve Thompson (1982) tarafından yapılan faktör analizi, uzlaşma, memnuniyet ve bağlılık alt ölçeklerinin iyi bir şekilde yüklendiğini, ancak memnuniyet alt ölçeğindeki pozitif ve negatif maddelerin ayrı bir grup oluşturmadığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, duygusal ifade alt ölçeğindeki dört maddeden ikisinin düşük faktör yüklerine sahip olduğu belirlenmiştir. Crane ve ark. (1990) tarafından yapılan bir çalışmada, stres altındaki ve stres altında olmayan çiftler karşılaştırıldığında, çift memnuniyeti ve duygusal ifade alt ölçeklerinin geçerliliğine ilişkin sorunlar olduğu ortaya konmuştur.

Bu eleştirilerin ardından, Busby ve ark. (1995) ölçeği gözden geçirerek, toplam madde sayısını 14'e düşürmüş ve tüm maddelerin 5 dereceli Likert tipi bir ölçekle yanıtlandığı yeni bir versiyon oluşturmuştur. Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeği (RDAS) adı verilen bu versiyonda, puanlar 14 ile 70 arasında değişmekte olup, daha yüksek puanlar daha iyi evlilik uyumunu göstermektedir. RDAS, çift memnuniyeti, çift bağlılığı ve çift uzlaşması olmak üzere üç alt ölçekten oluşmaktadır. Orijinal DAS'nin aksine, RDAS

yapılan faktör analizlerinde kabul edilebilir düzeyde yapı geçerliliği göstermiştir. DAS ve RDAS arasındaki korelasyon katsayısı oldukça yüksek bulunmuş ($r = .97, p < .01$), ayrıca RDAS ile MAT arasındaki korelasyon katsayısı .68 olarak hesaplanmıştır ($p < .01$). Ölçeğin Guttman split-half güvenilirlik katsayısı, .94 olarak bulunmuştur (Busby ve ark., 1995).

Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeğinin Türkçeye uyarlanması, Gündoğdu (2007) tarafından gerçekleştirilmiştir. 584 evli kadın ve erkekten oluşan bir örneklemle yapılan çalışma sonucunda, ölçeğin güvenilirlik katsayıları çift memnuniyeti için .80, çift bağlılığı için .74, çift uzlaşması için .80 ve tüm ölçek için .87 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Daha sonra Bayraktaroğlu ve Çakıcı (2017) ölçeğin psikometrik özelliklerini yeniden incelemiştir. Çalışmalarında, RDAS'nin toplam puan için .88, memnuniyet için .80, bağlılık için .80 ve uzlaşma için .74 olmak üzere Cronbach's alfa katsayılarının tatmin edici düzeyde olduğunu tespit etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, ölçeğin ölçüt geçerliliğini belirlemek amacıyla Evlilik Problemi Çözme Ölçeği (Baugh ve ark., 1982) ile yapılan korelasyon analizi sonucunda, korelasyon katsayısı .69 olarak bulunmuştur ($p < 0.01$). Bu çalışmada ise ölçeğin Cronbach alfa sonuçları çift memnuniyeti, çift bağlılığı, çift uzlaşması ve tüm ölçek için sırasıyla .80, .80, .78 ve .88 olarak bulunmuştur. Bu sonuçlar, RDAS'nin evlilik uyumunu değerlendirmede güvenilir ve geçerli bir ölçüm aracı olduğunu desteklemektedir.

2.4. Veri Analizi

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide ilişki motivasyonunun aracı etkisini test etmektir. Bu amacı gerçekleştirmek için, Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) kullanılarak evli çiftlerde temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide ilişki motivasyonunun aracı rolü incelenmiştir.

Veri analinde ilk olarak, ham veriler üzerinde veri tarama gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ardından, eksik veriler, örneklem büyüklüğü, aykırı değerler, normallik, doğrusallık

ve çoklu bağlantılılık gibi varsayımlar değerlendirilmiştir. Daha sonra, katılımcıların demografik ve ilişkisel özelliklerine ilişkin detaylı bilgi sunmak amacıyla betimleyici istatistikler hesaplanmıştır. Buna ek olarak, Pearson momentler çarpımı korelasyon katsayıları hesaplanarak değişkenler arasındaki korelasyonlar incelenmiştir. Son olarak, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide ilişki motivasyonunun aracı rolü, yol analizleri (path analyses) ile test edilmiş ve APIMeM analizleri (Kenny, 1996) kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Tüm ön analizler IBM SPSS v27 ile gerçekleştirilmiş, doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ve çiftler arası yol analizleri ise AMOS 24 kullanılarak yürütülmüştür.

2.5 Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları

Bu çalışma, alanyazına katkılar sunmakla birlikte bazı sınırlılıklar da içermektedir. İlk olarak, öz-bildirim ölçeklerinin kullanılması, katılımcıların psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu, evlilik uyumu ve ilişki motivasyonlarını değerlendirirken öznel yanıtlar vermelerine yol açabilir. Soruların mahrem niteliği nedeniyle, katılımcılar belirli bilgileri paylaşmaktan kaçınabilir veya toplumsal olarak kabul edilebilir yanıtlar verebilir.

İkinci olarak, çalışmada kolayda örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Rastgele olmayan bu yöntem, belirli özelliklere sahip bireylere ulaşmada avantaj sağlasa da bulguların genellenebilirliğini sınırlayabilir (Fraenkel ve ark., 2011).

Üçüncü olarak, veriler çevrimiçi anket yoluyla toplanmıştır. Bu yöntem, geniş katılım sağlarken internet erişimi olmayan bireyler için erişim kısıtı oluşturabilir. Ayrıca, araştırmacının doğrudan yönlendirme yapamaması, katılımcıların bazı soruları yanlış yorumlamasına neden olabilir ve veri güvenilirliğini etkileyebilir.

Son olarak, bu araştırma kesitsel bir tasarıma sahiptir. Bu durum, psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu, ilişki motivasyonu ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki neden-sonuç ilişkilerini belirlemeyi engellemektedir. Kesitsel veriler yalnızca belirli bir zamandaki durumu yansıttığı için değişkenler arasındaki nedenselliği ortaya koymamaktadır.

3. Bulgular

Çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlar, aktör-partner etkileri dikkate alınarak değerlendirildiğinden, ayırt edilebilir partnerler (yani, kadınlar ve erkekler) için Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) çerçevesi kullanılmış ve veriler Amos 24 istatistik programı aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Önerilen model, ilişki motivasyonunun, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu (özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma) ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık edeceğini öne sürmektedir. Çalışmanın araştırma sorusunu değerlendirmek amacıyla doymuş bir model (saturated model) oluşturulmuştur. Modelin uyum iyiliği değerleri $\chi^2(6) = 33.57$, $p > .05$, CFI = .98, GFI = .97, SRMR = .06 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

Elde edilen verilere göre, modelde yer alan yordayıcı değişkenler, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonundaki varyansın %35.2'sini açıklamaktadır. Aynı şekilde, kadınların ilişki motivasyonundaki varyansın %23.6'sı modelde belirtilen değişkenler tarafından açıklanmıştır. Daha yüksek değerler, yordayıcı değişkenlerin ilgili değişken üzerindeki etkisinin daha güçlü olduğunu ve değişkenler arasındaki ilişkinin daha belirgin olduğunu göstermektedir. Önerilen model kapsamında, kadınların evlilik uyumu en iyi açıklanan değişken olmuş (%66.4), buna karşın erkeklerin evlilik uyumu, modelde yer alan değişkenler tarafından %26.7 oranında açıklanmıştır. Bu sonuçlar, modelin evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisini değerlendirirken cinsiyetler arasındaki farklılıkları da ortaya koymaktadır.

3.1. Aktör Etkileri

Aktör etkileri, kadınlar ve erkekler için doğrudan ve dolaylı etkiler incelenerek değerlendirilmiştir. Özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonu üzerinde (H2a) düşük etki büyüklüğüne sahip anlamlı ve pozitif bir doğrudan etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur ($\gamma = .16$, $p < .01$). Bu sonuç, erkeklerin ilişkisinde özerklik ihtiyaçları karşılandığında, daha özerk bir ilişki motivasyonuna sahip olduklarını göstermektedir. Ancak, kadınların ilişki motivasyonu üzerinde özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun anlamlı bir aktör etkisi bulunmamıştır (H2a). Öte yandan, kadınların

yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu, ilişki motivasyonları üzerinde (H2b) düşük etki büyüklüğüne sahip anlamlı ve pozitif bir etkide bulunmuştur ($\gamma = .29, p < .01$). Bu durum, yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu yaşayan kadınların ilişkilerinde daha özerk bir motivasyona sahip olma eğiliminde olduklarını göstermektedir. Ancak, erkekler için yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunun ilişki motivasyonu üzerinde anlamlı bir aktör etkisi bulunmamıştır (H2b). İlişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ise hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için ilişki motivasyonunu anlamlı ve pozitif yönde yordayan bir faktör olmuştur (H2c). Kadınlar için ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun ilişki motivasyonu üzerindeki etkisi düşük düzeyde ($\gamma = .17, p < .01$) iken, erkekler için orta düzeyde ($\gamma = .37, p < .01$) bir etki göstermiştir. Bu bulgular, ilişkili olma ihtiyaçları karşılanan bireylerin, daha güçlü bir özerk ilişki motivasyonuna sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Genel olarak özetlendiğinde, kadınların ilişki motivasyonu, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaç doyumu ile anlamlı bir şekilde ilişkilidir. Buna karşılık, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonu, özerklik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaç doyumları ile anlamlı bir şekilde ilişkili bulunmuştur.

Özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun ne kadınların ne de erkeklerin evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir aktör etkisi bulunmamıştır (H1a). Kadınlar için yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu, evlilik uyumu üzerinde (H1b) anlamlı ve pozitif bir doğrudan aktör etkisine sahiptir ($\gamma = .19, p < .01$) ve düşük etki büyüklüğüne sahiptir. Ancak, erkeklerde yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir aktör etkisi bulunmamıştır (H1b). Benzer bir örüntü, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide de gözlemlenmiştir. Kadınlar için ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu küçük etki büyüklüğüne sahip, anlamlı ve pozitif bir aktör etkisi göstermiştir ($\gamma = .17, p < .01$), ancak erkeklerde ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi bulunmamıştır (H1c). Bu sonuçlar, kadınların evlilik uyumunun, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile anlamlı şekilde ilişkili olduğunu, ancak özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir. Buna karşılık, erkeklerde hiçbir psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu değişkeni, evlilik uyumunun doğrudan anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olmamıştır. Ayrıca, ilişki motivasyonunun hem kadınlar ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) hem de erkekler ($\beta = .30, p < .001$) için evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif bir aktör etkisi gösterdiği bulunmuştur.

Aktör etkilerinin değerlendirilmesinde, ilişki motivasyonunun aracı değişken olarak dolaylı etkisi kadınlar ve erkekler için ayrı ayrı incelenmiştir. Kadınlar için yeterli ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisinin, ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H3b) anlamlı, pozitif ve kısmi aracılık gösterdiği bulunmuştur ($\gamma = .10, p < .01, [CI .04, .18]$). Başka bir deyişle, kadınların ilişkilerinde yeterli ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması, ilişki motivasyonlarını artırmakta, bu da daha yüksek evlilik uyumuna katkıda bulunmaktadır. Benzer şekilde, kadınlar için ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi, ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H3c) anlamlı, pozitif ve kısmi aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .06, p < .01, [CI .02, .12]$). Yani, kadınların ilişkilerinde ilişkili olma ihtiyaçları karşılandığında, ilişki motivasyonları artmakta ve bu durum daha yüksek evlilik uyumu ile sonuçlanmaktadır.

Erkekler için özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi, ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H3a) anlamlı, pozitif ve tam aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .05, p < .01, [CI .01, .12]$). Yani, erkeklerin ilişkilerinde özerklik ihtiyaçları karşılandığında, bu durum ilişki motivasyonlarını artırarak daha yüksek evlilik uyumuna katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi de ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H3c) anlamlı, pozitif ve tam aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .11, p < .05, [CI .03, .25]$). Yani, erkeklerin ilişkili olma ihtiyaçları karşılandığında, bu durum ilişki motivasyonlarını artırarak evlilik uyumlarını olumlu yönde etkilemektedir.

3.2. Partner Etkileri

Özerklik, yeterli ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaç doyumunun doğrudan partner etkileri hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için evlilik uyumunu anlamlı bir şekilde yordamadığı görülmüştür (H4a, H4b, H4c). İlişki motivasyonunun hem kadınlar ($\beta = .29, p < .01$) hem de erkekler ($\beta = .22, p < .01$) için evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif bir partner etkisi gösterdiği bulunmuştur.

Partner etkilerinin değerlendirilmesinde, ilişki motivasyonunun aracı değişken olarak dolaylı etkisi, kadınlar ve erkekler için ayrı ayrı incelenmiştir. Kadınların yeterli ihtiyacı doyumunun, erkeklerin evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisinin, kadınların ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H5b) anlamlı, pozitif ve kısmi aracılık gösterdiği bulunmuştur ($\gamma = .06, p < .05, [CI .04, .18]$). Ayrıca, kadınların ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun, erkeklerin evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi, kadınların ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H5c) anlamlı, pozitif ve tam aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .04, p < .05, [CI .01, .10]$). Başka bir deyişle, kadınların yeterli ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarından duyduğu tatmin, kendi ilişki motivasyonlarını artırarak, eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. Bu sonuçlar, kadınların yeterli ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaç doyumlarının, erkeklerin evlilik uyumuna olan pozitif etkisinin, kadınların artan ilişki motivasyonu ile açıklandığını göstermektedir.

Öte yandan, erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun, kadınların evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H5a) anlamlı, pozitif ve tam aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .05, p < .01, [CI .01, .10]$). Ayrıca, erkeklerin ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun, kadınların evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisi, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla (H5c) anlamlı, pozitif ve tam aracılık göstermiştir ($\gamma = .11, p < .01, [CI .04, .27]$). Başka bir deyişle, erkeklerin özerklik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarından duyduğu tatmin, kendi ilişki motivasyonlarını artırarak, eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. Bu sonuçlar birlikte değerlendirildiğinde ilişki motivasyonunun, partner dinamiklerinde önemli bir aracı değişken olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

4. Tartışma

4.1. Aktör Etkilerinin Tartışılması

Bu çalışmada, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu (özerklik, yeterli ve ilişkili olma) ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişki aktör etkileri açısından incelenmiş ve cinsiyet farklılıkları ele alınmıştır. H1a hipotezi, özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun bireyin kendi evlilik uyumu ile pozitif ilişkili olacağını öne sürmektedir, ancak bu hipotez hem

kadınlar hem de erkekler için reddedilmiştir. Bu sonuç, bireyin evlilik içinde özerklik ihtiyacını karşılamasının evlilik uyumu üzerinde doğrudan bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir. Bu bulgunun, Öz-Soysal ve ark. (2024) tarafından yapılan ve özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun romantik ilişki kalitesini artırdığını bulan çalışma ile tutarlı olmadığı görülmektedir. Bu farklılık, bireylerin yaşam evrelerinden kaynaklanabilir. Erken yetişkinlik döneminde, özerklik ihtiyacı bireyin kimlik keşfi sürecinde önemli bir rol oynarken, uzun süreli evliliklerde karşılıklı bağımlılık ve destek daha belirleyici olabilir. Ayrıca, kolektivist kültürlerde (Aydın, 2020; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005) özerklik ihtiyacının evlilik uyumundaki rolü daha sınırlı olabilir; çünkü bireyler kişisel bağımsızlıktan ziyade karşılıklı dayanışmaya ve ortak karar almaya daha fazla önem vermektedir.

H1b hipotezi, yeterli ihtiyacı doyumunun bireyin evlilik uyumu ile pozitif ilişkili olacağını öne sürmektedir. Kadınlar için bu hipotez doğrulanmış, ancak erkekler için yeterli ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi bulunmamıştır. Kadınlar, kendilerini ilişki içinde yeterli hissettiklerinde, evlilik uyumlarının arttığını bildirmişlerdir (Patrick ve ark., 2007). Kadınlar için yeterli bakım verme, ev işlerine katkıda bulunma ve duygusal destek sağlama gibi ilişki rollerle ilişkili olabilir. Erkeklerde ise yeterli ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumuna etkisinin olmaması, geleneksel erkeklik normlarıyla açıklanabilir (Hearn ve ark., 2023). Erkeklerin yeterli duygusu, kariyer başarısı, finansal güvence ve toplumsal statü ile ilişkilendirildiğinden, evlilik bağlamında yeterli ihtiyacı daha az belirleyici olabilir.

H1c hipotezi, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun bireyin evlilik uyumu ile pozitif ilişkili olacağını öne sürmektedir. Bulgular hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için bu ihtiyacın evlilik uyumunda önemli bir yordayıcı olduğunu göstermiştir. İlişkili olma ihtiyacı, bireylerin kendilerini anlaşılmış, değerli ve desteklenmiş hissetmelerini içermektedir (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). Kadınlar için bu ihtiyacın tatmini, evlilik uyumu ile anlamlı şekilde ilişkili bulunmuş, erkekler için de benzer bir ilişki gözlemlenmiştir. Ancak erkekler için etkisinin daha güçlü olması, erkeklerin eşlerine duygusal destek açısından daha fazla bağımlı olduğunu gösteren literatürle uyumludur (Proulx ve ark., 2007;

Simon, 2002). Erkekler, kadınlara kıyasla daha sınırlı sosyal destek ağlarına sahip olduklarından, ilişkili olma ihtiyacının karşılanması, onların ilişki motivasyonlarını ve evlilik uyumlarını daha güçlü bir şekilde etkilemektedir.

Çalışmanın H3a hipotezi, özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkinin, ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla gerçekleşeceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu hipotez erkekler için doğrulanmış, ancak kadınlar için reddedilmiştir. Erkekler için, özerklik ihtiyacının evlilik uyumuna doğrudan katkı sağlamadığı, ancak ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla dolaylı bir etkide bulunduğu bulunmuştur. Bu sonuç, erkeklerin ilişkide özerk hissetmelerinin ancak ilişkiye daha fazla yatırım yapmaları halinde evlilik uyumuna katkı sağladığını göstermektedir (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Kadınlar için ise özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun ne doğrudan ne de dolaylı bir etkisi bulunmamıştır. Bu, kadınların özerklik ihtiyacını evlilik uyumlarında belirleyici bir faktör olarak algılamayabileceğini veya diğer ilişkisel faktörlerin daha güçlü etkiler gösterebileceğini düşündürmektedir.

H3b hipotezi, yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkinin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla gerçekleşeceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu hipotez kadınlar için kısmi aracılık ile doğrulanmış, ancak erkekler için reddedilmiştir. Kadınlar için, ilişkide kendini yeterli hissetmenin hem doğrudan hem de ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla evlilik uyumunu artırdığı bulunmuştur. Bu sonuç, kadınların ilişkilerinde kendilerini etkili ve yeterli hissetmelerinin, ilişkiye daha fazla yatırım yapmalarını sağladığını ve bunun da evlilik uyumlarını artırdığını göstermektedir. Erkekler için yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunun evlilik uyumu üzerindeki dolaylı etkisinin olmaması, erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonunun daha çok özerklik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyacına bağlı olduğunu göstermektedir.

H3c hipotezi, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkinin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla gerçekleşeceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu hipotez hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için doğrulanmıştır. İlişkili olma ihtiyacının tatmini, duygusal yakınlık, güven ve karşılıklı desteği artırarak evlilik uyumunu güçlendirmektedir

(Patrick ve ark., 2007). Özellikle erkekler için bu ihtiyacın tatmini daha güçlü bir motivasyon kaynağı olmuş ve evlilik uyumunu artırmada kritik bir rol oynamıştır.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkilerini incelerken cinsiyet farklılıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Kadınlar için yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçları daha belirleyici olurken, erkekler için özerklik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının evlilik uyumunu etkilediği görülmüştür. Ayrıca, ilişki motivasyonu, özellikle erkekler için, psikolojik ihtiyaçların evlilik uyumuna olan etkisini açıklayan önemli bir mekanizma olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu bulgular, evlilik dinamiklerinde psikolojik ihtiyaçların farklı işlevleri olduğunu ve bu farklılıkların toplumsal cinsiyet normları ile şekillendiğini göstermektedir.

4.2. Partner Etkilerinin Tartışılması

Hipotez H4a, partnerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumunun, partnerin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla eşin evlilik uyumunu yordayacağını öne sürmektedir. Bu hipotez kadınlar için doğrulanmış, ancak erkekler için desteklenmemiştir. Erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı doyumu yüksek olduğunda, kadınların evlilik uyumu daha yüksek bulunmuş, ancak bu süreç erkeklerin ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla gerçekleşmiştir. Bu bulgu, özerklik ihtiyacının erkekler için evlilik içindeki rolünün kadınlardan farklı olabileceğini göstermektedir. Erkeklerin özerklik ihtiyacı karşılandığında, ilişkide daha ilgili ve destekleyici olmaları (Anderson, 2020; Hadden ve ark., 2015), bunun da kadınların evlilik uyumunu artırmasıyla sonuçlanabilir. Bu durum, erkeklerin geleneksel olarak sağlayıcı ve karar verici rollerine sahip olduğu toplumsal beklentilerle (Loscocco & Spitze, 2007; Nock, 2001) de ilişkilendirilebilir.

Hipotez H4b, kadınların yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunun erkeklerin evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisinin, kadınların ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla gerçekleşeceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu hipotez doğrulanmış, ancak kadınların evlilik uyumu üzerinde benzer bir etki bulunmamıştır. Kadınlar, kendilerini yeterli hissettiklerinde, ilişkilerine daha fazla yatırım yapmakta, bu da eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu olumlu yönde etkilemektedir (Johnson ve ark., 2005; Overall ve ark., 2010). Bu sonuç, evlilikte yeterlik ihtiyacının

yalnızca bireysel bir tatmin kaynağı değil, aynı zamanda ilişkisel bir faktör olduğunu göstermektedir. Çiftler arasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılık (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bir partnerin psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının, diğer partnerin deneyimleri üzerinde belirleyici olduğu görülmektedir. Özellikle annelik ve ev içi sorumluluklar, kadınların yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunu şekillendirebilir ve evlilik dinamiklerini etkileyebilir (Kluwer, 2010).

Hipotez H4c, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla kişinin partnerinin evlilik uyumunu artıracakını öne sürmektedir. Sonuçlar bu hipotezi desteklemiş, ilişkili olma ihtiyacının evlilik içindeki özerk motivasyon süreçlerini tetikleyerek hem bireyin hem de eşinin evlilik uyumunu artırdığı gösterilmiştir (Knee & Browne, 2023). Araştırmalar, ilişkili olma ihtiyacı tatmin edilen bireylerin daha destekleyici ve yapıcı ilişki dinamikleri geliştirdiğini göstermektedir (Blais ve ark., 1990; Hadden ve ark., 2015; Knee ve ark., 2005). Hadden ve ark. (2015), ilişkili olma ihtiyacının, bireylerin eşlerini destekleme niyetlerini artırdığını ve bu durumun uzun vadede evlilik kalitesini güçlendirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bulgu, erkekler için tam aracılık, kadınlar için ise kısmi aracılık göstermiştir. Yani, erkeklerin evlilik uyumu tamamen eşlerinin ilişki motivasyonuna bağlı olarak etkilenirken, kadınlar için başka faktörler de rol oynamaktadır. Kadınların evlilik uyumu, ev içi iş bölümü, duygusal güvenlik, ortak ebeveynlik gibi faktörlerden de etkilenmektedir (Carlson ve ark., 2016; Neff & Karney, 2005, 2008).

Hipotez H5a, H5b ve H5c, özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumunun partnerin evlilik uyumu üzerinde doğrudan bir etkisi olacağını öne sürmektedir, ancak bu hipotezler desteklenmemiştir. Bu bulgu, psikolojik ihtiyaçların evlilik uyumu üzerindeki etkisinin ancak ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla anlam kazandığını göstermektedir (La Guardia & Patrick, 2008). Yöntemsel açıdan, anlamlı bulunmayan bulgular, partner etkilerinin genellikle belirli bağlamsal tetikleyicilere (örneğin, stres, çatışma) bağlı olarak ortaya çıktığını gösteren önceki çalışmalarla uyumludur. Örneğin, bir partnerin yeterlik ihtiyacı doyumunu, yalnızca bakım verme gibi zorlu durumlarda evlilik uyumunu etkileyebilir, ancak istikrarlı koşullarda bu ilişki belirgin

olmayabilir. Buna ek olarak, bu çalışmanın analizleri, özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyacı doyumu ile evlilik uyumunu, çiftler arasındaki karşılıklı bağımlılığı göz önünde bulundurarak her iki partnerin verilerini eşzamanlı olarak değerlendirmiştir. Bu yaklaşım, bu değişkenleri ayrı ayrı incelemek yerine, çift dinamiklerini bütüncül bir şekilde ele alarak daha kapsamlı sonuçlar elde etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

4.3 Kuram ve Uygulamaya Yönelik Çıkarımlar

Bu çalışma, Öz-Belirleme Teorisi'nin (SDT) evlilik bağlamındaki uygulanabilirliğini inceleyerek önemli kuramsal ve uygulamalı katkılar sunmaktadır. SDT, genellikle iş, eğitim ve spor gibi alanlarda incelenmiş, ancak uzun süreli evlilik ilişkileri bağlamında yeterince araştırılmamıştır. Çalışma, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu ile evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi ilişki motivasyonunun aracılık rolü üzerinden değerlendirerek, evlilik içindeki dinamikleri daha iyi anlamaya katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Bulgular, toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların evlilik içindeki işleyişini nasıl şekillendirdiğini göstermektedir. Özerklik ihtiyacı, kadınlar için evlilik uyumu üzerinde doğrudan etkili olmazken, erkekler için ancak ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla dolaylı bir etkiye sahip olmuştur. Erkekler özerkliklerini deneyimlediklerinde, ilişkiye yönelik motivasyonları artmakta ve bu da evlilik uyumlarını güçlendirmektedir. Kadınlar için ise yeterlik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının evlilik uyumunu doğrudan etkilediği görülmüştür. Kadınların ilişkilerinde kendilerini yetkin hissetmeleri ve duygusal bağlarını güçlendirmeleri, evlilik tatminlerini artırmaktadır.

Araştırmanın bulguları, evlilik danışmanlığı, psikoeğitim ve terapötik müdahaleler açısından önemli pratik çıkarımlar sunmaktadır. Kadınların ilişkide kendilerini yeterli hissetmelerini sağlayan programlar ve duygusal bağlarını güçlendiren stratejiler geliştirilmelidir. Erkekler için ise özerklik ve ilişkili olma ihtiyaçlarının ancak ilişki motivasyonu aracılığıyla evlilik uyumu üzerinde etkili olduğu göz önünde

bulundurularak, onların ilişkiye yönelik içsel motivasyonlarını artırmaya odaklanan müdahaleler oluşturulmalıdır.

Araştırmanın en önemli bulgularından biri, ilişkili olma ihtiyacının hem bireyin hem de partnerinin evlilik uyumunu doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak etkilediğidir. Duygusal yakınlığı güçlendiren terapötik yaklaşımlar (örneğin, Duygu Odaklı Terapi- EFT) evlilik müdahalelerinde etkili olabilir. Kültürel bağlamın da dikkate alınması, toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine duyarlı ancak geleneksel beklentilerin sorgulanmasını teşvik eden müdahalelerin geliştirilmesini gerektirmektedir.

4.4. Gelecekteki Araştırmalar için Öneriler

Bu çalışma, evlilik uyumunu etkileyen faktörlere ilişkin değerli bilgiler sunmakla birlikte çalışmanın sahip olduğu bazı sınırlılıklar gelecekteki araştırmalar için yol gösterici niteliktedir. Gelecekteki araştırmalarda, evlilik uyumunun zaman içindeki değişimini incelemek için boylamsal çalışmaların yürütülmesi ve ebeveynlik gibi önemli yaşam olaylarının evlilik üzerindeki etkilerini değerlendirmenin faydalı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca, bu çalışmada temel psikolojik ihtiyaç doyumu, ilişki motivasyonu ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için kesitsel bir tasarım kullanılmıştır. Bu araştırma tasarımı değişkenler arasındaki ilişkilerin araştırılmasında faydalı olmakla birlikte, nedensellik çıkarımı yapmayı veya altta yatan süreçlerin derinlemesine incelenmesini sınırlamaktadır. Gelecekteki araştırmalarda, bireyler ve çiftler için evlilik uyumunu etkileyen faktörleri daha derinlemesine anlamak amacıyla derinlemesine görüşmeler veya odak grup gibi nitel yöntemler kullanılabilir. Bu tür metodolojiler, çiftlerin ilişkisel dinamikler hakkındaki bakış açılarını, tutumlarını ve inançlarını ortaya çıkararak kendilerinin ve eşlerinin davranışlarını nasıl yorumladıklarına ışık tutabilir. Ayrıca, bireylerin kariyer, kişisel gelişim veya sosyal bağlantılar gibi diğer yaşam alanlarındaki motivasyonlarının evlilik ilişkilerine nasıl yansıdığına araştırılması önemli bulgular sunabilir. Bu tür çalışmalar, evlilik uyumunu etkileyen psikolojik ve sosyal süreçleri daha kapsamlı bir şekilde anlamaya katkı sağlayacaktır.

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