

**THE MEDIATOR ROLE OF SELF-CONSTRUAL  
AND ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLE ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED  
PARENTAL ATTITUDES IN CHILDHOOD AND  
THE ATTITUDES TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL  
VIOLENCE IN DATING**



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STYLE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED PARENTAL  
ATTITUDES IN CHILDHOOD AND THE ATTITUDES TOWARDS  
PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IN DATING

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## **ABSTRACT**

THE MEDIATOR ROLE OF SELF-CONSTRUAL AND ADULT ATTACHMENT  
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PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IN DATING

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Based on the premise that "attitudes towards violence can be the result of violence, but also give a lead to the continuation of violence", the variables that are thought to be able to predict people's attitudes towards violence was examined in current study. The principal aim was to determine whether self-construal and adult attachment style have mediator roles on the relationship between perceived parental attitudes in the childhood and the attitudes towards psychological dating violence. Secondly, it was aimed to understand if perceived parental attitudes in the childhood predicts the attitudes towards psychological dating violence, by adding the experience of violence in intimate relationships as control variable into the analysis. The participants of the study were selected through simple random sampling. 29

universities were selected by drawing of lots among all universities in Turkey aimed at allowing all university students to have equal chance for participating in current study and thereafter the academicians in these universities were contacted and the students were reached. It can be expressed that current study, which was carried out with 430 participants aged between 18-29 in total, who studied at 25 different universities and 73 different departments and grew up in 73 different cities, is highly representative. The results of current study showed that both the anxiety dimension of attachment and individual self-construal are fully mediators in the relationship between perceived maternal rejection and the attitude towards male psychological dating violence. Besides, perceived maternal rejection in childhood, which predicted attitude towards male dating psychological violence when the experience of violence in intimate relationships as control variable is ignored, did not predict attitude towards male dating violence when controlling this variable. In the discussion chapter, the results of the study were evaluated in the light of the results in the literature.

*Keywords:* Violence, dating violence, psychological violence, attachment, parental attitudes, self-construal

## ÖZ

BENLİK KURGUSU VE YETİŞKİN BAĞLANMA STİLLERİNİN  
ÇOCUKLUKTA ALGILANAN EBEVEYN TUTUMLARI VE FLÖRTTE  
PSİKOLOJİK ŞİDDETE TUTUM ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİDE ARACI ROLÜ

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"Şiddete yönelik tutumlar, şiddetin bir sonucu olabileceği gibi, şiddetin devam etmesine de yol açabilir" varsayımdan hareketle, bu çalışmada, kişilerin şiddete yönelik tutumlarını yordayabileceği düşünülen değişkenler incelenmiştir. Temel amaç, çocuklukta algılanan ebeveyn tutumları ile psikolojik flört şiddetine yönelik tutumlar arasındaki ilişkide benlik kurgusu ve yetişkin bağlanma stilinin aracı rolü olup olmadığını belirlemektir. İkinci amaç olarak, kontrol değişkeni olarak incelenenek olan 'yakın ilişkilerde şiddet deneyimi' analize eklenerek, çocuklukta algılanan ebeveyn tutumlarının psikolojik flört şiddetine yönelik tutumları yordayıp yordamadığını araştırılacaktır. Araştırmmanın katılımcıları basit tesadüfi örneklemeye yoluyla seçilmiştir. Tüm üniversite öğrencilerinin mevcut çalışmaya katılım

konusunda eşit şansa sahip olmaları amacıyla Türkiye'deki tüm üniversiteler arasında kura ile 29 üniversite seçilmiş ve daha sonra bu üniversitelerdeki akademisyenlerle iletişime geçilerek öğrencilere ulaşılmıştır. 25 farklı üniversitede, 73 farklı bölümde öğrenim gören ve 73 farklı şehirde büyüyen, 18-29 yaş aralığından toplam 430 katılımcı ile gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmanın temciliyetinin oldukça yüksek olduğu ifade edilebilir. Mevcut çalışmanın sonuçları, algılanan anne reddi ile erkek tarafından uygulanan psikolojik flört şiddetine yönelik tutum arasındaki ilişkide hem bağlanmanın kaygı boyutunun hem de bireysel benlik kurgusunun tam aracı rolü olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, kontrol değişkeni olarak yakın ilişkilerde şiddet deneyimi göz ardı edildiğinde erkek psikolojik flört şiddetine yönelik tutumu yordayan çocuklukta algılanan anne reddi, bu değişken kontrol edildiğinde erkek flört şiddetine yönelik tutumu yordamamıştır. Tartışma bölümünde, çalışmanın sonuçları literatürdeki bulgular ışığında değerlendirilmiştir.

*Anahtar kelimeler:* Şiddet, flört şiddeti, psikolojik şiddet, bağlanma, ebeveyn tutumları, benlik kurgusu



*To My Mother, Father,*

*Sister, Brother, Grandmother and Marcus*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. General Introduction

“Life doesn’t make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the sooner we learn that, the better for us all.”

Erik Erikson

It is vital important to make contact with someone for people who can establish social bonds even under difficult conditions (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). According to Beautrais (2001) - who carried out a study on suicide - one of the predictors of critical suicide attempts was a being socially isolated - which can be described as a situation in which there are disrupted or nonexistent interpersonal relationships and communication (Trout, 1980). Additionally, considering that both psychological and physical problems are relatively more widespread among individuals who experience social attachment deprivation, it is clear that individuals need a relationship even in order to maintain their functionality (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Perry (1996) explained that relationships are necessary for people to survive, work, learn, love and be loved and ensure the continuity of their species by breeding. Consistent with this, it can be stated that individuals who share a common

(even if it is negative) experience, or have something in common, or are often subjected to each other, have a tendency to establish a friendship or other bonds (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Despite this, it is not wrong to express that not all relationships are good for them. In the literature, it was emphasized the necessity of interaction for a conflict to be seen. Considering this emphasis, relationships can be evaluated as potential conflict contexts (Rahim, 1985). In relation with this, various relationships, when considered in terms of the violence experienced, can be toxic to individuals who are abusee and even abuser.

Harway and his colleagues (2002) expressed that the phenomenon of violence is one of the most urgent societal problems by taking into consideration its prevalence. Mercy et. al. (1993) portrayed violence as "the threatened or actual use of physical force toward an individual or a group, that ends up with or is probably to ends up with injury or death". This may be effective in determining the focus of the studies. Almost anyone can be the victim of violence, regardless of gender, age group, rural or urban area, education level and so forth. However, considering the studies conducted, it seems that the focal point of most of them is "Violence Against Women". One of the factors effective on this can be the fact that even if persons from all sexes are affected by relationship violence, it seems that women are more often victim and experience more serious injuries as a result of it (Harway et. al., 2002). In relation to that, it can be expressed that most of the studies on violence focus on physical violence, which is relatively easier to understand because it is noticeable at first glance. When looking at the researches done on the violence, it is known that %35 of all women have been reported that they were exposed to physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner, or

sexual violence by somebody who was not a close partner (WHO, 2014). In addition, it was stated that more than four out of ten women in the U.S. are supposedly exposed to at least one form of violence. This violence types and the rate for being exposed to them are as follows: Child abuse (17.8%), Physical assault (19.1%), Rape (20.4%), and Intimate partner violence (34.6%) (Plichta & Falik, 2001). In a study conducted in Turkey in 2019, some incidents of violence against women and the number of cases reported are as follows: Sexual assault (523), Sexual harassment (502), Child sexual abuse (515), Insult (10582), Willful injury (12972), Threat (14421), Maltreatment (2150), Deprivation of liberty (368) (Çalışkan, 2019). However, when looking at these violence incidents and the number of cases, it is seen that it is also very important to examine other types of violence. The reason is that although there are different types of violence, there are intertwined relationships between them. It can also be stated that they can also feed and predict each other (Murphy & O'Leary, 1989; Coker, Smith, McKeown & King, 2000).

It is seen that some of the studies on violence in recent years concentrated on psychological violence which can also be referred as psychological maltreatment, psychological abuse, emotional abuse or maltreatment, verbal abuse, mental violence, emotional violence /aggression (O'Leary & Maiuro, 2001; Winstok & Sowan-Basheer, 2015). It is important to study psychological violence in terms of realizing the probability of physical violence. Murphy and O'Leary (1989) stated that humanbeings' own psychological aggression is a predictor of their first occurrences of physical aggression in matrimony. White, Merrill & Koss (2001) stated that the variable which predicts the aggression in a best way was the verbal

aggression by partner and they added that the second best predictor variable was the physical aggression by partner. In relation to that, they also added that verbal aggression can result in physical violence and aggressive behavior of intimate partner can increase the probability of mutual violence. Considering these results, it is better understood that it is important to recognize psychological violence in order to prevent physical violence.

Although aggression is quite common among married couples in its various forms, studies conducted have shown that the dating process is also a period which violence can be seen. Research found that 31% of the men and 44% of the women who participated to the study stated that they had been aggressive against the persons who they are in relationship with in the year before their marriage (O'Leary & et. al, 1989). Clark, Beckett, Wells & Dungee-Anderson (1994) defined 'dating' as a training field to improve the skills which are essential in order to perpetuate a matrimony and family. To be more specific, dating process can be thought as a rehearsal for marriage. Therefore, it can be understood that evaluating the aggression in dating process is significant; because if there was any aggressive behavior and/or attitude in various forms of it against partner, it can be thought that there is a risk for violence in a much more severe way in marital process (Clark, Beckett, Wells & Dungee-Anderson, 1994). When considering that being able to prevent dating violence is vital important in order to intervene in the transmission of relationship violence across generations (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1999), it can be understood that dating violence which can be too frequent to be underestimated is a breaking point in maintainance of violence.

According to a study carried out on African American College Students, 92% of all males had behaved verbally aggressive attitude toward their partners at least once, and this ratio for women is 94%. Additionally, it was found that 35% of all males and 47% of all females expressed that they behaved in a physically aggressive manner towards persons who are their dating partners (Clark & et. al., 1994). Makepeace (1981) - who took the dating violence as "a major hidden social problem" in terms of its prevalence between college students- stated that more than twenty percent of university students have experienced direct dating violence, and many students also know someone else who has been involved in the violence. Nevertheless, the results of a dating violence preventive program study conducted by Foshee et al. (1998) showed that 25% less psychological violence, 60% less sexual violence, and 60% less violence towards current dating partner were committed in the treatment group compared to the control group. Taking this data in consideration, it is clear that to study on dating violence is crucial in order to prevent it by raising an awareness on it.

While people's attitudes towards violence can vary in relation to their past experiences, it is important to study the variables that have an impact on this diversity. This is because our approach to violence affects the cycle of violence towards the permanency of the violence. A study on violence in dating relationship showed that the likelihood of committing violence goes up by %200, when adding one point on the attitude scores on accepting violence (Stets & Maureen, 1987). It can be expressed that the number of people who accepted various attitudes - which may be perceived as violent by some persons - as normal is substantial in Turkey. To set an example, in a study conducted with nursing school students, it was

revealed that about one in three senior students does not perceive behaviors with regard to jealousy as violence (Aslan et al., 2008). In relation with that, it can be seen that people who experience a dating relationship, especially during adolescence, confuse some attitudes and behaviors such as jealousy and control with love and devotion. Informing these people about the violent relationship and its nature, while they are still in this period in order to correct this confusion that can have an impact on attitudes towards accepting violence as normal, might provide the opportunity to prevent violence in the long term (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1999). For this reason, studying the underlying mechanisms of various attitudes towards violence is meaningful in order to prevent new victims of violence and perpetrators of violence.

In the light of above-mentioned information and considering the increasing incidence of violence in time, the mediator role of self-construal and adult attachment style on the relationship between perceived parental attitudes in childhood and the attitudes towards psychological violence in dating will be examined in our current study.

## **1.2. Violence as a Concept**

“Violence is not merely killing another. It is violence when we use a sharp word, when we make a gesture to brush away a person, when we obey because there is fear. So violence isn't merely organized butchery in the name of God, in the name of society or country. Violence is much more subtle, much deeper, and we are inquiring into the very depths of violence.”

Jiddu Krishnamurti

Considering that humanbeings have a common motivation to establish and maintain bonds with other persons, it can be inferred that we are relational beings (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Nevertheless, although individuals have a need to belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), Gable and Reis (2001) expressed that the relationships are also main sources for people are in physically and emotionally pain. Considered in this context, aggression or violence is some of the aversive behaviors and attitudes that can be the source of physically pain and psychologically damage in relationships for people (Kowalski, 2001; Baron & Richardson, 2004).

When the literature was reviewed, it was seen that the concepts of aggression, violence and even abuse are used interchangeably. It is clear there is a need to be clarified these concepts for this study focusing on violence. First of all, Baron (1977) has made the following definition for aggression; "any form of behavior with the intention of harming and / or injuring another living creature who has the motivation for avoiding such aggressive treatment"; and he has added that this harmful behavior does not have to take place, and that behaviors creating an aversive result can also be evaluated within the scope of aggression. In another study on aggression, it was stated that thoughts or feelings are the factors that can lead to aggression, which is an observable behavior, but both of these are not considered within the scope of aggression (Allen & Anderson, 2017). Although it has been stated that negative emotions such as anger, motives such as desire to harm, and some negative attitudes such as racism may have an effect on the emergence of aggression, it has been stated that aggression can also emerge without the need for them - in cold blood and without a sense of hate (Baron, 1977). Considering the studies, it can be seen that some researchers examine violence with the scope of

aggression and according to this, they handle the acts related violence as aggression (Mizen, 2009; Anderson & Bushman, 2018). Using aggression and violence interchangeably, Geffner (2016) stated that these are visible with physical, sexual acts and aggressive behaviors. He also mentioned that these can occur psychologically and explained these terms as "physical, sexual or psychological assault on another person by one"; by adding that abuse also includes these, he considered violence and assault as individual incidents, while he examined abuse in a continuum that can include more than one form of aggression. In addition, while it is assumed there is a relationship between the abuser and the abusee, this is not found it imperative for violence or aggression. In addition, abuse is defined as the use of power and coercive control in which one person uses her/his superior position, privilege, or strength to impose his will on another - usually through threat (Geffner, 2016); and this definition quite coincides with the "definition of the term violence" used in present study. To explain the definition of violence, according to World Health Organization (WHO), violence is "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg & Zwi, 2002, p. 5). In addition, Krug et al. (2002) expressed that subtypes of violence are classified with regard to the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, including self-directed violence, interpersonal violence, and collective violence. Moreover, interpersonal violence is splitted into two subtypes as "violence in family and intimate relationships" and "violence in society" (WHO, 2005). Krug et al. (2002) also stated that violence can be seen in various ways regarding the nature of it, as physical, psychological, sexual, the manners which

involve deprivation or neglect.

More than one million people die and a lot more suffer non-fatal injuries each year, in consequence of self-inflicted, interpersonal or collective violence. Violence, in general, is one of the leading reasons of death for people aged 15-44 all around the world (Krug et al., 2002). Additionally, Olofsson, Lindqvist, Shaw and Danielsson (2012) explained that to be victim of violence is a critical risk factor in terms of health-related symptoms, for both men and women.

Violence is one of the biggest problems which should be examined, because when considering its effects, it can be understood that they are not limited with health problems and/or the reason of death. It also has an impact on the maintenance of the violence on society because it has a role on our attitudes towards violence and our resorting to violence against someone. Markowitz (2001) stated that there is a relationship between having violent experiences on childhood period and attitudes towards resorting to violence against spouses. Additionally, it was expressed that attitudes towards using violence against spouses is also related to the frequency of engaging in violence against children and spouses (Markowitz, 2001). In this context, Bandura (1973) stated that “People are not born with preformed repertoires of aggressive behavior; they must learn them in one way or another” (p. 61). In relation to attitudes towards violence, although many of the people participating in the study - carried out on spouses’ attitude towards violence against women - expressed that they find spousal violence, especially physical violence as inappropriate, they stated conflict is a part of the matrimony. They added that therefore it is acceptable for the wives to be beaten – depending on some factors

such as the extent of physical harm, the age of the husbands - and they added that women should be tolerant toward violence (Yigzaw, Berhane, Deyessa & Kaba, 2010). According to Riggs & O'leary (1996) who carried out a study on courtship aggression, it was seen that a more accepting attitude toward the aggression in dating process and aggressive attitudes in the past are significant elements in order to determine persons who are at risk for being aggressive in dating process. When all these are considered, it can be understood that it is important to investigate the mechanism underlying "violence and attitude towards violence", which can be thought to be correlated.

### **1.2.1. Types Of Violence.**

#### ***1.2.1.1. Physical Violence.***

The definition of physical violence is as "intentionally using of physical force" - which is likely to lead to death, disability, injury or any other harm (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black & Mahendra, 2015). Additionally, physical violence has been defined as the violation of the body integrity of the aggrieved person. It was stated that the violence that occurs with the application of physical force causes temporary or permanent damage to the body of the person and sometimes it can lead to death (Polat, 2016). Physical violence is the first and most noticeable form of violence, as the damages and victimizations caused by the act of physical violence on individuals are more easily noticed and the damages caused by this act of violence are evaluated more objectively than other types of violence (Uluocak, Gökulu & Bilir, 2014). Pushing, grabbing, shoving, pulling hair, slapping, hitting, kicking or biting, beating up, using a weapons or any tools for hurting are only some examples of physical violence (Lacey et. al., 2013). A study on violence in the Turkish sample revealed

that approximately 1 out of 3 women have been subjected to physical violence at least once (Altinay & Arat, 2007). In addition, according to the data published by We Will End Femicide Platform (2019), the number of women killed by men in Turkey is quite striking. The number of homicides that increase in every year is as follows for 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively; 409, 440, 474.

#### ***1.2.1.2. Sexual Violence.***

The actions such as forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse where she does not want, when she does not want and in ways she does not want (rape); forcing sexual intercourse with others; damaging the genitals; forcing to give birth or not give birth; forcing to abortion; forcing to incest relationship (sexual harassment and rape between relatives); forcing to prostitution; forcing to marriage; engaging in sexually disturbing behavior by phone, letter or verbally are sexual violence (BKSGM, 2008). According to a study on intimate partner and sexual violence, it was found that these types of violence - which have an impact on a significant portion of the population - have immediate and longtime outcomes on persons exposed such as physical injury, unwanted pregnancy, the infections which are transmitted through sexual ways and more of the same (WHO, 2010).

#### ***1.2.1.3. Psychological Violence.***

According to Harrell (1991), psychological abuse - which is also referred as psychological violence on the literature (O'Leary & Maiuro, 2001) - is defined as the utilization from more subtle coercive strategies in order to control and use victims for own benefits without overt threats of violence. O'Neil & Egan (1993, p.70) stated that psychological violence contains "misuses of power whose s/he has by trying to

devalue, restrict or violate someone else, in order to retain herself/himself control, benefit or status" (as cited in Good, Hepper, Hillenbrand-Gunn & Wang, 1995). It can be stated that all the examples below fall within the scope of psychological violence:

- If one of the partners consistently criticizes the other one,
- If s/he shouts at her/his partner and says offensive words
- If s/he does not give her/his partner enough money,
- If s/he prevents her/his partner to meet with his/her friends, family or other people,
- If s/he uses jealousy as an excuse to keep her/his partner under control,
- If s/he forces her/his partner to do something even though he/she does not want it,
- If s/he threatens to separate her/his partner from the children,
- When her/his partner is sick or in need of herself/himself, if s/he does not provide sufficient care,
- If s/he belittles her/his partner regarding his/her beliefs or social class
- If s/he compares her/his partner with other people
- If s/he puts pressure on her/his partner about the way her/his partner dresses, the places he/she will go to and the people he/she will meet
- If s/he attempts to prevent her/his partner from self-development
- If s/he tries to establish sexual domination over her/his partner by sexually

belittling her/his partner and demanding excessive sexual intercourse (Chang, 1996; BKSGM, 2008; Baygal, 2012).

According to a study carried out on domestic violence in primary care patients, it was expressed that 15.3% of 829 participants stated that they had been subjected to domestic violence in the last 5 years, and 5.9% of these people reported physical violence and 9.4% reported psychological violence. In addition, according to the same study, the rate of exposure to psychological violence of women was much higher compared to men (80.8% vs. 19.2%) (Selic, Pesjak & Kersnik, 2011). Other than this, in a study done on marital violence in Turkey, the frequency of psychological violence was found to be 93%, much higher than expected. On the other hand, it was stated that the frequency of economic violence in marriage is 34.4%, the frequencies of physical violence and sexual violence are respectively as follows: 37.5% and 3.9% (Dönmez, 2008). A study on emotional violence, which is also meant as psychological violence in the literature, revealed that 229 of 234 women (99%) participants were subjected to psychological violence at least once. In addition, most of the participants - who stated that they were abused – more frequently reported that they were exposed to psychological violence. Therefore, it can be thought that psychological violence is more common in physically abusive relationships than non-abusive relationships. In relation to that, it can be inferred that psychological violence can be seen with other types of violence (Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause & Polek, 1990).

The results of a study revealed that 54.4 of battered women could predict physical abuse they might be exposed to on the basis of psychological abuse they

exposed to. Accordingly, the types of psychological violence such as threats of abuse and restriction especially are the variables significantly predict future physical abuse (Follingstad et al., 1990). Besides, it was found that psychological aggression by the partner is a predictor for the first physical aggression incidents in the relationship (Murphy & O'Leary, 1989). These can be seen as a supportive findings for the view that "psychological violence emerges as a harbinger of physical violence (O'Leary, Malone & Tyree, 1994).

An important point to be considered is that the effects of psychological violence should not be confused with the effects of physical violence. Although these two types of violence can be frequently seen together, the study conducted by Follingstad et al. (1990) showed that 72% of the women who were subjected to violence reported that psychological violence had a more severe effect than physical violence. Psychological distress, poor physical and mental health such as arthritis, migraine and chronic pain, the higher mean scores on depression, stress and anxiety, lower self-esteem are various instances of the impacts of the psychological violence on person exposed to (Fortin, Guay, Lavoie, Boisvert & Beaudry, 2012; Coker, Smith, Bethea, King, & McKeown, 2000; Al-Modallal, 2012; Aguilar & Nightingale, 1994).

### **1.3. Psychological Violence in Dating**

According to Straus (2004), dating relationship is "a dyadic relationship" which includes meetings ensuring socially interaction and activities both parties jointly participated into in order to maintain the relationship. Both parties generally invest in the relationship by spending time and energy (Straus, 2004). Besides,

Murray and Kardatzke (2007) defined the dating relationship as "the parties share out an emotional, romantic and/or sexual bond" and distinguished this relationship from relationships that indicate lifelong commitment such as marriage and engagement.

Although pre-marital romantic relationships are portrayed in popular culture instruments as excessively going well or bittersweet and both partners overcome all difficulties in order to establish a successful relationship on them, actually this is not the case (Makepeace, 1981). Research shows that pre-marital violence against the romantic partner is quite common. In a study conducted with university students on this topic, 22.3% of the participants reported that they were either victims or perpetrators of violence in the pre-marital period (Cate, Henton, Koval, Christopher & Lloyd, 1982). In addition, it was revealed that almost 12% of adolescent participants were subjected to or perpetrate intense dating violence (Coker et al., 2000). Besides, Bonomi et al. (2012) revealed that 64.7% of female participants and 61.7% of male participants were exposed to dating violence between the ages of 13-19.

Dating violence, one of the types of interpersonal violence (Juarez, 2019), is also a type of intimate partner violence and can be experienced in different ways, including physical, psychological / emotional, sexual and stalking (CDC, 2014; Price et al., 1999). Rouse, Breen, and Howell (1988) stated that the article published by Makepeace in 1981 was a pioneer for studies on dating and/or courtship violence. When the literature is reviewed, it can be seen that the focus of attention in terms of violence was child abuse in the sixties and violence in the family in the seventies, respectively (Gelles, 1980). However, since what happens during the dating period

can be a harbinger of what will happen during the marriage period (Clark, Beckett, Wells & Dungee-Anderson, 1994), studying on dating violence is meaningful to prevent the potential violence in the future.

Considering the findings of studies on dating violence around the world, Aslan et al. (2008) explained that the incidence of dating violence varies between 10% and 55%, based on how the violence is defined, which type of it is evaluated and the method used to evaluate it. A study on dating partner abuse - revealed the seriousness of the situation by showing the finding that more than 90% of participants exposed to psychologically abusive behavior coming from their intimate partners in dating relationships. Additionally, with this study, it was emphasized once again that psychological abuse is a precursor of future physical abuse (Neufeld, McNamara & Ertl, 1999). In connection with this, it was additionally stated that the development of violence follows a path from psychological violence to physical violence (Murphy & O'Leary, 1989). There are many other studies showing the importance of psychological violence in preventing physical violence. To be more clear, in the study by Parlak (2018), it was stated that the frustration created and psychological pressure applied by the partner are among the external factors that trigger violence in the relationship. In the same study, according to the statements of adolescents, it was revealed that some internal factors that trigger violence are jealousy and the desire to control. Considering that jealousy, controlling, psychological pressure on the partner, and creating frustration are within the scope of psychological violence (Chang, 1996; BKSGM, 2008), it can be understood that psychological violence is generally among the predictors of violence. In addition, one of the findings obtained in a study examining the relationship between physical

aggression and verbal aggression is that “the more verbal aggression, the more physical aggression”. Starting from this point of view, it can be considered that if people do not accept psychological violence as the normal at the beginning of the relationship, physical violence will probably be prevented (Straus, 1974). In the light of this information, it can be understood that studying psychological violence in dating relationships will be as meaningful as studying physical violence. Since understanding the mechanism underlying of psychological violence in dating can be a guide for preventing physical violence in a way.

#### **1.4. Attitudes Towards Violence**

Attitudes towards violence have been the main target of the trainings organized to prevent violence; because they have an impact on the using violence, in the reaction of the victims to victimization people experienced and in the reaction of the society towards violence (Flood & Pease, 2009). According to Fazio Model, behaviors are determined by a person's interpretations and definitions about the situation in respect of partly ambiguity of social stimuli and situation. The person's attitudes are like a guide to perceiving the situation, and perceptions that are compatible with attitudes can lead to attitudinally compatible behaviors (Fazio, 1986). In consistent with this model, the results of the various studies on different sampling showed that there is a significantly positive relationship between attitudes toward violence and violent behavior (Seddig & Davidov, 2018; Ssenyonga, Hermenau, Nkuba & Hecker, 2019; Doe, 2000). From this point of view, it is clear that the attitude towards dating violence is an issue that needs to be studied as much as violence; because an approach such as seeing and accepting violence as normal can be an important factor in perpetuating the violence (García-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise & Watts, 2005).

The study conducted by Doe in 2000 showed that spouses' attitudes towards domestic violence and the actual occurrence of spousal abuse are closely related, and tolerant attitudes lead to violent behavior. Similarly, Molina (2020) found that there is a significantly positive relationship between attitude towards psychological violence and intimate partner acceptance-rejection. While this finding supports the hypothesis that the attitude towards psychological violence predicts the psychological violence committed by the partner, it also reveals the necessity to study the attitudes towards violence in order to combat violence. In particular, the findings of the study conducted by Jewkes, Levin and Penn-Kekana (2004) are consistent with this necessity. According to this study, which was conducted as a cross-sectional study of violence against women in three provinces of South Africa, 58% of the participants stated that being beaten is culturally accepted as expressing love, and 34% of the participants stated that they personally supported it. In addition, the findings showed that women in the northern state less frequently report abuse. Besides, the findings of a study done by McDonell, Ott & Mitchell (2010) showed that the common predictor of being a perpetrator and a victim in both women and men is the attitude towards violence. Therefore, the attitude of being tolerant towards violence is an approach that can be effective in the presence, frequency, reporting of violence and also seeking for help (Jewkes, Levin & Penn-Kekana, 2004; García-Moreno et al., 2005), and its investigation will be a guide both for preventing the violence and for further studies.

Studies on attitudes towards violence have examined this concept in terms of different variables. When looking at the existing findings on the relationship between this variable and gender; Molidor and Tolman (1998), who found that there were

differences between girls and boys in terms of the response to dating violence, stated that boys are not inclined to interpret it as damaging and threatening, while girls are disposed to consider it as significant attacks which could cause psychological and physical harm to individuals. According to the findings of another study conducted among university students, it was found that males had higher levels of accepting violence than females. Nevertheless, some different studies on the relationship between attitudes towards violence and gender have produced results that contradict the above findings. To be more specific, according to Staik (2004), women who have subjected to violence tend to accept violence more than men (as cited in Kepir-Savoly, Ulaş & Demirtaş-Zorbaz, 2014). Given these conflicting results, it can be understood that more studies are needed on this subject. Another variable that was examined in relation to the attitude towards violence is whether people are currently in a dating relationship. According to a study on this topic, the fact that the person is currently experiencing a dating relationship significantly affects the attitude towards dating violence perpetrated by men. Accordingly, those who currently experience a dating relationship show more tolerance to violence (Yumuşak, 2013). Apart from this variable, the attitude towards violence was considered in terms of the age variable. Working on this issue, Cinal (2018) stated that as people get older, their tolerance to psychological violence inflicted by women in the relationship increases. Furthermore, the attitude towards violence was also examined in terms of the duration of the current relationship. According to Kepir-Savoly et al. (2014), there is a negative correlational relationship between duration of the relationship and the attitude to accept violence. When the literature was reviewed, the attitude towards violence variable, which was seen to be handled with regards to many different

variables, will be examined from the point of other factors that might be relevant in present study.

### **1.5. The Relationship Between Perceived Parental Attitudes in Childhood and Attitudes Towards Violence**

“Something like the sky this childhood. It's not going anywhere.”

Edip Cansever

Geçtan (1989) stating that no living creature in the world needs care and protection as much as a newborn baby, also explained that the positive and negative behaviors of the people around the baby and especially her/his mother can leave permanent marks on her/him for a lifetime. Therefore, the family is a crucial context that needs to be taken into account, as some characteristics of it may play a role in predisposition to some negative consequences in child development. These features can be listed as follows; the quality of parenting shown to the child, structure of the family as a system, whether the parent and child relationship is based on warmth and kindness or harshness and rejection (Kerig, Ludlow & Wenar, 2000).

Three critical parental attitudes reported by Arrindell et al. (1999) can be listed as the following sub-dimensions; emotional warmth, rejection, (over) protection. Considering these attitudes of a parent who punishes, embarrasses the child, prefers his siblings to this child, abuses the child, rejects the child directly through criticism and / or directly as an individual, this parent can be evaluated in the rejective parent category. For the parents who show emotional warmth, it can be stated that they are warmhearted, compassionate, stimulating and praising. Finally,

for the (over) protective parent, it can be expressed that s/he is an intrusive and overly involved person who has anxiety and fear for the safety of her/his child (Arrindell et al., 1999). Kerig, Ludlow and Wenar (2000) - who explained the importance of parental attitudes and the child-parent relationship - stated that if the parenting skills of the parents are insufficient and there is a conflicting relationship between the child and parent. They expressed that this constitutes an important factor for the child's susceptibility to maladjustment. In addition, the home environment is important, for example, raising children in homes in which violent behavior, abuse, and neglect are seen - even if the children are not a directly victim of these behaviors - might mean causing a pathological development of them. On the other hand, the positive relationship between the child and the parent and authoritative parenting style are a protective factor for the child against family stress (Kerig, Ludlow & Wenar, 2000). Considering that the authoritative parenting style includes setting standards for the child's behavior, but also being responsive to her/his needs and autonomy, and an affectionate, a consistent, involved and caring attitude (Baumrind, 1966), the importance of the emotional warmth provided by the parents will be better understood.

Although the relationship between perceived parental attitude and attitude towards violence has not been adequately examined, there are studies examining the effect of childhood abuse experiences on being victims in intimate relationships and revealing important findings. Renner & Slack (2006), working on this issue, stated that some experiences of violence, such as physical and sexual abuse in childhood and observational experiences of intimate partner violence, increase the likelihood of being subjected to intimate partner violence as a victim in adulthood. Based on this

finding, it can be made inferences that childhood abuse experiences might lead the victim to learn to be a victim and to adopt an attitude to see violence as normal. Moreover, according to Lefkowitz (1973), parental rejection as an attitude is the best predictor of aggression in both men and women (as cited in Leary et al., 2003). Besides, Ehrensaft et al. (2003) - who conducted a study on this subject - reported that they found a positive significant relationship between childhood maltreatment and rejection by peers, and the reason of this was stated as the defectiveness in interpersonal functionality of these victims of violence. They also added that these victims would likely find peer groups of aggressive and a deviational people more attractive. Moreover, in another study, it was found that the characteristics of the relationship between mothers and daughters affects the likelihood of being a victim of abuse in other relationships for the girls. Additionally, it was determined that the presence of a positive relationship can protect against being abused (Cleveland, Herrera & Stuewig, 2003). The results of another study examining the effect of the family factor on being victims and/or perpetrators of physical violence are interesting. Accordingly, weak parent-child attachment has critical importance on being perpetrator and/or victim in both males and females. In addition, family conflicts have been found to be effective on being victims of violence for both boys and girls. This has also been associated with being perpetrators for girls. Moreover, the harsh discipline of the family was effective on being perpetrators and victims in other relationships for girls, while the negative relationship between mother and child was found to be related to girls' being victims in relationships (Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi & Silva, 1998). In another study, while parents' not using authoritative parenting style was found as an important risk factor for the exposure to sexual violence, which is another sub-category of dating violence, authoritative parenting

style was found as an important protective factor for children not to be victims of violence in relationships (Small & Kerns, 1993). When viewed from this aspect, it might be considered that these people are likely to exhibit violent behavior and/or being subjected to violence and therefore violence is acceptable for these people. By looking at this information, it would be meaningful to examine the effect of perceived parental attitude on attitude towards violence in order to combat with the violence.

### **1.6. Adult Attachment Style**

“What cannot be communicated to the [m]other cannot be communicated to the self.”

— John Bowlby

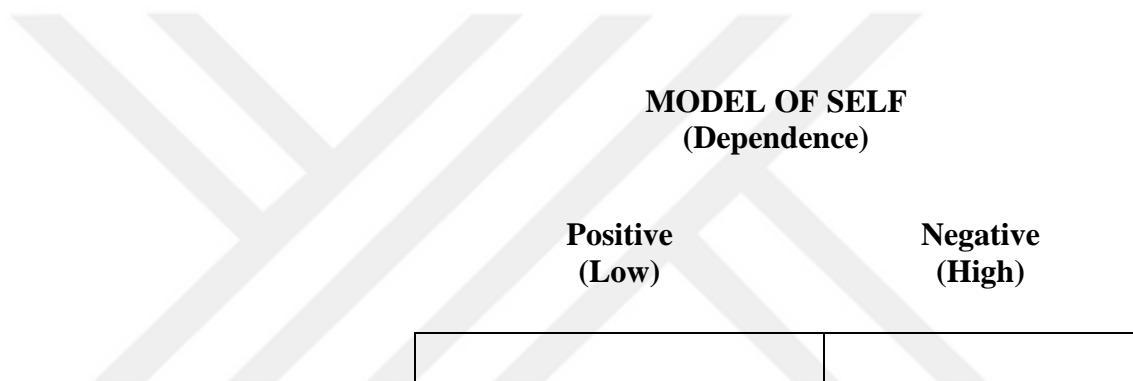
Bond & Bond (2004) stated that other closely related factor that have an influence on being victim is attachment style. It can be expressed that children who have experienced parental rejection or abuse in their childhood will maintain domestic violence which can be seen as a cycle, in their adult life. The reason for this is they will respond to the social environment and stimuli through the behaviors they acquired during childhood. Therefore, it can be stated that violence causes to continue itself by leading to a new violent act (Bowlby, 1984). To explain this situation based on attachment theory, according to Bowlby (1988), individuals develop internal working models that are unique to them and related to relationships, depending on their experiences with their parents in early childhood (as cited in Lee, Reese-Weber & Kahn, 2014). Relationship experiences and repeated interactions with primary caregivers give shape two significant ingredients of internal working models, one of these is the representations individuals build about themselves and

the other one is the representations that individuals build about others (Gillath, Karantzas & Fraley, 2016). Lee et al. (2014) gave an example for this as follows; Children who grow up with parents who display unpredictable and cruel attitudes might develop an internal working model in which they see themselves as worthless and find other people as unpredictable, and it can be expressed that it is difficult for these people to establish a relationship of trust with others. Bifulco, Moran, Ball & Lillie (2002) stated that these internal working models, which serve to interpret subsequent relationships as well, enable individuals to predict and interpret the behaviors of the persons who are attachment figures for themselves. In relation to that, they added that it can be thought that early relations have an impact on the relationships established afterwards by influencing these models. According to Harris (1996), who stated that these internal working models might cause the relationship styles experienced in childhood to be experienced in also adulthood period, attachment styles are in a continuum (as cited in Bayramkaya, 2009).

Three basic features that distinguish adult attachment style from attachment style can be mentioned. The first of these is about the individual who attached person establishes bond with. While a child is attached to the parents, the adult individual establishes an attachment with the peer or the romantic partner. The second is about the attached person's position in the relationship with the person he or she has bonded with. Babies who bond with their parents need the care and safety to be provided by their parents, while for adults the situation is reciprocal. To be more clear, adults both provide care and safety to their partners in the relationship and also need care and safety from them (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Lastly, the fact that sexual attraction almost always exists in a romantic relationship, while not talking about

sexual attraction in childhood attachment (Tennov, as cited in Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

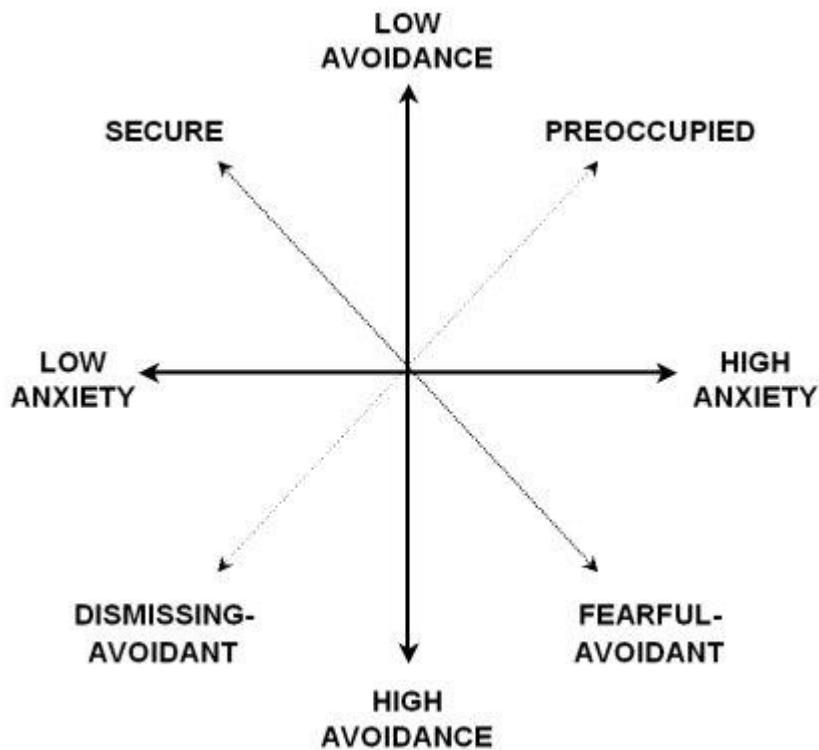
Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a 4-group model for adult attachment style. In defining these, they combined the representations of the self and the others, which are the two components of internally working models. They dealt with the representations of the person towards himself and others in a two-pronged, negative or positive way. Figure 1. 1. shows 4 groups of models related to this.



		<b>MODEL OF SELF (Dependence)</b>	
		<b>Positive (Low)</b>	<b>Negative (High)</b>
<b>MODEL OF OTHER (Avoidance)</b>	<b>Positive (Low)</b>	<b>CELL I SECURE</b> Comfortable with intimacy and autonomy	<b>CELL II PREOCCUPIED</b> Preoccupied with relationships
	<b>Negative (High)</b>	<b>CELL IV DISMISSING</b> Dismissing of intimacy Counter-dependent	<b>CELL III FEARFUL</b> Fearful of intimacy Socially avoidant

*Figure 1. 1. The 4 groups of model of adult attachment proposed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991).*

Attachment styles were conceptualized in the sense of dependency and avoidance. What is meant by dependency is the degree of person's need for others in order to create positive self-regard. What is meant by avoidance is the degree to which person avoids establishing close relationships with other people in order not to meet with aversive outcomes. As it is highlighted in this model, there are four different adult attachment styles. The first of these is the secure attachment style. In this attachment style, the person's perception of self is that s/he is valued and lovable, while her/his perception about other people is that others are accepting and responsive. In this style, both dependency and avoidance are low. The second is the preoccupied attachment style. It can be said that while the person's perception of self is that s/he is worthless and unlovable, her/his perception towards others is positive. In this attachment style, where avoidance is low and addiction is high, it can be said that it is important for this person to get acceptance from the valued people in order to create self-regard. Another attachment style is fearful attachment style. While the person's perception of self is that s/he is unlovable and worthless, this person also finds others unreliable and rejecting. Therefore, in this attachment style, where both addiction and avoidance are high, the person needs others in order to gain self-regard, but avoids establishing a close relationship in order to protect herself/himself from possible rejection. The last attachment style is dismissive attachment style. In this style, the person perceives herself/himself as valued and lovable, while s/he finds others unreliable and rejecting. For this reason, her/his need for others is low in order to gain her/his self-regard and her/his avoidance is high because s/he avoids establishing close relationships with others in order to protect herself/himself from potential disappointment. Therefore, while dependence is low in this style, avoidance is high (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).



*Figure 1. 2.* This two-dimensional model based on individual differences - which expresses the theoretical relationships between attachment prototypes (Bartholomew, 1990) and avoidance and anxiety related to attachment - is taken from Fraley and Bonanno (2004).

A study revealed that there is a significant relationship between to be a victim of violence as women and anxious attachment style. It can be stated that having a relationship between a woman with an anxious attachment style and a man with a dismissive attachment style is an important risk factor for violence (Bond & Bond, 2004). Another study revealed that the mispairing of an anxiously attached woman and an avoidant attached man was associated with violence for both woman and man (Doumas, Pearson, Elgin & McKinley, 2008). Besides, Mauricio & Gormley (2001) found that men who are insecurely attached and additionally have the need for

dominating their relationship are more likely to engage in violent behavior towards their female partners.

According to the study done by Hudson & Ward (1997), men with fearful and dismissing attachment style had highest scores in terms of "fear of intimacy, anger expression, and anger suppression". It was found that fearfully attached men displayed furthest hostility against women whereas securely attached men have the lowest score on hostility against women. Besides, it was revealed that dismissively attached men have most tolerant attitudes towards rape myths. The findings also revealed that male partners who exhibit violent behavior are more likely to be with a preoccupied, ambivalent-anxious and disorganized attachment style than others who are nonviolent, and are also more jealous and more insecure towards their partners (Holtzworth-Munroe, Stuart & Hutchinson, 1997). According to McDermott and Lopez (2013), men who are with anxious attachment or avoidant attachment style are likely to identify with traditional gender roles for romantic relationship life. Whereas this is for protecting ones with the anxious attachment style from the fear of abandonment, it is for controlling the level of closeness in relationships for ones with the avoidant attachments. For this reason, people who are attached in these two ways may find violence and oppression acceptable to manage the threats related to attachment style to their masculinity regarding their attachment style (McDermott & Lopez, 2013).

Sarason, Pierce and Sarason (1990) - who indicated the parallelism between attachment styles in childhood and perceived social support in adulthood period - stated that the secure relationships formed with primary caregivers in early childhood

period contributes to be established internal working models about others as "supportive and available" (as cited in Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline & Russell, 1994). A study on the relationship between perceived parental attitude and parental attachment style showed that there is a positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and secure attachment compared to the other three parenting styles which are authoritarian, permissive, and negligent (Ögretir-Özçelik, 2017). When considering the features of the authoritative parent who tries to guide the child rationally, demands from the child but is also sensitive to her/his needs, provides discipline in a non-restrictive way, confirms the child's present characteristics but also sets some standards for future behavior, verbally points to and encourages the balance of giving and taking, and behaves as compassionate way (Baumrind, 1966); it can be understood that these attitudes of the parents can indicate secure attachment. According to Gittleman, Klein, Smider & Essex (1998), there is a relationship between care taken by parents and adult attachment. Securely attached people of both genders stated more care received by parents compared to people with fearful attachment style. According to the results of a study showing that paternal care is at least as significant as maternal care, paternal care has a predictive role in adult attachment for both men and women. Nevertheless, low maternal protection - which means as respecting for the child's autonomy - was also considered an important predictor of positive adult attachment for men. This demonstrates the need for men to get their mothers' approval for their decisions in order to gain self-esteem and be attached to their mothers. Additionally, according to this study, another factor that predicts the secure attachment for women was also found to be the nurturing they received by their mothers (Matsuoka et. al., 2006).

In the light of the above information, it can be thought that adult attachment style, which is found as related with perceived parental attitudes, has an important role in our attitudes towards violence. Therefore, examining the relationship between adult attachment styles and attitudes towards violence is valuable in terms of both our attitudes towards violence and being cautious in choosing partners, by providing important awareness.

### **1.7. Self-Construal**

Another variable that this study will handle with is self-construal, as mentioned earlier. Our self, which enables us to communicate and relate with others and actually enables us to survive through this interaction, has a great importance in determining how we see and perceive other people, ourselves and what is happening around us (Kağıtçıbaşı & Cemalcılar, 2014). Kağıtçıbaşı (2007) discusses the self, which is formed by social interactions and continues its development by relatively being affected by social situations, as a social product. The answer given to the question of "who am I" constitutes our self-concept which is beliefs of a person about herself/himself. These beliefs consist of individual's thoughts about who and what s/he is and individual characteristics (Kağıtçıbaşı and Cemalcılar, 2014). Singelis (1994) conceptualized the self-construal as "a whole of thoughts, feelings and actions regarding one's relationship with other people, and her/himself as different from others". Markus & Kitayama (1991) emphasized that self-construal - which are divided into two independent self and interdependent self - can also carry the influence of the culture people live in. To give an example, while independent self-construal is more common in individualistic cultures, interdependent self-construal is more often seen in collective cultures. It was also stated that these

construals can play an important role on the individual experiences' nature, people's thoughts, feelings and motivations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Matsumoto, 1999).

Marcus and Kitayama (1991) stated about two separate self-construals regarding people's beliefs about the relationship between selves and others, and where they position themselves in these relationships: independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal, as previously mentioned. *Individuals with independent self-construal* orient themselves separate from their social context, and they have boundaries. Their own goals are important in relation to their autonomous and independent selves, and processes such as self-actualization can be mentioned. Their attributions for their behavior including their own thoughts, feelings, and abilities are internal. They do not define their selves in terms of their relationships with others, however, they evaluate themselves by comparison with others. It is important to directly express themselves and what is on their minds, for them. *Individuals with interdependent self-construal* define and position themselves through their relationships. It is important to feel belonging and engage in "appropriate" behaviors, because their attributions to their behavior are external, and they refer to status, roles, and relationships. Adapting and maintaining harmony in social relations are among their abilities. They support the goals of other people. What others think and feel is important to them, and therefore the way they express themselves is also affected from this. They express themselves by thinking about their relationships and the other persons' feelings, not in direct way (Marcus & Kitayama, 1991). Some later studies suggested that self-construal model be divided into three as individualistic, collective and relational (Lykes, 1985; Greenwald & Breckler, 1985). Accordingly, collective and relational self were seen as two different types of interdependence

self, because the collective self was about the individual's self-identification with the group to which s/he belonged, while the relational self was about the person's identification of herself/himself with the relations s/he was in. In addition, while the main motivation of the person with the relational self construct was the benefit of others, the main motivation of the person with the collective self construct was the collective benefit (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Through the scale to be used in present study, self-construal was examined from the three aspects which are relational, individual and collective self perspectives. The table for levels of representation of the self was presented in Table 1. 1.

Table 1. 1.

*Levels of Representation of the Self*

Level of analysis	Self-concept	Basis of self-evaluation	Frame of reference	Basic social Motivation
Individual	Personal	Traits	Interpersonal comparison	Self-interest
Interpersonal	Relational	Roles	Reflection	Other's benefit
Group	Collective	Group prototype	Intergroup comparison	Collective welfare

*Note.* This table is taken from Brewer and Gardner (1996).

When the literature is reviewed, it's have not found any studies investigating the relationship between self-construal, which is considered in terms of its relation with many factors, with violence and aggression in dating. Nevertheless, it can be expressed that some studies examining the relationship of self-construal with various variables such as consumers' aggressive tendencies, romantic relationship type, and forgiveness can give an idea in this regard. One of the studies on these subjects

showed that while the interdependent self-construct negatively affects the aggression and assertiveness of the consumers, the independent self-construct plays a positively role on the aggression and assertiveness of the consumers (Polyorat, Jung & Hwang, 2013). Other than this, carrying out a study on romantic relationship styles and self-construal, Üney & Güneri-Yöyen (2020), found a positive correlation of individual self-construal with the forms of passionate love, friendly love and rational love, while they found that there is a positive correlation of the relational self-construal with passionate love, sensible love, possessive and altruistic love styles. Besides, in this study, a positive and significant relationship was found for collective self-construal with friendly love, sensible love, possessive love and altruistic love. These results and especially the determination of the positive relationship of the relational self and collective self categories with the altruistic love style altruism - where the main motivation is the benefit of others (Batson, 2010) - is compatible with one of our hypotheses, "Individuals with individual self-construal will show less tolerance to psychological violence in dating". Another study carried out among college students by Neto and Mullet (2004) showed that while independent self-construal is negatively related to forgiveness, interdependent self-construal has a positive relation with this variable. This situation was associated with the fact that individuals with more independent self-construal were angrier towards offenders in this study. The study by Hook, Worthington, Utsey, Davis, and Burnette (2012), on the other hand, consistently revealed that people with a collective self-construal understand being more forgiving in the scope of repairing relationships, providing social cohesion, and reconciliation. On the other hand, Decicco and Stroink (2007) stated that they did not find a significant relationship between independent self-construal and forgiveness as a result of their analysis. Another study revealed that people with interdependent

self-construal are more reconciliatory, while people with independent self-construal are more revengeful (Zhang, Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Zhang, 2019). Considering all these results, the importance of investigating the relationship between self-construal and attitudes towards psychological dating violence is better understood in current study. The reason for this is that self-construal, which is effective on our forgiveness and relationship type, might also be determinant on our attitudes towards violence.

Families are seen as one of the biggest agents for their children - although not the only factor - in the socialization process (Maccoby, 1994), which includes to learn roles, build gradually identity in continuity, internalize the standards (Invernizzi, 2003). In addition, it has been stated that especially the emotional qualities of the relationships of parents with their children such as love, hate, fear and empathy play an important role in the course of socialization (Maccoby, 1994). The parent-child relationship, which is very important in terms of process, is a key point in the child's introduction to the social world (Peterson & Rollins, 1987), and parents' attitudes towards children can affect their perception of their own selves. To be more specific, Rezai Niaraki and Rahimi (2013), who examined the effect of parental attitudes on the self-concept, found that authoritative parenting style was associated with significantly higher self-esteem, compared to both permissive parenting style and authoritarian parenting style. Apart from this, another study conducted in the Turkish sample revealed the relationship between parental acceptance / involvement and self-esteem (Koydemir-Özden & Demir, 2009). Additionally, one of the studies on the relationship of self-construal with family efficacy and parental closeness revealed that increasing scores in both family efficacy and parental closeness measurements indicate a high scoring in measuring of self-construal. Thus, it can be

inferred that socialization experiences with family encourages more interdependent self-construal in the child (Profugo, Mendoza & Magno, 2009). The striking finding of another study showed that adolescent participants with both high interdependency and independence in the context of self-construal reported the highest level of cohesion in their families (Liu & Goto, 2007). Moreover, the finding of another study conducted with 3 different nations from different countries on self-construal showed that close relationships with family members were related with interdependent self-construal. Accordingly, the Chinese and Indians who participated in the study had closer relations with their families relative to Canadians, and the Chinese and Indians showed more interdependent self-construal, while Canadians showed an individualistic self (Li, Zhang, Bhatt & Yum, 2006). In the light of all this information, it can be seen that the parental attitudes towards the child and the relationships established with the family are effective on the child's self-construal. However, information in the literature on the relationship between perceived parental attitude and self-construal is quite insufficient, and therefore it is obvious that the relationship between these two should be examined.

In the light of this information, it is clear that there are quite uncertainties in the relationship of self-construal with both violence and parental attitudes - due to the limited number of studies. For this reason, to fill these gaps and to bring the relationship between these variables to light are important for the measures to be taken.

## **1.8. The Experience of Violence in Intimate Relationships**

The last variable to be examined as the "control variable" in this study is whether the person has experienced violence in an intimate relationship or not.

Physical, sexual violence and/or threats, stalking and psychological violence (which can also contain coercive tactics) perpetrated by a person's current or former close partner, is in the scope of intimate partner violence (IPV), and this can be seen between romantic or sexual partners living together or not, and same or opposite sex couples (Black et.al, 2011).

By looking at the results of 1985 National Family Violence Resurvey, Stets and Straus (1990) reported that almost half of the participants who reported being a perpetrator of domestic violence (%49 of all) were also subjected to violence by their intimate partners in the past (as cited in Anderson, 2002). Umberson, Anderson, Glick & Shapiro (1988) - who analyzed data from a sample of participants who were currently married or living with their partner - reported that approximately two out of three respondents who stated that they were involved in violence in intimate relationship were both the perpetrators and victims of violence. Costa et al. (2015) found a reciprocal relationship between being a perpetrator and being a victim of violence as a result of their study on violence in close relationships. Besides, according to Caetano, Vaeth & Ramisetty-Mikler (2008), %8 of the couples participated to their study stated the violence in their relationship is a reciprocal and they are both perpetrators and victims in their relationships. According to another study on a sampling including different ethnic origins involving of Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, while mutual violence was quite common, blacks reported more mutual violence than other two ethnic groups. Mutual violence rates for Whites, Latinos and Blacks participating in the study are respectively 44%, 45%, 61% (Caetana, Ramisetty - Mikler & Field, 2005). Findings from another study showed that people who were victims or perpetrators of dating violence are again probably to

be involved in the experiences of violence in some way. Additionally, according to this study, while the probabilities of becoming victims or perpetrators for males who were victim of dating violence in the past are similar, female who were victims in the former dating relationship were more likely to be victims (Park & Kim, 2019).

Considering all these studies, it can be understood that exposure to violence have a possibility to affect the attitudes towards violence and engaging in violent behavior. Therefore, this variable will be examined in this study as a control variable in order to control its potential effects on expected relationships between the variables.

### **1.9. The Aim and Hypotheses of the Study**

Current study aims to examine various variables that are likely to have an impact on the attitudes towards psychological violence in dating period in both women and men.

The main aims of the present study will be to investigate (a) the relationship between "perceived parental attitudes in childhood" which is a predictor variable and "the attitudes towards psychological violence in dating" as criterion variable and (b) the mediator effects of self-construal and adult attachment style on the relationship between perceived parental attitudes in childhood and the attitudes towards psychological violence in dating, by bringing the potential effects of the violence experience in close relationship under control. The hypotheses of this thesis are as follows:

(H1) Parental rejection in childhood period will predict being more tolerant towards psychological violence in dating.

(H2) It is expected that there will be a significantly meaningful relationship between perceived parental attitudes in childhood, adult attachment style and self-construal.

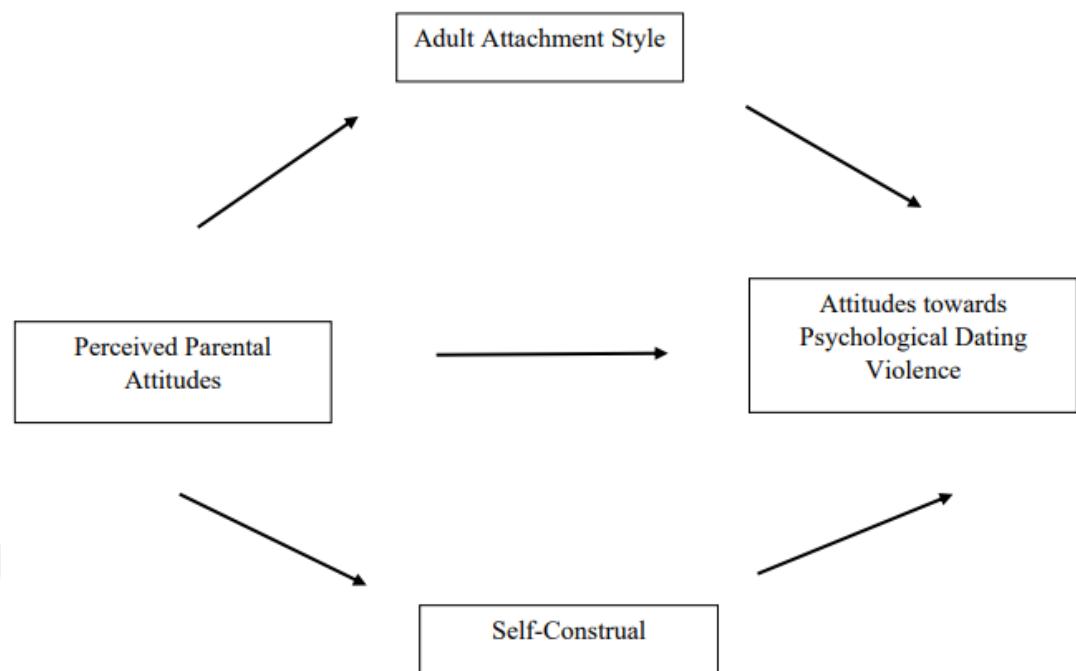
(H3) Anxiety dimension of adult attachment style which includes fearful and preoccupied attachment will predict more tolerance to psychological violence in dating.

(H4) Experiencing violence in previous close relationships will predict a relatively greater tolerance to psychological violence in dating.

(H5) Individuals with an individual self-construal will show less tolerance to psychological violence during dating.

(H6) A significant relationship is expected between gender and attitude towards violence in dating. Accordingly, men will tolerate psychological violence more in dating than women and will accept it as more normal than women.

(H7) Individual self-construal and anxiety dimension of adult attachment style will mediate the relationship between perceived parental attitudes in childhood and attitudes towards psychological dating violence.



*Figure 1. 3. The Proposed Model for the Mediator Roles of Self-Construal and Adult Attachment Style on the Relationship between Perceived Parental Attitudes and Attitudes towards Psychological Violence in Dating.*

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### 2.1. Participants

Participants in this correlational study were determined using simple random sampling. The academicians of the universities selected by drawing lots among 209 universities in Turkey were reached and the scales of the study were sent to the students. In the sample including of 430 - single and never married - undergraduate students, the inclusion criteria is "Participants must have a romantic relationship that they are currently experiencing and lasting at least for one month". While 85.3% of our sample - which contains data from 25 different universities and 73 different departments - is female, 14.7% of it is male participants. Except the missing data for age, the age of the individuals participated to our study ( $N=426$ ) ranged from 18 to 29 ( $M = 21.31$ ,  $SD = .354$ ). The distribution of the participants by the variable of the grade are they in is as follows for the freshman, sophomore, junior and senior, respectively; 15.8%, 25.1%, 29.8%, 29.3%. In addition, the participants in our sample vary considerably by the variables "the city you were born in" and "the city you grew up in". In our study, while the total number of cities reached in terms of the

"the city you were born in" variable is 75, this number is 73 in terms of the "the city you grew up in" variable. Apart from this, while 12.1% of our participants stated that they are currently working, 87.9% of them stated that they are not working. In addition, the percentage distribution of the participants according to their monthly household income is as follows; 16.3% for the category of 0-2.000 TL, 40.9% for the category of 2.000-5.000 TL, 27.7% for the category of 5.000-10.000 TL, 11.6% for the category of 10.000-20.000 TL, and lastly 3.5% for the category of 20.000 + TL. Besides, except the missing data, the relationship duration of the individuals participated to our study (N=418) ranged from 1 to 108 month ( $M = 24.81$ ,  $SD = 20.916$ ).

Details on the descriptive analysis of the sample were presented in Table 2. 1.

Table 2. 1.

*Means and Standard Deviations of Demographic Variables*

Characteristic	Full Sample	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	21.31	1.792
Duration of the relationship (in months)	24.81	20.916

Table 2. 2.

*Demographic Characteristics of the Participants*

Characteristic	Full Sample	
	<i>N</i>	%
Gender	430	100
Male	63	14.7

Female	367	85.3
Grade Are They In	430	100
Freshman	68	15.8
Sophomore	108	25.1
Junior	128	29.8
Senior	126	29.3
Working Status	430	100
Working	52	12.1
Not Working	378	87.9
Monthly Household Income	430	100
0 – 2.000 TL	70	16.3
2.000 – 5.000 TL	176	40.9
5.000 – 10.000 TL	119	27.7
10.000 – 20.000 TL	50	11.6
20.000 +	15	3.5

*Notes.* N= 430 participants for each characteristic.

## 2.2. Instruments

In this study, which was carried out by collecting quantitative data, an online survey was prepared to examine the mediator role of self-construal and adult attachment style in the relationship between perceived parental attitudes and attitudes towards violence. Detailed information about all the self-report scales and demographic information form used in this correlational study was given below.

### 2.2.1. Demographic Information Form.

In this form, which was prepared in order to analyze the demographic information of the participants, the questions asked to participants are as follows; their gender, age, university they study at, which department they study, what grade they are in, the city they were born in, the city they grew up in, whether they are

working now and their monthly household income. In addition, the status of their relationship and how long they had been romantically relationship were also among the questions asked (Appendix B).

### **2.2.2. Egna Minnen Barndoms Uppfostran for Children (s-EMBU).**

In present study, on the purpose of evaluating perceived parental attitudes in childhood, it was benefited from the Turkish short version of Egna Minnen Barndoms Uppfostran for Children scale developed by Perris, Jacobsson, Linndström, von Knorring & Perris (1980). The adaptation study of the short version of this scale into Turkish - which was first developed in long form - was carried out by Dirik, Yorulmaz and Karancı (2015). The Turkish version of this scale was named as "Kısaltılmış Algılanan Ebeveyn Tutumları-Çocuk Formu (KAET-Ç)". This scale consisting of rejection, emotional warmth and (over) protection sub-dimensions contains a total of 23 items that measure the attitudes of the mother and father separately. The internal consistency values of the Turkish version of the scale for the mother part are as follows: .75 for emotional warmth, .72 for (over) protection, and .64 for rejection. The internal consistency values for the father part of this Turkish version are as follows: .79 for emotional warmth, .73 for (over) protection, and .71 for rejection. In addition, for the Turkish version of the scale, concurrent, convergent, and criterion validities were examined and the results were found valid. In the scope of the current study, reliability value for the maternal rejection subdimension of this scale, which is  $\geq .72$  for the internal consistency values of all sub-dimensions for the original version, is .63 (Appendix C).

### **2.2.3. The Attitudes Towards Dating Violence Scales.**

In present study, in order to evaluate "the attitude towards psychological violence in dating", which was examined as an outcome variable, the Turkish version of two subscales of the "Attitudes Towards Dating Violence Scales" (Price et al., 1999) was benefited from. One of these scales used in the study is "The attitudes towards male psychological dating violence (AMDV for psyc.)", while the other is "the attitudes towards female psychological dating violence (AFDV for psyc.)". This scale, whose standardization to Turkish was carried out by Yumuşak and Şahin (2014), was responded on the 5-scale type. The higher the total score obtained from this scale, whose options for response ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), it means that the person filling this scale accepts the violence at a higher level. The internal consistency value of "AMDV for psyc." in the Turkish version was found as .81, whereas this value was found as .85 and .76 for boys and girls, respectively, in the original version. These values for the subscale "AFDV for psyc." in the Turkish version was found to be .75, while it was .72, .78 for boys and girls, respectively, in the original version. Within the scope of this study, the internal consistency value for the subscale of "AMDV for psyc." were found as .74 (Appendix D).

#### **2.2.4. Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised.**

The Turkish version of Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised developed by Fraley, Waller & Brennan (2000) was used to examine adult attachment style, which was examined as one of the mediator variables within the scope of this study. This scale, standardized to Turkish by Selçuk, Güneri, Sümer & Uysal (2005), includes a total of 36 items measuring anxiety and avoidance. This scale, whose response options vary between strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7), is prepared with a 7-point Likert type. While the low scores obtained from both

avoidance and anxiety sub-dimensions show that the person is securely attached, the high scores from both of these sub-dimensions indicates that the person is fearfully attached. Nevertheless, the combination of the high score from the anxiety sub-dimension and the low score from the avoidance sub-dimension indicates that the person is preoccupiedly attached, whereas the combination of the high score from avoidance sub-dimension and the low score from anxiety sub-dimension indicates that the person is dismissingly attached. The adaptation study for this scale revealed that the internal reliability values for the Turkish version of the scale were .90 and .86 for the avoidance and anxiety dimensions, respectively. In this study, this value for anxiety sub-dimension is .86 (Appendix E).

#### **2.2.5. Relational, Individual and Collective Self-aspects (RIC) Scale.**

The Turkish version of the Relational, Individual and Collective Self-aspects (RIC) Scale developed by Kashima and Hardie (2000) to evaluate the self-aspects of individuals in terms of individual, relational and collective self was used to measure "the self-construal" which is the second mediator variable of this study. The Turkish version of this scale, which was adapted to Turkish by Ercan (2011), was named as İlişkisel-Bireyçi-Toplulukçu Benlik Ölçeği. The Turkish version of this scale contains a total of 27 items measuring three sub-dimensions comprising of individual self, relational self and collective self. In this scale prepared with 7-point Likert type, response options are ranged between Very untrue of me (1) and Very true of me (7). Chronbach Alpha reliability analysis for the original version of the scale revealed that these values for individual self, relational self and collective self sub-dimensions are respectively as follows: .72, .81, .78 (Kashima & Hardie, 2000). In the Turkish version of this scale, the internal reliability values for individual self, relational self, and collective self sub-dimensions are respectively .73, .68, .77 (Ercan, 2011).

Within the scope of this study, this value for the sub-dimension of individual self is .65 (Appendix F).

#### **2.2.6. Intimate Partner Psychological Violence Scale.**

Finally, the Intimate Partner Psychological Violence Scale was benefited from to handle the experience of psychological violence in close relationships as a control variable of present study. Originally in Turkish and developed by Cankardaş-Nalbantçılar (2018), this scale is known as the "Yakın İlişkilerde Psikolojik Şiddet Ölçeği". This scale with 8 sub-dimensions consists of 69 items in total and was prepared according to the 6-point Likert type. While the internal consistency value for the whole of this scale, which is scored between never (0) and almost every day (5), is .98, these values for all sub-dimensions vary between .80 and .95. In the scope of current study, the internal consistency value for this scale is .93 (Appendix G).

### **2.3. Procedure**

At first, ethical permission was obtained by the Bahçeşehir University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee in order to be able to conduct our study in accordance with ethical standards. Afterward, the study as an online survey was prepared and 29 universities were picked by lot from among all universities in Turkey in accordance with simple random sampling, as the target population of our study was all undergraduate students in Turkey. By this means, it has been clarified online survey will send to which universities' academicians. The online survey of our research was sent to the lecturers of these 29 universities via e-mail and their support was requested by sending a link of the survey to their students. Individuals who accepted to participate in our study entirely on a voluntary basis firstly encountered with the informed consent form on the first page of the online

survey, which information about our research was provided. Through informed consent form, the participants were informed that our study did not cause any physical and/or psychological harm to them and that they can stop filling the questionnaires whenever they want. In addition, the participants were informed that it would take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete our study through this form. After the consent form, self-report scales prepared for the participants to fill out were presented. Finally, the participants were informed that if they supported this study by participating, donations would be made to the Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation, and accordingly, 10 TL for each 5 participants was donated to this foundation.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### 3.1. Preliminary Analysis

In this study using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 to analyze the collected data, the data were initially examined in terms of missing values, outliers, reliability of the scales used, normality, homogeneity, and linearity, for performing the necessary analyses. After the data were made ready for parametric tests, the demographic characteristics of the sample were examined and Independent Sample T-Tests and The One-Way Analysis of Variance were conducted in order to determine the differences between the groups in terms of the variables related to demographic characteristics. In the sequel, the analysis of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was conducted for comprehending the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables addressed in current study. Thereafter, hierarchical multiple regression was tested in order to understand the predictor effects of the variables handled as predictors and a control variable on the criterion variable. Lastly, mediation analyses were conducted to investigate whether mediator variables have any impact on the relationship between predictor variable and

criterion variable.

In present research, there are 1 predictor variable, 1 outcome variable, 2 mediator variable – which handled as predictor variables on the hierarchical multiple regression analysis - and 1 control variable. In line with the correlation analysis made, while the outcome variable is the “Attitudes towards Male Psychological Dating Violence”, the predictor variable is the “Maternal Rejection”. While the mediator variables of the study are the “Anxiety Dimension of the Attachment” and the “Individual Self-Construal”, the control variable is the “Experience of Psychological Violence in Intimate Relationships”. The variables listed here are actually sub-dimensions of 'perceived parental attitudes in childhood', 'attitudes towards psychological violence in dating', 'adult attachment style' and 'self-construal' which were stated main variables at the beginning of the study. The reason for not analyzing all sub-dimensions of these main variables is that some of them did not meet some assumptions of parametric tests and they did not meet the "assumption of correlation between variables" required for mediation analysis. For this reason, the variables considered in the analysis were revised as sub-dimensions that meet all of these assumptions providing to do parametric tests.

### **3.2. Data Screening**

The collected data ( $N = 585$ ) were screened first in order to be able to carry out the analyzes accordance with the purpose of the study. From this collected data, the data of 38 number of participants were removed because they were studying at universities other than those selected by lot, and the data of 10 number of participants were removed by the reason of not giving answer of "Yes" to the informed consent form. Additionally, the data of 21 number of participants were

removed because of not meeting inclusion criteria which is the "Being in a romantic relationship that has been going on for at least a month". Besides, the data of 2 number of participants were removed by the reason of not being undergraduate students. Lastly, the data of 22 number of participants were removed because they were married or engaged. After this process, the missing values and outliers of our data were examined.

In current data, a total of 4 (0.9%) missing data was found in the variable of age and 12 (2.8%) in the variable of relationship duration, then 'The little's missing completely at random (MCAR) test' was applied, and as a result, the p value was found to be greater than 0.05 ( $p = .210$ ). Consequently, it was found that the missing data in the study were completely at random.

Apart from this, various individual data destroyed the normality and linearity of the variables have been identified in current data by controlling z scores, Cook's distance and Mahalanobis distance; and data of 64 number of participants detected were removed in order to verify the assumptions and be able to do parametric test. As a result of all these examinations, the data set used in current study consists of 430 data ( $N = 430$ ).

Subsequently, normality, homogeneity, linearity analyzes were performed in order to comprehend whether the current data provided the assumptions of the parametric tests. It has been determined that the variables are distributed normally (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). First of all, it was found that maternal rejection handled as the predictor variable was normally distributed with skewness of .976 ( $SE = .118$ ) and kurtosis of .368 ( $SE = .235$ ). Secondly, "Attitudes towards Male Psychological

"Dating Violence" which was examined as outcome variable was also normally distributed with skewness of .791 ( $SE = .118$ ) and kurtosis of -.167 ( $SE = .235$ ). Thirdly, anxious attachment which is one of the mediator variables was normally distributed with skewness of .431 ( $SE = .118$ ) and kurtosis of -.482 ( $SE = .235$ ). Fourthly, individual self-construal as second and last mediator variable was also found as normally distributed with skewness -.740 ( $SE = .118$ ) and kurtosis of .129 ( $SE = .235$ ). Lastly, control variable can be considered as normally distributed with skewness of 1.335 ( $SE = .118$ ) and kurtosis of 1.607 ( $SE = .235$ ).

### 3.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Scales

After the screening process is completed, the Maternal Rejection sub-dimension of Egna Minnen Barndoms Uppfostran for Children, The attitudes towards male psychological dating violence subscale of The Attitudes Towards Dating Violence Scales, Anxiety sub-dimension of Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised, The Individual Self sub-dimension of The Relational, Individual, Collective Self- Aspects Scale, and lastly Intimate Partner Psychological Violence Scale were analyzed in terms of their reliabilities and descriptive characteristics. Looking at the Cronbach Alpha values obtained by reliability analysis, it is seen that all scales are reliable. The results of this analysis presented in Table 3. 1.

Table 3. 1.

*Descriptive Statistics for the Measure*

Measure	<i>A</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
s-EMBU					
Maternal Rejection	.630	1.00	2.57	1.3884	.36516

<b>ATDVS</b>						
AMDV for psyc	.738	1.00	2.67	1.4758	.40684	
<b>ECR-R</b>						
Anxiety	.862	1.22	5.89	3.1827	.97786	
<b>RIC</b>						
Individual Self	.652	4.33	7.00	6.2072	.58741	
<b>YİPŞÖ</b>						
Total	.928	.00	1.35	.2803	.26280	

*Notes.* s-EMBU: **Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran- Short Form**, ATDVS:

The Attitudes Toward Dating Violence Scales, ECR-R: The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised, RIC: Relational, Individual, Collective Self-Aspect Scale, YİPŞÖ: Yakın İlişkide Psikolojik Şiddet Ölçeği (Psychological Violence in Close Relationship)

### 3.4. Bivariate Correlations

It was benefited from Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation and Product Moment Pearson Correlation Analyzes to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the continuous variables examined in the current study. In this section, the obtained correlation findings are presented.

The result of Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation for all sub-dimensions of the variables mentioned in the introduction was presented in table 3. 2.

Table 3. 2.

*Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Between the Subscales of Variables*

Subscales	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1. s-EMBU: Maternal rejection	1														
2. s-EMBU: Maternal overprotection	.563**	1													
3. s-EMBU: Maternal emotional warmth	-.472**	-.246**	1												
4. s-EMBU: Paternal rejection	.600**	.393**	-.316**	1											
5. s-EMBU: Paternal overprotection	.382**	.718**	-.160**	.515**	1										
6. s-EMBU: Paternal emotional warmth	-.333**	-.153*	.676**	-.468**	-.120**	1									
7. ATDVS: AMDV for psyc	.108*	.098*	-.015	.117**	.078	-.007	1								
8. ATDVS: AFDV for psyc	.078	.087	-.042	.080	.053	-.050	.738**	1							
9. ATDVS: Total score	.098*	.103*	-.029	.103*	.074	-.027	.926**	.933**	1						
10. ECR-R: Avoidance	.178**	.085	-.238**	.127**	.038	-.211**	.074	.144**	.121**	1					
11. ECR-R: Anxiety	.314**	.288**	-.178**	.303**	.261**	-.214**	.220**	.246**	.252**	.300*	1				
12. RIC: Relational self	-.064	.050	.205**	-.023	.117**	.206**	-.025	-.119**	-.078	.360**	-.001	1			
13. RIC: Individual self	-.162**	-.064	.185**	-.127**	-.047	.210**	-.232**	-.167**	-.208**	-.129**	-.226**	.363**	1		
14. RIC: Collective self	.098**.*	.103*	-.029**	.103**.*	.074	-.027**	-.042	-.121**	-.089*	-.118**	-.065**	.633**	.376**	1	
15. YİPSÖ: Total	.257**	.151**	-.083	.255**	.129**	-.151**	.273**	.325**	.326**	.215**	.460**	-.075	-.126**	-.065	1

\* p &lt; .05, \*\* p &lt;.01

The result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation for variables' sub-dimensions examined in parametric tests in present study was presented in table 3. 3.

Table 3. 3.

*Pearson Product Moment Correlation Among the Subscales of Variables*

Subscales	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1.s-EMBU: Maternal rejection	1				
2.ATDVS: AMDV for psyc	.106*	1			
3.ECR-R: Anxiety	.301**	.210**	1		
4.RIC: Individual self	-.141**	-.266**	-.227**	1	
5.YİPŞÖ: Total	.240**	.225**	.471**	-.138**	1

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01

When looking at the relationships of the variable "attitudes towards male psychological violence" with other continuous variables, results showed there is a significant positive correlation between maternal rejection and attitudes towards male psychological violence,  $r = 0.106$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . As scores in maternal rejection increases, scores in attitudes towards male psychological violence increases. This means more tolerant attitude towards male psychological dating violence. Additionally, results indicated there is a significant positive correlation between anxiety dimension of attachment and attitudes towards male psychological violence,  $r = 0.210$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . As scores in anxiety sub-dimension increases, scores in attitudes towards male psychological violence also increases. To be more clear, it can be inferred that the higher a person's anxiety score is, the more likely that person will tolerate male psychological dating violence. Moreover, results indicated

there is a significant negative correlation between individual self as a self-construal and attitudes towards male psychological violence,  $r = -0.266$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . The higher score on individual self-construal is, the more intolerant attitude towards male psychological violence is. Additionally, results showed there is a significant positive correlation between the violent experiences in intimate relationships and attitudes towards male psychological violence,  $r = 0.225$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . It can be considered that the more frequent the experience of violence in intimate relationships, the higher a person's score for tolerating male psychological violence in dating.

Considering the correlation analysis between maternal rejection and other variables, results showed there is a significant positive correlation between maternal rejection and anxiety dimension of attachment,  $r = 0.301$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . As scores in maternal rejection increases, the scores in anxiety dimension of attachment also increases. Moreover, results showed there is a significant negative correlation between maternal rejection and individual self as a self-construal,  $r = -0.141$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . This means the lower maternal rejection score, the higher individual self-construal score. Results showed there is a significant positive correlation between maternal rejection and the violent experiences in intimate relationships,  $r = 0.240$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . It can be inferred that as maternal rejection score increases, it means that the frequency of violence in intimate relationships increases.

Besides, results showed there is a significant negative correlation between anxiety dimension of attachment and individual self as a self-construal,  $r = -0.227$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p< 0.05$ . As score in anxiety dimension of attachment increases, score in individual self decreases. Additionally, results indicated there is a significant positive

correlation between anxiety dimension of attachment and the violent experiences in intimate relationships,  $r = 0.471$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . It can be considered that the more anxiety dimension a person's attachment is, the more frequent the experience of violence in close relationships. Lastly, results showed there is a significant negative correlation between individual self and the violent experiences in intimate relationships,  $r = -0.138$ ,  $n=430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . The higher the individual self-construal score, the lower score of the frequency of violence in close relationships.

### **3.5. Group Differences**

In current study, in order to examine group differences in terms of the attitude towards male psychological dating violence, which is the criterion variable, Independent samples t-test was applied for the variables of gender and working status. Additionally one-way ANOVA was applied for comprehending the effect of the variable of monthly household income variable -that includes 5 separate groups within itself - on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence.

The attitudes towards male psychological dating violence scores of females and males were compared. On average, males ( $M = 1.732$ ,  $SD = .465$ ) have higher scores on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence than females ( $M = 1.431$ ,  $SD = .379$ ). This difference,  $-.300$ , 95% CI  $[-.423, -.177]$  was statistically significant,  $t(428) = -4.851$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Nevertheless, for this variable, the fact that the two groups do not consist of the same number of people is an important limitation on the accuracy of this result.

The attitudes towards male psychological dating violence scores of participants who are currently working and are not working were compared. There

was no significant effect for working status  $t(428) = .554$ ,  $p = .580$ , despite participants who are working ( $M = 1.505$ ,  $SD = .456$ ) obtaining higher scores than participants who are not working ( $M = 1.471$ ,  $SD = .400$ ). However, looking at the differences on the number of people in these two groups, it can be inferred that there is a need for further study on comprehending the effect of working status on the outcome variable.

On the other hand, sample means (SD) were 1.426 ( $SD = .376$ ) for the participants who earn 0-2.000 TL, 1.500 ( $SD = .420$ ) for the participants who earn 2.000-5.000 TL, 1.505 ( $SD = .422$ ) for the participants who earn 5.000-10.000 TL, 1.401 ( $SD = .364$ ) for the participants who earn 10.000-20.000 TL, 1.426 ( $SD = .380$ ) for participants who earn 20.000 + TL. Additionally, one-way ANOVA was used to determine group differences in terms of montly home income. Results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between seperate 5 groups' means on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence as determined by one-way ANOVA ( $F(4, 425) = 1.051$ ,  $p = .380$ ).

### **3.6. Simple Linear Regression**

A simple linear regression was used to predict a score on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence from a score on maternal rejection. Maternal rejection did explain an important amount of the variance in attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $F(1, 428) = 4.881$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $R^2 = .011$ ,  $R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .009$ . The regression coefficient ( $B = .118$ ) indicated that an increase in one score on maternal rejection corresponded, on avarage, to an increase in the score of attitudes towards male psychological dating violence of .118 points.

Table 3. 4.

*Regression Analysis Summary for Maternal Rejection Predicting Attitudes Towards Violence*

Variable	B	95% CI	$\beta$	t	p
(Constant)	1.312	[1.160, 1.463]		17.062	.000
Maternal Rejection	.118	[.013, .224]	.106	2.209	.028

Note.  $R^2$  adjusted = .009. CI = confidence interval for B.

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict a score on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence based on a score on individual self as a self-construal. Individual self did explain a significant amount of the variance in attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $F(1, 428) = 32.616, p = 0.00$ ,  $R^2 = .071$ ,  $R^2$  adjusted = .069. The regression coefficient ( $B = -.184$ ) indicated that an increase in one score on individual self corresponded, on average, to a decrease in the score of attitudes towards male psychological dating violence of .184 points.

Table 3. 5.

*Regression Analysis Summary for Individual Self-Construal Predicting Attitudes Towards Violence*

Variable	B	95% CI	$\beta$	t	p
(Constant)	2.620	[2.224, 3.015]		13.020	.000
Individual Self	-.184	[-.248, -.121]	-.266	-5.711	.000

Note.  $R^2$  adjusted = .069. CI = confidence interval for B.

A simple linear regression was also used to predict a score on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence from a score on anxiety dimension of

attachment. Anxiety dimension of attachment did explain a significant amount of the variance in attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $F(1, 428) = 19.843$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ,  $R^2 = .044$ ,  $R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .042$ . The regression coefficient ( $B = .088$ ) indicated that an increase in one score on anxiety dimension of attachment corresponded, on average, to an increase in the score of attitudes towards male psychological dating violence of .088 points.

Table 3. 6.

*Regression Analysis Summary for Anxiety Dimension of Attachment Predicting Attitudes Towards Violence*

Variable	B	95% CI	B	t	P
(Constant)	1.197	[1.068, 1.326]		18.289	.000
Anxiety Dimension of Attachment	.088	[.049, .126]	.210	4.455	.000

Note.  $R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .042$ . CI = confidence interval for B.

A simple regression was lastly used to predict a score on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence from a score on the experiences of violence in intimate relationships. The experiences of violence in intimate relationships did explain an important amount of the variance in attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $F(1, 428) = 22.843$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ,  $R^2 = .051$ ,  $R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .048$ . The regression coefficient ( $B = .348$ ) indicated that an increase in one score on experiences of violence in intimate relationships corresponded, on average, to an increase in the score of attitudes towards male psychological dating violence of .348 points.

Table 3. 7.

*Regression Analysis Summary for Experiences of Violence in Intimate Relationships  
Predicting Attitudes Towards Violence*

Variable	B	95% CI	$\beta$	t	P
(Constant)	1.378	[1.323, 1.433]		49.223	.000
Experiences of Violence in Intimate Relationships	.348	[0.205, .492]	.225	4.779	.000

Note.  $R^2$  adjusted = .048. CI = confidence interval for B.

### 3.7. Hierarchical Multiple Regression

A two stage hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence as dependent variable. The variables of maternal rejection, anxious attachment and individual self addressed as predictor variables, whereas the experience of violence in intimate relationships examined as control variable. The experience of violence in intimate relationships was entered at stage one of the regression in order to control the effect of it. The variables of maternal rejection, anxious attachment, and individual self were entered at stage two. Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression were presented in Table 9.

Table 3. 8.

*Results of Regression of Criterion on Predictor Variables*

Variables	B	$\beta$	t
Model 1			
Control Variable	.348	.225	4.779***
Model 2			
Control Variable	.234	.151	2.900**

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Maternal Rejection	.014	.013	.263
Anxiety Dimension	.035	.085	1.571
Individual Self	-.155	-.224	-4.765***

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Note.  $R^2 = .051$  for Model 1,  $p < .001$ ;  $R^2\Delta = .062$  for Model 2,  $p < .001$ ; Total  $R^2 = .113$ ,  $p < .001$ .

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at stage one, the experience of violence in intimate relationship as control variable contributed significantly to the regression model,  $F(1, 428) = 22.843, p = .000$  and accounted for 5.1% of the variation in the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. Introducing the variables of maternal rejection, anxiety dimension of attachment and individual self in stage two explained an additional 6.2% of variation in the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence and this change in  $R^2$  was found as significant,  $F(4, 425) = 13.521, p = .000$ . Together the three independent variables and one control variable explained 11.3% of the variance in the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. However, in this stage, neither maternal rejection nor anxiety dimension of attachment were significant predictors of the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. Therefore, it can be concluded that individual self-construal significantly predicts attitudes towards male psychological dating violence when the experience of violence in intimate relationships was controlled.

### 3.8. Mediation Analyses

In mediation analysis, it was aimed to understand the mediator roles of self-construal and adult attachment styles on the relationship between perceived parental

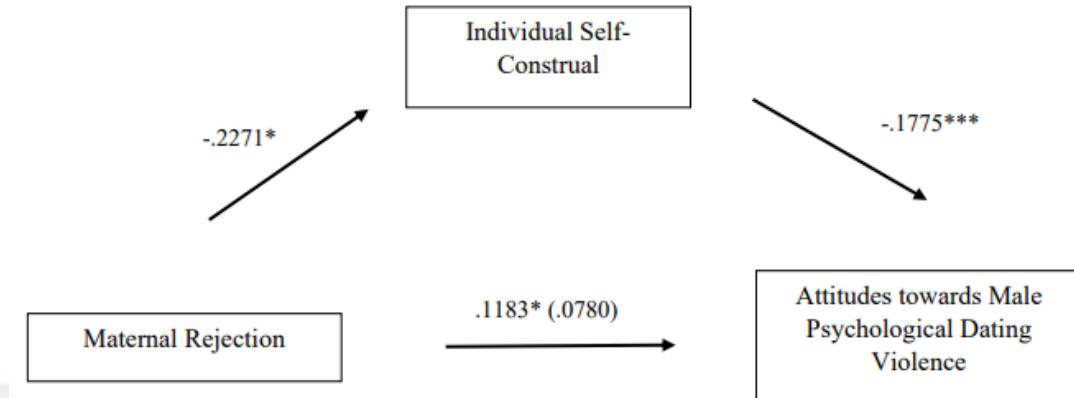
attitudes in childhood and attitudes towards psychological violence in dating.

Maternal rejection - which is one of the sub-dimensions of parental attitudes - as a predictor variable, the individual self - which is one of the sub-dimensions of self-construal - and anxious attachment - which is the sub-dimension of adult attachment styles - as mediator variables and lastly attitude towards psychological violence committed by men in dating as a criterion variable were analyzed. In this study, the analyzes for the individualistic self and anxious attachment mediator variables were carried out separately. In order to examine the effects of mediator variables, PROCESS, which was developed by Hayes (2018), was used in the study, and the relevant analyzes were made by selecting model 4.

### **3.8.1. The Mediator Role of Individual Self-Construal on the Relationship between Maternal Rejection and Attitudes Towards Male Psychological Dating Violence.**

In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of maternal rejection on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence, ignoring the mediator, was significant,  $b = .1183$ ,  $t (428) = 2.2093$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Step 2 indicated that the regression of the maternal rejection on the mediator, individual self, was also significant,  $b = -.2271$ ,  $t (428) = -2.9498$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that the mediator (individual self), controlling for maternal rejection, was significant,  $b = -.1775$ ,  $t (427) = -5.4516$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Step 4 of the analysis showed that, controlling for the mediator (individual self), maternal rejection was not a significant predictor of the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $b = .0780$ ,  $t (427) = 1.4898$ ,  $p = .1370$ . A Sobel Test was conducted and found full mediation in the model ( $z = 2.583$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ). It was found individual self fully mediated the

relationship between maternal rejection and the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence.



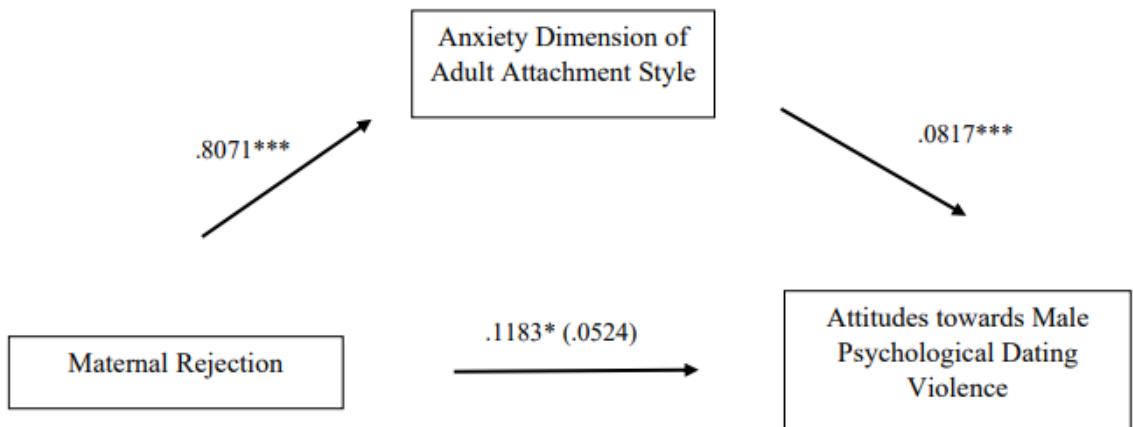
\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

*Figure 3. 1. Individual Self-Construal as a Mediator on the Relationship between Maternal Rejection and Attitudes towards Male Psychological Dating Violence*

### **3.8.2. The Mediator Role of Anxious Attachment on the Relationship between Maternal Rejection and Attitudes Towards Male Psychological Dating Violence.**

In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of maternal rejection on the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence, ignoring the mediator, was significant,  $b = .1183$ ,  $t (428) = 2.2093$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Step 2 indicated that the regression of the maternal rejection on the mediator, anxiety dimension of attachment, was also significant,  $b = .8071$ ,  $t (428) = 6.5389$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Step 3 of the mediation process indicated that the mediator (anxiety dimension of attachment), controlling for maternal rejection, was significant,  $b = .0817$ ,  $t (427) = 3.9611$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Step 4 of the analysis showed that, controlling for the mediator (anxiety dimension of attachment), maternal rejection was not a significant predictor of the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence,  $b = .0524$ ,  $t (427) = .9487$ ,  $p = .3433$ . A

Sobel Test was conducted and found full mediation in the model ( $z = 3.355, p = 0.0007$ ). It was found anxiety dimension of attachment fully mediated the relationship between maternal rejection and the attitudes towards male psychological dating violence.



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

*Figure 3. 2. Anxiety Dimension of Attachment as a Mediator on the Relationship between Maternal Rejection and Attitudes towards Male Psychological Dating Violence.*

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DISCUSSION**

It can be stated that "violence" - which has attracted attention of many researchers in recent years and we encounter in various ways in almost all areas even though it is disguising - is a sociological and psychological concept whose underlying mechanisms need to be understood. In addition, because of the consequences it causes, violence - which can undermine both the functionality and relationships of people - has gain much more important. To be more clear, understanding people's attitudes towards violence is valuable and necessary in many aspects such as functionality and giving healthy qualities to relationships.

Present study aimed to investigate the relationship between attitudes towards psychological violence in dating, perceived parental attitudes, adult attachment styles, and self-construal. The main purpose of the study is to comprehend the mediator role of adult attachment styles and self-construal in the relationship between perceived parental attitudes and attitudes towards violence. In this way, it is aimed to contribute to the literature on the predictors of our attitudes towards violence and to reveal findings that may be useful for studies designed to prevent

violence.

In this section, where the findings will be evaluated in the light of the data in the literature, the limitations and strengths of the present study will be explained, and clinical implications will be discussed.

#### **4.1. Interpretation of Demographic Information**

Relationships between demographic variables and the variable of attitudes towards violence were examined by conducting relevant analyzes in the study.

It was seen that - although it is not considered to be a satisfactory result because of unequal number of men and women and further studies by paying attention to form groups with an equal number of women and men are needed - gender is an independent variable that significantly affects the attitudes towards violence. In relation to that, it can be stated that men' attitudes towards male psychological dating violence are more tolerant than women. Regarding this variable, one of the studies showing that there are significant differences in terms of the attitudes towards violence between men and women revealed that men have a more approving approach to violence against women. Additionally, men who participated into study point to women as the reason for the occurrence of violence (Sakallı, 2001). In addition, another study conducted with participants from 4 different countries showed that there are significant differences between men and women in terms of attitudes towards physical violence against women (Nayak, Byrne, Martin & Abraham, 2003). Besides, another study examining attitude towards rape, which is a sexual violence, showed that the attitude of men to all rape scenarios presented to participants within the scope of the study was more rape-supportive

against women, compared to women (Ewoldt, Monson & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2000). Additionally, Price et al. (1999) showed that males have an attitudes as more accepting of violence compared to females. Apart from this, some studies have also shown that the probability of men to have a more supportive approach to the use of physical force in romantic relationships relative to women is higher (Finn, 1986; O'Keefe, 1997). Despite all this, it is clear that the relationship between gender and attitudes towards violence should be re-examined with evenly distributed groups in future studies, since the numbers of male and female participants in this study were not close to each other.

#### **4.2. The Relationships between Perceived Parental Attitudes in Childhood, Attitudes towards Psychological Dating Violence, Adult Attachment Styles and Self-Construal**

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis showed that although there was no significant relationship between each sub-dimension of all variables in the study, there are significant relationships between maternal rejection sub-dimension of perceived parental attitudes, attitudes towards male psychological dating violence sub-dimension, anxiety dimension of attachment and lastly individual self as a self-construal - which allowed to do mediation analysis. Additionally, the mediator roles of adult attachment style and self-construal in the relationship between perceived parental attitudes in childhood and attitudes towards psychological dating violence were investigated separately in current study. Results indicated that anxiety dimension of attachment and individual self sub-dimension of self-construal have a mediating effect on this relationship.

First one of the results is that there is significantly positive relationship between maternal rejection and anxiety dimension of adult attachment. Secondly, mediation analysis showed that maternal rejection has a direct effect on anxiety dimension of attachment. In other words, people who expressed that their mother had a rejective attitudes towards themselves in their childhood period were likely to get a high score on the anxious dimension in adult attachment style. These findings are consistent with the results in the literature. To be more specific, one of the studies examining this relationship showed that children who were insecurely attached had higher scores in the rejecting and overprotective categories on perceived parental attitudes scales compared to those who were securely attached, while their score in the emotional warmth category was significantly lower. (Roelofs, Meesters, Ter Huurne, Bamelis & Muris, 2006). Additionally, on this subject, Bartholomew (1990) speculated about the parenting style which fearfully avoidant adults face with when growing, who required a high score in the anxiety dimension because there was not enough empirical evidence at the time he published his study: These fearfully avoidant persons might have raised with the parents who might have showed their negative feelings towards and in front of their children. Another study revealed that father rejection has a direct effect on insecure attachment in the child (Breinholst, Tolstrup & Esbjørn, 2019). The findings of another study revealed that although maternal rejection was not, paternal rejection predicted the anxiety dimension of attachment (Landolt, Bartholomew, Saffrey, Oram, & Perlman, 2004). In a study examining the mediating role of adult attachment and emotional dysregulation in the relationship between aggression and parental rejection, the significant relationship between parental rejection and insecure adult attachment was revealed (Casselman & McKenzie, 2015). In conclusion, it is clearly understood in the light of all these

studies that parental rejection can prevent the child's secure attachment and predict the child's insecure adult attachment.

The other finding is that maternal rejection is significantly and negatively correlated with individual self dimension of self-construal. Additionally, according to mediation analysis, maternal rejection has a direct effect on individual self-construal. To put it another way, an individual with a lower score in maternal rejection has a higher score in individual self-construal. Although studies on this relationship can not be reached, there are various findings in the literature that enable to evaluate the findings of current study. The self-construal developed by the individual is considered as a probable abstract of the patterns of interactions established directly with parents and peers in the early periods (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Self-construal has a significant meaning, because Cross, Morris and Gore (2002) stated that how person describe herself/himself plays a role in the way s/he thinks, s/he feels and s/he establishes an interaction with other people. Profugo, Mendoza and Magno (2009) stated that parental closeness and family efficacy are predictors of interdependent self-construal's relational form, accordingly, any increase in parental closeness and family efficacy means increase in score of interdependent self-construal. Other study on parenting and grandiose narcissism showed a positive correlation between independent self-construal and positive parenting which includes parental warmth, parental induction, and parental engaged time. Also, this study found that positive parenting for father has a direct effect on independent self-construal (Eberly-Lewis, Vera-Hughes & Coetzee, 2018). It can be stated that these are consistent with the result reached within the scope of this study. Apart from this, the results of a study aiming to examine the effect of parental

responsiveness on adolescent susceptibility to peer influence revealed that parental attitudes have a different effect on the child's self-construal depending on the individual or collective culture of the country. According to this study, while parental responsiveness undermines the development of interdependent self-construal in a country with an individual culture such as Canada, it has emerged that it positively affects interdependent self-construal development in a country with a collective culture such as China. As a result, although both the results of current study and the results in the literature show that parental attitude plays a significant role on self-construal, however there is a fact that there are various uncertainties and limited number of researches in order to reach a result. Additionally, it is clear that different variables such as country culture can affect this relationship. These obviously show that there is a need to do further studies on the relationship between parental attitudes and self-construal.

One of the other results is that there is significantly positive relationship between anxiety dimension of adult attachment and tolerant attitudes towards male psychological violence. Secondly, mediation analysis showed that anxiety dimension of adult attachment has a direct effect on attitudes towards male psychological violence. In other words, people who get a high score on anxiety dimension were likely to have a more tolerant attitude towards male psychological violence. These findings are consistent with the results in the literature. A study carried out about attitudes towards intimate partner violence showed that there is a significantly positive correlation between anxiety dimension of attachment and the tolerant attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. Additionally, mediation analysis revealed that anxiety dimension has a direct effect on the more tolerant

attitudes towards intimate partner violence (McDermott & Lopez, 2013). In addition, some of the studies on anxious attachment and violence reveal the predictors of violence. Considering that perpetrating violence might be related to seeing it as normal (Riggs & O'leary, 1996; Seddig & Davidov, 2018; Ssenyonga, Hermenau, Nkuba & Hecker, 2019; Doe, 2000), these studies provide valuable information. A study aimed at predicting dating violence showed that anxious attachment affects the development of the person's temperament as angry, the angry temperament allows the person to display behaviors in order to control the person who s/he is in the romantic relationship with, and as a result, violence occurs in dating relationships. Besides, it has also been stated that if there is no violence or it has just begun to be used in a relationship, to examining an attachment problem can have a significant preventative effect in order to overcome relationship problems (Follingstad, Bradley, Helff & Laughlin, 2002). Additionally, Tweed and Dutton (1998) stated for impulsivity, which is an important predictor of spousal violence (Edwards, Scott, Yarvis, Paizis & Panizzon, 2003), it has required to get higher scores in the fearful attachment style category which is associated with higher anxiety dimension of attachment styles. Additionally, it was also stated that both groups of abusive men, who were evaluated in two separate groups within the scope of the study, reported preoccupied attachment style and/or fearful attachment style, which required a high score in the anxiety dimension (Tweed & Dutton, 1998). In addition, Gormley (2005) stated that there is an obvious relationship between the anxiety dimension of adult attachment and intimate partner violence, and this attachment dimension can bring the risk of being perpetrator towards romantic partner and might have an impact on individuals to be abuser. Another study showed that women who were members of mutually violent relationships scored the highest in anxious attachment.

In addition, it was found that women with a high anxiety score and a low avoidance score (preoccupied) were more likely to use violence compared to women with a high score in both of them (fearful avoidant) (Orcutt, Garcia & Pickett, 2005). While these findings obtained from the literature are consistent with result of current study, they also support the another finding of current study - "There is a significantly positive correlation between anxious attachment and the experience of violence in intimate relationships". When looking at the Bowlby (2008)'s statement - the purpose for behaving in anger way is to protect the valuable relationship - the violence of the anxious attachment person to her/his partner can be associated with preventing the end of the relationship. Yet it is clear that this is an unhealthy expression of love when considering the damage it creates. Consequently, because of all these aspects, the importance of attachment type, which has a relationship with violence, for establishing healthy and non-violent relationships is quite obvious.

The other one of the results reached is that there is significantly negative relationship between individual self-construal and attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. Additionally, mediation analysis showed that individual self has a direct effect on criterion variable. To put in different way, people who got higher score on individual self subscale were more likely to get a lower score on the criterion variable. This means they were less tolerant towards male psychological dating violence. Even if the findings on this relationship are quite limited, some interpretations can be made from the results reached in the literature regarding the relationship between self-construal and some other variables. A study by Morry and Kito (2009) showed that relational-interdependent self-construal has a positive correlation with the behaviors which support relationship and also

relationship quality. To be more specific, it can be thought that a person with a relational-interdependent self-construal will more frequently display behaviors that will support the relationship and the quality of the relationship will be higher. Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000), who claim that people with a relational-interdependent self-construal see the relationships they value as a part of their selves, and because of this, they allow these relationships to affect their lives more compared to people with other types of self-construal - argued that these people will be more committed to their relationships. In consistent with this expectation, results of this study showed that people who get high score on the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal scale describe significant relationships for them as more intimate and more self-dedicated compared to those who get low score, and also that these people also consider other people's requirements and desires when deciding. Additionally, it was also found that in order to maintain these valuable relationships, these people open up themselves to their partners more, care their partners more, and are more sensitive to their partners' needs (Cross, Bacon & Morris, 2000). In addition, Markus and Kitayama (1991) stated that while it is appropriate to say what is in their minds directly for people with an independent self, to experience and express of feelings and motives for people with an interdependent self-construal is determined by considering how the other party react to this. In the light of all this information, it can be considered that whereas people with relational-interdependent self-construal would have a more tolerant attitudes towards violence in order to not lose the valuable relationship for them, people with independent self-construal would give a reaction in consistent with what is in their minds about violence, without anxiety of losing this relationship and would show less tolerant towards violence. Consequently, the findings of present study is coherent with the inferences of findings in the literature. However, it is clear

that there is a lack of studies focused on the relationship between self-construal and attitudes towards violence in the literature and there is a need for further studies.

The other one of the results reached is that there is significantly positive relationship between maternal rejection and having tolerant attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. In other words, people who perceive their mother as more rejective towards themselves in their childhood period were likely to get a high score on the subscale of attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. This means they are more likely to have an accepting attitudes towards male psychological dating violence. Additionally, mediation analysis showed that maternal rejection has a indirect effect on attitude towards male psychological violence. To be more specific, getting a higher score on maternal rejection - which does predict the attitudes towards male psychological violence when ignoring the mediators - does not predict this criterion variable when controlling for the mediators which are anxiety dimension of adult attachment and individual self-construal. It can be considered that the findings reached by reviewing literature support these findings of current study. Newell (1934) argued that the mother's attitude towards the child was rejecting, mainly because of the unhappy adjustments of the mothers to the marriage, and stated that the children who experienced mother rejection were relatively insecure on average. In addition, it was emphasized that children who experience maternal rejection exhibit behaviors that are either submissive, aggressive, or a mixture of both. While accepting the aggressive behaviors as more antisocial behaviors, it was listed the characteristics as follows: quarrelsome, stealing, truant from school, rebelling and disobedient. Besides, submissive behaviors were exemplified as follows: shy and introverted, sensitive, fearful, easily

crying, and complaining easily (Newell, 1936). A study on dating violence and being perpetrator of violence in adolescence showed that committing a crime, experiences of parental rejection, and committing sexual harassment were predictors of membership in groups includes mutually violent behaviors (Chiodo et al., 2012). Moreover, another study conducted on the relationship between parental attitudes and violence revealed that maternal rejection, which influences psychosocial adjustment negatively for the child, has an indirect effect on both being the victim of violence and bullying others. According to this, maternal rejection is related to an increase in victimization and bullying (Papadaki & Giovazolias, 2015). Consequently, it is clear that maternal rejection affects one's position in the experience of violence - either by making the person the perpetrator or the victim or both. However, it is clearly seen that there is a need for more studies examining the relationship between the attitude towards violence and maternal rejection - which its relationship with violence has been investigated by many studies.

Lastly, results showed that there is a significantly positive relationship between the frequency of experience of violence in intimate relationships and having more tolerant attitudes towards male psychological violence. Besides, according to regression analysis, experience of violence in intimate relationships is a predictor of the attitudes towards male psychological violence. In other words, people who more frequently exposed to the violent behaviors by their romantic partners were likely to have a more accepting attitude towards male psychological violence. Evaluating the results in the literature, it can be seen that these results are compatible with the results of current study. To be more clear, a study examining the attitude towards intimate partner violence revealed that there is a relationship between perpetrating

intimate partner violence in the past and more blaming the victim of violence (Erickson, Johnson, Langille & Walsh, 2017). Another study conducted in Zambia which found 44% of participants have a history of intimate partner violence, showed that people with a history of intimate partner violence had more accepting attitudes for intimate partner violence compared to people who did not have any history of intimate partner violence. Additionally, they justified the violence based on the reasons such as the woman going out by not giving any information to her husband, neglecting her children, discussing with her husband (Lawoko, 2006). Another study found that its participants who perpetrated violence towards their intimate partner were also probable victims of violence by their intimate partner (Lamis, Leenaars, Jahn & Lester, 2013). Besides, other study of intimate partner violence has shown that many cases of intimate partner violence involve bidirectional violence, so a perpetrator can also be a victim (Anderson, 2002). Moreover, another study on attitude towards intimate partner violence revealed that people who witnessed their father beating their mother, even if they did not have direct experience of intimate partner violence towards themselves, were more supportive of the male's violence towards wife (Speizer, 2010). In the light of all above information, it can be understood that the experience of violence in intimate relationships has an important role in development of attitudes towards violence and being victim/perpetrator of violence.

#### **4.3. Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

This correlational study which is allowing us to understand the complex relationships between various variables has several strengths. First of all, for this study, which accepts all undergraduate students in Turkey as a population, data were collected from 25 number of universities and 73 number of departments through

simple random sampling. So that, it can be expressed that the representation of current study is relatively higher than the studies conducted with convenience sampling as a result of the increase in the diversity in the data set. In addition, while many studies only measure attitudes towards violence against women, present study more comprehensively measured attitudes towards violence against both women and men. In addition, the standardization and/or development of almost all scales used in current study, which was collected data from individuals between the ages of 18-29, was carried out with the data collected from the young population. This can be considered an important advantage in terms of reliability for the study. In addition, the fact that the data was collected through the online system enabled the collection of data from students studying in different cities, which is very important in terms of representing our population and generalizing our data to population. Related to this, with the application of the study over the online, it can be stated that present study is both cost-efficient and time-saving. In addition, in our study, it is also important to consider the experience of violence in close relationships as a control variable, so that this effect is taken under control and the effect of other variables on the criterion variable is better understood.

In addition to its strengths, this study has various limitations as well. The first of these concerns is studying of "violence", which is a sensitive concept that, when asked, can trigger participants about their respective experiences. In order to compensate the effects of this possible trigger, the contact information of institutions such as associations and foundations where they can receive legal and psychological support regarding their experiences of violence was shared with the participants at the end of the work. Another limitation is the possibility that within the scope of

social desirability, participants can give more acceptable answers by the society about their attitudes towards violence. Nevertheless, the fact that the study was conducted through the online system and the absence of face-to-face encounters with people filling the scales can be considered a factor that may reduce the threat in this regard. Apart from this, the number of men and women is not equal in our study, and it can be said that there is a important difference between the groups in terms of the number of people. While this makes it difficult to generalize the results obtained on the relationship between gender and attitudes towards violence, it can be considered as an important limitation for this study. Again, while the majority of the participants reported that they have an income level 2.000 – 5.000 TL, it is striking that the number of people from the income level 20.000 + is quite low. Additionally, the number of people in working and non-working groups is not equal, the difference between these two groups is significant. Besides, the majority of the participants are in the 19-29 age range, whereas the number of people aged 28 and 29 is quite low. Moreover, the kurtosis value of Experiences of Violence in Intimate Relationships, which was examined as a control variable in the study, was found to be 1.607. However, since there was no outlier data that increased this value, it was performed the analysis despite this value. It can be stated that this mentioned kurtosis value (1.607) is a limitation for current study. The reason for this is that +1.5 and -1.5 values specified by Tabachnick & Fidell (2013) were taken as criteria for skewness and kurtosis in this study. All these can be considered as a significant issue in terms of representation and generalizability and can be considered among the limitations of the research.

Finally, it has been observed during the literature review that the intention to harm is often emphasized in the definition of violence (e.g., Baron, 1977; Krug et al., 2002; Breiding et al., 2015). It is not always easy to understand whether such a behavior is intended or not. Nevertheless, the criterion of intentionality - which is also given an importance by the legal system on evaluating a situation in terms of judgment and punishment - seems necessary in order to distinguish harm caused to the opposite side by a traffic accident or a surgeon operating his patient from aggressive behaviors. (Baron, 1977). Nevertheless, this criterion in the definitions might allow to tolerate a behavior that can be considered as violence in some respects on the grounds that it is not intentional. To give an example, someone who puts pressure on his girlfriend about how to dress "on the grounds that he loves her" might not intentionally intend to harm her, but it can still be said that this behavior is an example of psychological violence, and in this respect, there might not be an intention to harm behind every violent behavior. This criterion, which can be considered a barrier for many studies, should be addressed in more detail in future studies, because the absence of intentionality under a behavior that can be considered as violent behavior can be misleading for researchers, according to this definition.

#### **4.4. Clinical Implications**

There are many projects designed so far to prevent violence. One of them is the project called Youth Relationship Project by Grasley, Wolfe and Wekerle (1999), which considers the early and middle adolescence period as an important period in which the necessary patterns can be formed in order to establish healthy close relationships which are not violent. It was created to reduce the possibility of violence that can be seen in dating relationships. Some of another interventions developed to prevent violence or reduce its frequency are school-based. De La Rue,

Polanin, Espelage, and Pigott (2017), who conducted a meta-analysis study on these, stated that these programs do provide information about violence in dating period by raising awareness in people and have a significant impact on attitudes. Another Project, The Safe Dates Project, which was carried out to assess the school-based prevention program for dating violence within the scope of adolescent population, influenced being a victim of sexual violence most marginally, while this program also had an impact on perpetuating psychological, physical and sexual dating violence and being a victim of physical dating violence (Foshee et al., 2005). Considering the contributions of these projects, it is clear that it would be meaningful to develop similar intervention projects aimed at combatting violence - for different populations such as children, adolescents, adults, parents, and so forth.

The results of present study showed that it can be also beneficial to handle attachment styles in preventive programs for combating violence. Additionally, another result of this study is that maternal rejection has an indirect effect on attitudes towards violence according to mediation analysis. In addition, according to the results of the simple linear regression analysis of maternal rejection, it was found to be a predictor of the attitude towards male psychological dating violence. Since these results show that parental attitudes can also be determinative on attitudes towards violence, it might be beneficial to consider parental attitudes too in intervention programs will be done. There are some interventions developed for these in the literature. To give an example, developed as an intervention, Child-Parent Psychotherapy is an attachment-focused procedure that has been found efficacious in the treatment of traumas of young children who have been exposed to domestic violence, and it aims to repair the attachment and the trauma by improving

the relationship between the caregiver and the child (Busch & Lieberman, 2007). The findings of a study in which this intervention was applied, showed that children in the experimental group who received this intervention showed less anxious attachment than those in the control group, while mothers improved their empathy skills and increased their interaction with their children (Lieberman, Weston & Pawl, 1991). The findings of a study on Preschool-Parent Psychotherapy (PPP), which is a specific type of Child-Parent Psychotherapy, revealed that when it is compared to didactic intervention which focused on parenting skills, PPP intervention is more efficient in the development of internal representations of self and a person who gives a care in the child (Toth, Maughan, Manly, Spagnola & Cicchetti, 2002).

Another intervention program is STRONG intended decreasing dating violence among early adolescent boys based on parental influence. The constructs which are its target is emotion regulation, communication between parent-child and information of relationship health. The results of the pilot study showed that those who participated in the STRONG both perpetrated less violence and became less victims compared to those who did not participate (Rizzo et al., 2021). Considering these studies, it can be thought that parental attitudes and anxious attachment style-oriented violence intervention study might be effective for adolescents and young adults who are in a dating relationship. Raising awareness of people about anxious attachment and maternal rejection, which predicts more tolerant attitudes towards dating violence, can be a meaningful step in struggling with violence.

This study proposes not only some suggestions for intervention studies, but also for the role of the therapist for psychotherapy. According to Bowlby (1988) there is a parallelism between the role of the therapist to that of the mother in one

regard. When clients begin psychotherapy, the psychotherapist supports them by providing a secure basis for recognizing and expressing their thoughts and feelings. Here, as the client tells about the feelings and thoughts that s/he has discovered, therapist tries to be empathetic by listening carefully and sensitively to her/his discoveries, trying to see her/his experiences through her/his eyes, and responds to the patient carefully and sympathetically. All this to some extent to meet her/his unmet emotional needs. It is also informative as the client's reaction to therapist for all these will resemble previous relationship patterns (Bowlby, 1988). All this is quite consistent with the concept of Limited reparenting, which is considered the heart of schema therapy. The concept of limited reparenting is aimed at meeting the client's unmet needs within limits (Young, Klosko & Weishaar, 2006). Considering the role of the mother's rejection in the child's adopting a more tolerant attitude towards violence and the role and influence of the therapist, which is similar to the mother, it can be deduced as the patterns acquired by the client with their negative experiences can be reorganized in a relationship that provides emotional warmth and includes behaviors and attitudes as the behavior of an authoritative parent to the child in a "limited way". In addition, considering the rejecting parent characteristics described by Arrindell (1999) - such as punishing the client, comparing a client to other clients, showing to prefer other clients to him/her, embarrassing the client, abusing the client, criticizing the client, or rejecting the client as an individual - it is understandable to what extent such behaviors by therapist can damage 'existing patterns of the client' originating from unmet needs. In this respect, this study proposes to therapists to be a limited authoritative parent, as suggested in the concept of limited reparenting in Schema Therapy, and to avoid being a rejecting therapist. Other than that, while current study suggests that therapists who do family therapy

should pay particular attention to the attachment between parent and child, it also recommends reconsideration of the relationship between mother and child in the scope of "authoritative parenting" which requires to approach both the physical and emotional needs of the child with sensitivity, consistency, and compassion. Lastly, the most important aspect of this study is related to the negative relationship between individualistic self-culture and attitudes towards violence. To be more clear, based on this information, it seems that it would be meaningful to work with a client who has experienced psychological violence, for that s/he should give importance to her/his own wishes and needs without harming the boundaries and rights of other people. It is significant that s/he is sensitive to her/his wishes and needs as well as wishes and needs of the person he is in a relationship with. In this respect, it is critical to be able to set limits on destructive behaviors/requests from others. To work with clients on setting boundaries where necessary and good enough might help to combat psychological violence.

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