



**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEPARATION-  
INDIVIDUATION AND PSYCHODYNAMIC  
PERSONALITY ORGANIZATION: THE ROLE OF  
SHAME AND GUILT**

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Thesis for the Master's Program in Clinical Psychology

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## ETHICAL DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have conducted my work in accordance with academic rules and ethical behaviour at every stage from the planning of the thesis to its defence. I confirm that I have cited all ideas, information and findings that are not specific to my study, as required by the code of ethical behaviour, and that all statements not cited are my own.

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# ABSTRACT

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEPARATION-INDIVIDUATION AND PSYCHODYNAMIC PERSONALITY ORGANIZATION: THE ROLE OF SHAME AND GUILT

Aygün, Arslan

Master's Program in Clinical Psychology

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Falih Köksal

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The aim of this study was to investigate the predictive effects of shame and guilt on separation individuation and personality organization and to examine the mediating role of shame and guilt in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization. Data were collected from 337 participants. Trait Shame and Guilt Scale, Separation Individuation Inventory and Personality Organization Inventory were used to collect the data. According to the results, shame, guilt, personality organization and separation individuation were positively correlated. Participants' personality organization and separation individuation scores differ significantly according to their shame/guilt levels. Personality organization scores were predicted by separation individuation and shame scores, while shame and guilt predicted separation individuation scores, respectively. While shame was a significant mediator variable in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization, guilt was not found to be a significant mediator. The results were

discussed in terms of the literature.

Keywords: shame, guilt, separation individuation, personality.



# ÖZET

## AYRIŞMA BİREYLEŞME VE PSİKODİNAMİK KİŞİLİK ORGANİZASYONU ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ: UTANÇ VE SUÇLULUK DUYGULARININ ROLÜ

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Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Falih KÖKSAL

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Bu çalışmanın amacı utanç ve suçluluk duygularının ayrılma bireyleşme ve kişilik organizasyonları üzerindeki yordayıcı etkilerini araştırmak ve ayrılma bireyleşme ile kişilik organizasyonu ilişkisinde utanç ve suçluluk duygularının aracı rolünü incelemektir. Veriler 337 katılımcıdan toplandı. Verileri toplamak için Sürekli Utanç ve Suçluluk Ölçeği, Ayrılma Bireyleşme Envanteri ve Kişilik Organizasyonu Envanteri kullanıldı. Sonuçlara göre utanç, suçluluk duyguları, ayrılma bireyleşme ve kişilik organizasyonu pozitif yönde korelasyon göstermektedir. Katılımcıların kişilik organizasyonu ve ayrılma bireyleşme puanları utanç/suçluluk seviyelerine göre anlamlı olarak farklılık göstermektedir. Kişilik organizasyonu puanlarını ayrılma bireyleşme ve utanç puanları yordarken; ayrılma bireyleşme puanlarını sırasıyla utanç ve suçluluk duyguları yordamaktadır. Ayrılma bireyleşme ve kişilik organizasyonu ilişkisinde utanç duygusu anlamlı bir aracı değişken iken; suçluluk duygusu bu ilişkide anlamlı bir aracı etkisi göstermemiştir. Sonuçlar literatür doğrultusunda tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: utanç, suçluluk, ayrışma bireyleşme, kişilik.



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*For those left behind and those to come...*

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Shame and guilt, often classified as self-conscious emotions (Tangney and Dearing, 2002) within psychological literature, hold significant importance across various domains of psychology, particularly within psychoanalytic discourse. Their pervasive presence in diverse disciplines such as philosophy, literature, and cinema underscores their profound influence on both individual psychology and cultural norms, suggesting that these emotions are universal human experiences. Indeed, the exploration of shame and guilt has been a focal point within psychoanalytic literature (Lewis, 1971) and clinical practice, elucidated by theorists from various perspectives.

While serving dual functions of regulating both intra and interpersonal processes, managing moral and social transgressions, and guiding individuals toward socially acceptable behaviors (Muris and Meesters, 2014), the experience of shame and guilt can be deeply distressing. Individuals who undergo intense experiences of these emotions are particularly vulnerable to various psychopathological processes (Tangney and Fischer, 1995).

The association between shame, guilt, and psychological disorders prompts inquiries into their distinctions, similarities, developmental trajectories, and coping mechanisms, as well as their relationship to specific psychopathological processes. Although both emotions entail negative self-evaluation by internal and external observers, a crucial theoretical differentiation lies in the self/behavior distinction. Shame entails a global negative evaluation of the self, whereas guilt is confined to the specific situation or behavior prompting the feeling (Lewis, 1971). Understanding the psychological dynamics that differentiate these similar yet distinct emotions, as well as identifying potential developmental or environmental influences on their prevalence, constitutes a central focus of this study.

Considering the internal and external observation aspects of shame and guilt suggests a potential linkage to object relations theory, a significant framework within psychoanalytic literature. The internalization processes of object relations, the quality of internalized relationships, and the degree of object-self distinction are pivotal in shaping individuals' experiences of these emotions. Additionally, the impact of early mother-infant relationships, often regarded as prototypes for subsequent relationships, holds particular importance in shaping one's susceptibility to shame and guilt

(Schoore, 1991). Mahler's separation-individuation theory, elucidating the psychological birth and individuation process of infants, offers insights into the developmental stages and interactions that shape these emotions. Examining the pathological and protective effects of these developmental processes on shame and guilt intensity in later life is essential.

Furthermore, integrating the concept of personality organization, a cornerstone in psychoanalytic diagnosis and assessment, with shame, guilt, and separation-individuation processes facilitates a comprehensive examination of these variables. This thesis aims to elucidate these variables sequentially, delving into their nuances and interconnections to provide a thorough understanding of their role in clinical psychology.

### ***1.1 Self Conscious Emotions***

Research in clinical psychology has historically centered on basic emotions of biological origin, such as joy, sadness, fear, surprise, and anger. However, there has been a gradual shift towards recognizing the significance of self-conscious emotions, which encompass shame, guilt, pride, and embarrassment. Unlike basic emotions, self-conscious emotions involve complex social and self-processes, incorporating the influence of basic emotions on cognitive functions (Tracy and Robins, 2007). They emphasized the distinct features of self-conscious emotions, listing five key aspects. Firstly, these emotions necessitate self-awareness and self-representations. Secondly, they typically emerge later in development compared to basic emotions. Thirdly, they serve to accomplish complex social goals. Fourthly, unlike basic emotions, they are not easily recognizable through universal facial expressions. Lastly, they possess cognitively intricate structures.

These emotions are characterized by diverse self-evaluations due to their close association with the self, playing a role in individuals' awareness of the relationship between basic emotions and the self. Interpersonally, they function in regulating social behavior and repairing social breaches (Tracy and Tangney, 2007). Because of their involvement in various complex cognitive processes, they emerge later in development compared to basic emotions (Izard, 2007). These cognitive processes can be categorized into three main areas (Lewis, 2000). First, self-awareness is crucial. Second, understanding societal norms and moral standards is necessary. Third, a theory of mind must be developed to perceive how others evaluate oneself.

Dickerson, Gruenewald and Kemeny (2004) conceptualize emotions as existing on a spectrum, with basic emotions at one end and self-conscious emotions at the other. The literature has debated the relationship of shame and guilt with basic emotions and which category better defines these emotions. Tracy and Robins (2007) propose that shame aligns more closely with basic emotions, while Malti (2006) contends that guilt is closer to self-conscious emotions due to its complex cognitive demands. In terms of the distinction between emotion and affect, Elison (2011) categorizes shame as an emotion, guilt is seen more as a concept wherein affective and cognitive processes intertwine.

Shame and guilt, the focal points of this study, are classified as negative self-conscious emotions. According to Tracy and Robins' (2004) cognitive appraisal approach, these emotions arise when events are internally attributed. The perception that an event is caused by internal processes is crucial in experiencing shame and guilt. Under this model, shame emerges when internal causal attribution is perceived as stable and global, whereas guilt arises when internal causal attribution is seen as unstable, controllable, and situation-specific.

### ***1.1.2. Shame***

Among negative self-conscious emotions, shame is one of the painful emotions to experience. Shame is an emotion that can arise in interactions with others in social contexts as well as in the internal processes of the individual (Gilbert, 1998). It guides behavior, has effects on the evaluation of one's self, social desirability and acceptance (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). Shame has many important effects on cognitive, behavioral, physiological, personal and interpersonal processes (Lewis, 1992). This experience signals that one's whole self is subjected to an internal or external evaluation and increases the experience of self-consciousness (Wittgenstein, 1958). Therefore, many authors have drawn attention to the relationship of shame with the qualities of inferiority, undesirable, unattractive, defective, worthless in relation to the self (Gilbert, 1998; Nathanson, 1996; Lewis, 1992; Tangney and Fischer, 1995). According to Lansky (2005), we feel shame if our self is exposed to others in terms of inadequate, powerless, undesirable, unloved qualities. This applies both to situations that have happened and situations that are expected to happen in the future.

Emotions of shame and guilt will be addressed in this study with the guidance of psychoanalytic grounding.

### ***1.1.2.1. Psychoanalytic Views on Shame***

In the realm of psychoanalysis, the exploration of shame and guilt has been integral to understanding psychological dynamics since the inception of the field. However, an examination of the psychoanalytic literature reveals a tendency, starting from Freud, to accord greater significance to guilt over shame. Freud's explanations rooted in libido and conflict theory led to a predominant focus on Oedipal and superego punishments (Hazard, 1969). Various theorists have offered explanations for this emphasis. Alongside Erikson, who attributed it to the sociocultural milieu of Freud's era, there are scholars who attribute it to the prevailing prominence of the ego concept over the self, fostering a conflict-centric perspective (Lewis, 1971).

Freud's structural theories (Freud, 1914, 1961), in which he distinguished between the super-ego and the ego ideal, are the closest works to Freud's formulation of shame (Hazard, 1969). He explained the feeling of shame in terms of the exposure of the child's genitalia and the corresponding processes of exhibitionism and vulnerability (Freud, 1914). In addition, some authors have reported that Freud wanted to distance himself from shame formulations that Adler contributed with the concept of 'inferiority complex' (Morrison, 1983). Lewis (1988) on the other hand, argues that Freud's shift from seduction theory, which explains his views on psychopathology in terms of abuse and trauma, to early childhood fantasies reduced his interest in shame. In this direction, Morrison (1983), who stated that the concept of ego ideal defined by Freud was defined in terms of achieving goals and values and that this was insufficient to explain the feeling of shame, brought up the concept of ideal self, which is more closely in contact with the experience of shame, instead of the concept of ego ideal. Stating that the concept of ideal self points to processes such as the desired self and the self one wants to be, Morrison argued that this formulation is more successful in understanding the feeling of shame.

Erikson (1950) gave special importance to the feeling of shame while explaining the stages of psychosocial development. He defined the developmental period between the ages of one and three, which corresponds to the period Freud called the anal period, as Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt. In this period, a sense of autonomy develops as the infant, who was a completely passive being in the previous developmental process, realizes that they have a will power over these processes with the development of his bowel muscles. With this newly acquired skill, the child realizes that they have the will to hold their feces or to evacuate them wherever they wants. At this point, parental

responses that support the child's will support the child's autonomy, while attitudes that are contrary, coercive, punitive and ignoring the child's will are associated with the loss of autonomy in the child and therefore with a sense of shame.

Lewis (1988), who made significant contributions to the literature on self-conscious emotions, explained shame with symptom formation, separation distress and attachment processes. Lewis (1988), who defined the emotion of shame as a helpless state, explained this emotion as arising from rejection or loss of love experienced in the early relationship between the caregiver and the child. She wrote that the feeling of shame arises from being rejected by significant others, feeling unlovable, or experiencing the loss of existing love. Referring to Bowlby's attachment studies (1969), she underscored that children separated from their caregivers during early development perceive this separation as rejection, equating it with a loss of love. She characterized the child's angry state, which Bowlby termed 'bitter protest', as an embodiment of the experience of shame. Furthermore, in contemporary attachment research (Main and Weston, 1981), the authors connected the gaze aversion behaviors seen in securely attached infants upon reuniting with their mother after separation to the broader body of literature on shame expression in adults.. They interpreted the indifferent and avoidant behaviors exhibited by insecurely attached infants as a form of rejecting the disappearing and rejecting object, thereby exploring the nexus between attachment theory and the sensation of shame.

Within psychoanalytic literature, Kohut delved into the self-experiences of individuals at developmental narcissistic stages, offering distinctive insights. He elucidated this phenomenon through the notion of self-object, positing that an individual's self-conception evolves through its acknowledgment by another (Kohut, 1971). In his early writings, Kohut associated the feeling of shame with the ego ideal when he was still loyal to structural and drive theories. He said that the experience of shame occurs when the ego fails to discharge one's exhibitionistic expectations (Kohut, 1966). He stated that people who are prone to feel shame are success-driven and that all the failures experienced on this path trigger shame. Kohut, who later changed his views from drive theory to self psychology, which he pioneered, addressed many concepts corresponding to this experience in his theory, although he used the word shame less directly. Stating that the basic need of the child is an empathic mirroring through the responsiveness of the caregiver. Kohut (1971) suggested that delays and failures above the optimum in these response expectations would lead to self pathology in the child.

According to Morrison (1983), this situation will reveal problems such as self esteem, defective self, hopelessness, lethargy, most of which can be handled on the basis of shame. Morrison also suggests that what can be understood about shame from Kohut's views is specific to situations where the child's attempts to be recognized, approved and mirrored by the self object fail.

Rothstein et al. (1994) examined the relationship between shame and superego. He posited that the superego's association with ideal. The child's accepted or unaccepted attitudes and behaviors signals real or perceived parental disapproval thereby laying the groundwork for the experience of shame. Rothstein states that the feeling of shame is related to what another person thinks and will think; and that parental disapproval in the shame situation is related to being inferior, substandard in relation to oneself. This disapproval is related to the person's expectations of ridicule, humiliation or rejection. The person experiences these expectations in an internal quality by identifying with the parent they internalize and fantasize about. In other words, the person may feel shame through the evaluation of external objects, or they may feel shame by identifying with their internalized parental objects.

### ***1.1.3. Guilt***

At its core, guilt can be understood as an affective response arising from the recognition of one's transgression against internalized moral or social norms (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). This definition underscores the inherent moral dimension of guilt, highlighting its connection to ethical principles and societal values. Moreover, guilt encompasses cognitive processes involving the evaluation of one's actions in relation to prevailing standards of right and wrong (Baumeister, Stillwell and Heatherton, 1994). This cognitive appraisal is pivotal in distinguishing guilt from related emotions such as shame and remorse. Unlike shame, which involves a global negative evaluation of the self, guilt focuses specifically on the disapproval of one's behavior (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). Similarly, while remorse pertains to the regret for negative outcomes, guilt centers on the acknowledgment of personal responsibility for those outcomes (Lindsay-Hartz, 1995). Thus, guilt entails a nuanced cognitive assessment wherein individuals attribute their actions to their own moral agency. Furthermore, guilt encompasses an affective component characterized by feelings of tension, remorse, and self-reproach (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). These emotional experiences often accompany the recognition of wrongdoing and serve as internal

signals prompting reparative or corrective action. However, the intensity and duration of guilt emotions can vary widely depending on factors such as the severity of the transgression, individual differences in moral sensitivity, and cultural norms surrounding moral responsibility (Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek, 2007).

In addition to its cognitive and affective dimensions, guilt influences behavioral responses, motivating individuals to engage in reparative actions aimed at rectifying their transgressions or alleviating the distress caused to others (Baumeister, Stillwell and Heatherton, 1994). This behavioral aspect of guilt underscores its adaptive function in fostering prosocial behavior and maintaining interpersonal relationships (Lindsay-Hartz, 1995). From these explanations, we can see that the experience of guilt underlines the harm done to another dissociated in one's psyche or in external reality. Guilt requires awareness of self and other as separate beings and the ability to make arbitrary inferences involving one's own actions (Hoffman, 1982).

The insights on the awareness of self and other related to guilt pave the way for the psychoanalytic examination of this emotion.

#### ***1.1.3.1. Psychoanalytic Views on Guilt***

Freud's theoretical inquiries were deeply engaged with the concept of guilt, highlighting its intricate connection with anxiety. He posited that prior to the formation of the superego, children navigate a realm devoid of moral constraints, prioritizing the fulfillment of their impulses. In this pre-superego stage, the apprehension experienced by the child regarding the satisfaction of desires is termed "realistic anxiety" (Freud, 1961). However, with the development of the superego, this anxiety is accompanied by a process called moral anxiety as the child becomes aware of parental restrictions and the link between these restrictions and the loss of parental love. With the internalization of the superego, a cognitive component is added to this experience, which previously had a high affective tone, and forms the experience of guilt. According to Freud, the affective component of guilt is associated with fear and the cognitive component with the realization of the loss of parental love and protection (Freud, 1961). According to Freud's conclusions, with the development of the superego in the oedipal period, the child cannot direct their aggressive drives and frustrations against the parents who give them love, care and protection. These aggressive impulses suppressed by the superego and return back to the person themselves without reaching their original object. So the child turns the aggressive

drives that were originally directed at the parent back on themselves and experiences this drive as guilt.

Melanie Klein, who is considered one of the pioneers of the object relations school, gave special importance to the theoretical and practical explanations of guilt. Unlike Freud, Klein argued that the development of the superego is much earlier than the oedipal period and underlined the relationship between the development of the splitting mechanism and the disappearance of this mechanism (Klein, 1933). When the splitting mechanism is at work, it keeps the infant's good and bad experiences separate, which prevents them from realizing that their caregiver can have both positive and negative traits. As a result, the infant doesn't perceive the caregiver in a complete or realistic way. Klein, who called this state the paranoid-schizoid position, noted that the infant was more likely to have paranoid concerns in this state (Klein, 1935). From the fourth month of life onwards, a significant change begins to occur in the infant's psyche and the infant has less need to split between good and bad experiences. With the disappearance of the splitting mechanism, the previously partially experienced object is replaced by a more complete and realistic object experience in which good and bad experiences are integrated (Klein, 1935). While the source of fear and anxiety in the previous paranoid position was related to the child's fantasies of being harmed, with the realistic perception of the object, the source of anxiety in the infant who shifts to a depressed position begins to be related to the damage to the object, that is, the caregiver. With the disappearance of splitting, the infant, who can experience both aggressive and libidinal drives towards the same object, becomes more aware of the damage caused by aggressive impulses and fantasies. According to Klein, this is the basis of guilt (Klein, 1935). At this point, with the disappearance of projections, which are one of the basic mechanisms of the paranoid position and obscure the self-object distinction, the self-object distinction begins to become more apparent.

Friedman (2013) emphasized the importance of the relationship between chronic guilt and traumatic processes. He explains that children who are accidentally or intentionally traumatized in a cruel way by their parents take responsibility for this trauma. This responsibility causes the child to blame themselves, but it is less worrying to think that they are at fault and guilty than to think that the world is full of persecutors. As Fairbairn (1943, pp. 66-67) said:

*"It is better to be a sinner in a world ruled by God than to live in a world ruled by*

*the Devil."*

In addition to the unconscious guilt based on ambivalent feelings towards the object of love, Modell (1971) explains the concept of survivor guilt, which is based on surviving, continuing life and prioritizing oneself after traumatic and traumatizing experiences. This concept was first used by Niederland (1961) to explain the intense guilt experiences of Holocaust survivors. According to this explanation, the experience of guilt is linked to perceiving one's ongoing survival as a form of betrayal rather than being associated with the resurgence of hostile feelings towards oneself.

Emphasizing guilt in the processes of separation and individuation, Modell (1971) discusses the concept of separation guilt in the context of object relations theory. Modell explores how separation guilt arises from the infant's recognition of their separateness from the primary caregiver, usually the mother, as they begin to develop autonomy and independence. He suggests that this guilt emerges from the infant's fear of losing the mother's love and protection as they assert their own identity. Modell emphasizes that separation guilt is a crucial aspect of early development, reflecting the child's growing awareness of their individuality and the inevitable need to separate from the mother to establish their own identity.

#### ***1.1.4. Distinction between Shame and Guilt***

In this section, some distinctions between these two emotions will be discussed, both in general and in psychoanalytic literature. One of the most widely accepted perspectives in differentiating these two emotions is based on the self versus behavior. In shame, the individual experiences a negative evaluation of their entire self, whereas in guilt, the negative evaluation is confined to the specific behavior performed. (Lewis, 1971). As a result of this distinction, the evaluations that emerge in shame are "I am a bad person," while in guilt, they are "I did something bad" (Lindsay-Hartz, 1984). Such a distinction related to the self between these two emotions brings remorse, feelings of conscience, and reparative behaviors for the feeling of guilt, while it brings behaviors such as hiding, withdrawing, and avoiding for the feeling of shame (Tracy and Tangney, 2007).

These two emotions also differ in terms of the emotions that accompany or precede them. Shame is accompanied by disgust and contempt (Pulver, 1999), while guilt is accompanied by sadness and grief (Wilson and Gilbert, 2003).

When we look at these distinctions from a psychoanalytic perspective, developmental distinctions stand out first. When the relationship between guilt and superego is taken into consideration, the psychoanalytic literature is of the opinion that shame coincides with earlier periods than guilt since the superego emerges later in development. Freud (1961) examined this distinction in terms of early narcissistic libido problems in shame and moral conflicts that come with superego development in guilt. Erikson (1950), on the other hand, placed the 'autonomy versus shame and self doubt' stage in an earlier stage of psychosocial development than the 'initiative versus guilt' stage. Jacobson (1964), on the other hand, suggested that shame is related to earlier narcissistic vulnerability and is related to the exposure of one's deficiencies in various contexts. Similarly, Lewis (1971) suggested that shame is a more archaic and primitive early superego function than guilt.

Rothstein (1994) distinguished these two emotions in terms of oedipal and preoedipal conflicts by associating shame with loss of love in the preoedipal period and guilt with castration, sexual conflicts and loss of the object anxiety in the oedipal period. In this distinction, it is seen that one of the important differences between these two emotions is related to the reference to the object.

There are also some views that differentiate the emotions of shame and guilt in terms of active and passive experiences. Gedo (1980), who evaluates the developmental process of the human infant from the moment of birth to growth from a passive existence to a more active existence, distinguishes between shame and guilt by associating passivity in the early period with helplessness. Accordingly, while the helpless and needy state of the infant in a passive existence can be explained by shame dynamics, guilt dynamics come into play with the increase in the experience of agency of the infant, who moves into a more active mode with the progression of development. Lansky (2005) put forward ideas that support these views. Accordingly, the components of helplessness, vulnerability and powerlessness brought about by the feeling of shame are at the opposite pole compared to the emphasis on agency and power in the feeling of guilt. When a person feels guilty about any behavior, this indicates a more controlled experience than the helplessness and powerlessness components of shame. Lansky (2005) highlights the feeling of guilt instead of shame in a defensive sense as one of the consequences of such a distinction between these emotions. As Thrane (1979) points out, in the guilt dynamic when we say 'how can I have done *that*' the emphasis is on that. That is, it is about the nature of the thing done.

In the shame dynamic, the emphasis in this sentence is on 'I', as in 'how can I have done that'.

#### ***1.1.5. Shame-Guilt and Psychopathology***

Considering the different aspects of shame and guilt examined above, we can expect a number of different behavioral and symptomatic patterns to emerge as a result of the experience of these emotions. The fact that shame leads to behaviors such as isolation, hiding and avoidance, while guilt leads to behaviors such as repairing and compensating is associated with different psychopathological disorders.

The relationship of these emotions with externalization and internalization processes has been studied in the literature. While shame has been found to be associated with externalizing conditions due to avoidant and passive attitudes and therefore linked to some aggressive attitudes (Stuewig et al., 2010), guilt has been found to have a higher relationship with internalization processes (Tangney, Wagner and Gramzow, 1992). People who are prone to shame have been found to have more tendencies towards suspiciousness, irritability, anger, and judgment of others than people who are prone to guilt (Miller and Tangney, 1994). Similarly, it was found that participants' guilt scores were negatively correlated with antisocial tendencies such as theft, anger and vandalism (Cohen et al., 2011). In the same study, it was found that the tendency to feel guilty was positively correlated with moral decision-making and moral judgment and honesty. The fact that shame is experienced in relation to the whole self is thought to be more determinant in its relationship with psychopathology than other emotions (Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek, 2007).

The relationship between shame and guilt with personality disorders has an important place in the literature. According to (Jacobson, 1964), shame plays a central role in borderline personality disorder cases where expectations of rejection and abandonment may result in self-harm. Similarly, Schoenleber and Berenbaum (2012) stated that hiding, isolation, avoiding negative situations and suicide in personality problems are caused by coping with shame in non-adaptive ways. In addition, it has been reported by Ritter and colleagues (Ritter et al., 2014) that the symptomatic phenomenon of narcissistic personality disorder cases is ways of coping with shame. In parallel with these findings, it has been found that individuals with personality disorders have higher shame tendencies than healthy individuals and individuals with axis I disorders (Rüsch, Lieb, et al., 2007). Kernberg, on the other hand, stated that individuals with

neurotic personality functioning such as depressive, masochistic, hysterical and obsessive personality, which he considers as high-level or more adaptive personality pathologies, are characterized by guilt feelings that bring with them an unconscious desire to suffer rather than shame (Kernberg, 1996).

Mollon (1984) categorized the personality disturbances caused by guilt and shame as self-related and object-related. Based on Kohut's (1971) distinct developmental lines of narcissism and object love, he mentions the protective function of shame against the threat of disintegration of the fragile self. The feeling of guilt, on the other hand, is stated to arise from a conflict with an externalized object rather than the self. Considering these findings, it is seen that shame has more pathogenic effects than guilt in studies on psychopathology and shame-guilt relationship in the literature.

### ***1.2. Separation – Individuation***

Human relationships are often shaped around issues of closeness and distance. The relationships that individuals establish with others can be shaped around certain gratification and anxiety factors. People's ability to relate to others throughout life, to be alone and to develop a self-representation that is differentiated from others to a certain extent can be largely explained by the relationship in which we first open our eyes to life, namely the mother-infant relationship.

In psychoanalytic theories, the fact that the early mother-infant relationship is closely linked to the personality and relating processes of the individual has been formulated by different theorists from different perspectives. Among these explanations, perhaps one of the most well-known is the separation-individuation process, which Mahler and colleagues (1967, 1971, 1975) explained based on systematic infant-mother observations, and which they based on Freudian drive theory. These studies built on the ideas and theories put forward by previous theorists about the mother-infant relationship or the infant's psyche and became a systematic developmental theory.

It is known that the human offspring is not fully ready for the world in the biological sense and is therefore dependent on the presence of the mother (Parens, 1991). This dependence brought about by biological inadequacies brings along the examination of psychological processes. Mahler observed that the psychological processes of psychotic children in her clinical practice were similar to those of newborn babies. Based on this observation, she hypothesized that the first developmental process of a human infant begins with a symbiotic relationship between the mother and infant, a

pattern also seen in psychotic individuals (Mahler, 1974). Mahler stated that the physiological birth and psychological birth of the human infant do not proceed simultaneously, and that psychological birth is a slower process (Mahler, 1967). She analyzed this process in a developmental period that starts with birth and ends with libidinal object constancy by the 36th month. Mahler, who shaped her theory based on Freud's 'bird-egg' metaphor (Freud, 1911) about the newborn baby, also shaped the process of separation of the human baby from the mother and its subsequent individuation through this metaphor.

Mahler and her colleagues conducted a psychoanalytic investigation into the progression of the mother-infant relationship and the development of the infant's psyche, as per Freudian theory. They tracked this journey from the primary narcissism stage, where the infant is unaware of the boundary between self and external objects, to the subsequent stages where the infant gradually begins to differentiate from the mother and establish its own individuality. This longitudinal study spanned 36 months, starting from birth. Mahler and her team, who conducted observational studies on mother-infant interactions, observed that during this time, both the anatomical and cognitive development of the baby, as well as the various needs and tasks arising from these developments, can be tracked in specific periods. The data obtained from the observations were interpreted in terms of universal developmental stages of the human infant's development, innate characteristics and the psychological interactions between mother and infant. According to these observations, the process of separation and individuation was analyzed on the basis of 3 main developmental periods and 4 sub-periods. The developmental tasks required by each of these periods, the quality of mother-infant interaction, the infant's conflicting needs in the framework of security/intimacy or separation/individuation, and the psychological skills to be acquired differ. Therefore, failures and traumas in each period are also determinative for the other stages that follow (Mahler, 1974).

### ***1.2.1. Normal Autistic Stage***

In this stage, which covers the first month of life, the baby is in a state similar to the prenatal period and is in a state of primitive hallucinatory disorientation in which the gratification of its needs belongs to its own omnipotence (Mahler, 1967). In this period, there is not yet a distinction between internal and external reality. In the infant's psyche, the mother's external perception and the infant's internal stimuli are not yet

differentiated. At this stage, when the newborn sleeps more than they are awake, the primary need is to achieve homeostatic balance. This is accomplished through tension-reducing activities such as urinating, vomiting, sneezing, spitting, and receiving maternal care. The gratification provided by the mother's care and the internal tensions will start to be distinguished with good or bad qualities over time (Mahler, 1967). Mahler refers to the position of the infant in this period when the infant is not aware of the mother's presence as absolute primary narcissistic using Freudian terminology. However, Mahler's design of a baby with no connection to the outside world in the first stage of birth, which she called the normal autistic stage, has been challenged first by various object relations theorists (Fairbairn, 1946; Klein, 1952) and then by contemporary infant research. Mahler's explanation of the newborn as a closed system with a stimulus barrier in parallel with Freud (1911) has been challenged by many empirical studies. It has been stated that infants are oriented towards certain social and physical world stimuli from birth, and that they actively have certain preferences and expectations (Gergely and Watson, 1996; Rochat, 1995). Related research has shown that newborns show an innate sensitivity to the structure of the human face (Fantz, 1963; Morton and Johnson, 1991); a predisposed preference for the female voice (Friedlander, 1970); an innate capacity to mimic specific facial movements (Meltzoff and Moore, 1989) and perhaps even some basic emotional responses (Field et al., 1983).

### ***1.2.2. Normal Symbiotic Stage***

In this stage, which starts from the 2-3rd month of birth, the baby is gradually becoming vaguely aware of the mother. Although the position of primary narcissism continues, the infant is no longer in the absolute primary narcissistic stage as in the autistic stage (Mahler, 1967). In this stage, the infant's energy investment is gradually shifting from the internal organs to the body under the influence of environmental stimuli (Mahler, 1974). This change indicates that the autistic phase is over. The baby gradually begins to realize that the satisfaction of its needs is provided by the mother, the need satisfying object. The infant now behaves as if in an all-powerful union with the mother (Mahler, 1967). This union with the mother has hallucinatory, delusional, omnipotent and somatic features. The infant is still completely dependent on the mother. In this stage, there is an interpenetration with the mother and the 'I' and 'not-I' positions of the infant have not yet differentiated. The difference between the external

and the internal begins to be perceived gradually (Mahler, 1967). In order for the symbiotic period to be overcome in a normal and optimal way and for the infant to enter the process of differentiation, the caregiver should have a 'holding behavior' and this transition should be gradual (Mahler, 1967). The harmony in the caregiver's relationship with the infant ensures this process. Finally, one of the indicators that the symbiotic period is optimal and the mother-infant bond is formed is the specific smiling response.

### ***1.2.3. Separation – Individuation Stage***

This is the stage in which the symbiotic life of the infant with the caregiver ends and the infant progresses towards separation-individuation processes and is divided into 4 sub-stages. While separation is related to the ability to differentiate from the primary caregiver, individuation refers to autonomy as a separate self (Mahler, 1975).

#### ***1.2.3.1. Hatching (Differentiation)***

The infant's need satisfaction relationship with the mother, which was a symbiotic intertwining experience with the mother in the previous stage, gradually evolves into an object relationship in the hatching stage from the 3-4th month (Mahler, 1963). Self-representations that are initially integrated with the mother gradually begin to differentiate into separate self and object representations. This phase continues until approximately the 10th month. This is the stage when the infant first begins to try to physically distance from the mother. The baby, who has been completely passive in the mother's lap until this time, gradually tries these attempts. With the development of motor skills, the baby tries to slide away from the mother's lap, but the mother's close presence is still very important. It starts to play near the mother's feet as close as possible (Mahler, 1974). Infants who survive the symbiotic stage in an optimal way and acquire basic trust can easily experience feelings of curiosity and exploration during this period, and their trust in the mother's presence is high (Mahler, 1974). In this stage, when the mother's attitudes make separation difficult or invasive, the infant shows early separation experiences or tendencies to cling to the mother.

#### ***1.2.3.2. Practicing***

The practicing phase, typically occurring around 16 to 24 months of age, marks a pivotal stage where infants actively engage in exploring their newfound motor skills,

and developing a sense of autonomy (Mahler, 1975).

The first phase of this stage overlaps with the hatching stage. In this early practicing phase, the infant attempts to separate from the mother through movements such as crawling and climbing, albeit clinging to the mother. The later phase of the practicing period actually begins when the baby acquires the skill of upright position (Mahler, 1974). They engage in activities such as walking, and manipulating objects, driven by a desire to explore and interact with the world around them. Mahler observed that infants during this phase often alternate between moments of adventurous exploration and seeking reassurance from primary caregivers, highlighting the delicate balance between autonomy and attachment (Mahler, 1975). Even though the child tries to move away from the mother, the child returns to the mother again, needing closeness and presence. With these newly acquired skills, the baby begins to direct interest in the mother towards foreign objects. These objects are chosen as items that the mother has used before, such as blankets, diapers, etc., with which a relationship can be established. The baby tries to recognize and feel these objects with the mouth and hands. (Hoffer, 1947). Over time, one of these objects may become a transitional object between the mother and the outside world (Winnicott, 1953). Self and object representations, which were divided into two poles as good and bad in the previous period, are not yet integrated in this stage (Mahler, 1967).

It is particularly important to examine the feeling of shame in this stage because the motor skills acquired during this period feed the child's greatness (Mahler and McDevitti, 1980). The child is mesmerized by these newly acquired skills. The child is at the peak of their all-powerful narcissism (Mahler, Pine and Bergman, 2018) and therefore narcissistic vulnerability is high. The infant, who was previously much more dependent on the mother, begins to behave almost as if in a manic state with these new skills (Johnson, 1987). Neuropsychological studies have also found that children in this period have more positive affective experiences than negative ones (Rothbart, Taylor and Tucker, 1989). In this stage, shame is experienced as an automatic response that develops in the relationship with the caregiver (Schorer, 1991). In this period, the infant begins to realize that they are the object of an observer and with this, the foundations of the shame experience are laid (Parkin, 1985). The child's longing to share their omnipotent and exhibitionist state with the mother, and the degree to which the mother reciprocates this desire with mutual sensitivity, is crucial in shaping the experience of shame. When the child, exhilarated by their newfound abilities,

encounters instances where the mother fails to attune to these moments during their return to her, recognizing their separation and dependency, feelings of shame may arise. These experiences are internalized and form a prototype for future shame experiences (Schoore, 1991).

Shame is also used as a function that comes into play in this period for the child who is in a hyperarousal state to restrict this arousal. The threshold of this arousal and its restriction by shame is determined by the inclusiveness of the child's relationship with the mother in previous periods, the mother's co-sensation to the child's exhibitionism and the merge relationship established with an all-powerful mother in previous stages (Schoore, 1991). Therefore, experiences starting from this period are particularly effective in the formation of the narcissistic vulnerability of the child and the feelings of shame experienced with it.

Another characteristic of this period may be the conflicting attitudes that the child may show towards the experiences that were intertwined with the mother in previous phases. At this point, the mother's reactions to separation efforts are particularly important. Too little or too much reaction of the mother to these efforts may interrupt the child's separation processes (Mahler, Pine and Bergman, 1975). Towards the end of this period, as a result of the optimal ruptures against its omnipotence, the baby gradually begins to realize its dependence, smallness and separation, and realizes that not all of their needs are met instantly. Mahler describes the emotional state of the child experiencing this realization as low-keyedness. The gradual nature of this realization, rather than being overwhelming, is important for later experiences of individuality. (Mahler, 1974).

Contemporary researchers have built upon Mahler's foundational work, offering insights into the complexities of the Practicing Phase and its implications for child development. Attachment theory, pioneered by John Bowlby and extended by Mary Ainsworth, provides a valuable framework for understanding the emotional dynamics that underpin the Practicing Phase. Ainsworth's concept of the secure base highlights the role of caregivers in providing a secure foundation from which infants can venture out to explore the world and return for emotional support when needed (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth et al., 1978).

### ***1.2.3.3. Rapprochement***

The Rapprochement Stage typically occurs between 18 months and 3 years of age, marking a critical juncture in a child's quest for independence while grappling with the need for emotional security and proximity to caregivers (Mahler, 1975). All the strengths that the child experiences during the practicing phase, together with the development of cognitive and emotional skills that come with age, cause the child to realize the separation from the mother and the need for the mother. As the child becomes more aware of their separation from the mother, they feel an increasing need to share the new skills they have discovered with the mother (Mahler, 1974). At this stage, the child experiences conflicts about their autonomy and dependence on the mother. During this period, the main conflict arises from two opposing tendencies: the desire for autonomy, strength, and importance on one hand, and the reliance on the mother to fulfill all needs through some sort of magical intervention on the other, indicating a dependency on the mother. During this period, the child gradually begins to realize that the objects of love are separate individuals and that they too have their own needs and interests. Gradually and painfully, child begins to accept that he/she is no longer a whole being with the mother (Mahler, 1974). The shifting between different emotional states arising from the child's conflicting needs, the difficulties related to the acceptance of the mother as a separate other, and the related anger crises caused these experiences in this period to be called rapprochement crisis (Mahler, 1974).

At this stage, the child's primary source of gratification is no longer its own discoveries, but the social interactions it enters into. The acceptance of the mother as a separate individual begins to lead the child to accept that they have a separate existence as well. The child, who begins to recognize himself as a separate being, begins to interact with children like himself in a social context and begins to meet his needs such as mirroring and imitation through the relationships he enters with another child (Mahler, 1974).

Contemporary researchers have extended and elaborated upon Mahler's conceptualization of the rapprochement phase, offering nuanced insights into its psychological underpinnings and developmental significance. Attachment theory, pioneered by John Bowlby and further refined by Mary Ainsworth, provides a valuable lens through which to understand the dynamics of parent-child relationships during this phase. Ainsworth's concept of "secure base" elucidates how caregivers serve as a

source of comfort and security, enabling children to explore their environment with confidence, knowing they can return to the safety of their attachment figure when needed (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1978). Moreover, contemporary research in developmental psychology has underscored the role of socioemotional regulation in shaping the rapprochement phase. According to the work of researchers such as Karen Cassidy and Jude Cassidy, toddlers' ability to manage their emotions and navigate the complexities of attachment relationships during this phase lays the foundation for later social and emotional competence (Cassidy and Shaver, 2016). The development of secure attachment bonds during the rapprochement phase is associated with positive outcomes such as increased empathy, emotion regulation, and resilience in the face of adversity (Cassidy and Berlin, 1994).

#### ***1.2.3.4. Emotional Object Constancy and Individuality***

This is the last stage of individuation. This stage starts around the age of 3 and continues as a never-ending process. The term object constancy, which is one of the tasks of this stage, was first used by (Hartmann, 1952) and means that the child's need to distinguish libidinal and aggressive impulses as good and bad decreases and this splitting is neutralized. Mahler used the term object constancy in this period from Hartmann's perspective. This stage starts gradually from the 25th month. As in the practicing stage, the child develops the ability to be separated from the mother again. The child can show the ability to be alone without the physical presence of the mother. The mental representations of the mother are intrapsychically embedded in the child (Mahler and La Perriere, 1965). The ability to preserve the mother as an internal object allows the child to remain separated from the mother for longer periods of time. In particular, the predominance of positive experiences in the relationship with the mother allows the child to preserve the mother as a good internal representation. The elimination of the experiences that the child split in previous periods with both caregiver interaction and cognitive development helps the acquisition of object constancy.

#### ***1.3. Shame/Guilt and Separation-Individuation***

Understanding the relationship between shame, guilt, and the early mother-infant relationship has important implications for child development and psychopathology. Infants who experience disruptions or disturbances in the mother-infant relationship,

such as maternal neglect or abuse, may be at increased risk for developing maladaptive patterns of shame and guilt (Fonagy, Gergely and Target, 2007) which can contribute to later psychosocial difficulties, including depression, anxiety, and personality disorders. The emotion of shame, believed to emerge as early as the first 14-16 months of life (Schoore, 1991), is described as a hindering influence on positive experiences (Tompkins, 1963). Tompkins characterized this inhibitory process by explaining that feelings of shame suppress the positive emotions of interest-excitement and enjoyment-joy, thus impeding the child's exploration and self-expression. Shame not only hinders the ability to enjoy experiences but is also linked to disturbances in caregiver-infant interactions (Kaufman, 1989), leading to an increased vulnerability to feelings of shame later (Lewis, 1992). Research findings examining the correlation between shame and early relationships reinforce the concepts outlined earlier. Claesson and Sohlberg (2002) demonstrated that recollections of a mother who blamed, ignored, or abandoned are linked to feelings of shame. Stuewig and McCloskey (2005) revealed that severe parenting practices are associated with a tendency towards shame, with parental rejection during adolescence playing a mediating role. Similarly, Hodgkins (2001) investigated the association between parental acceptance/rejection, hope, and shame, discovering consistent outcomes that perceived paternal rejection is correlated with levels of shame among men, but not among women.

When examining the separation-individuation process in detail to explore the links between the mother-infant relationship and feelings of shame and guilt, particular attention is drawn to the association of shame with the practicing and rapprochement phases. There is consistent evidence indicating that shame emerges in the early stages of toddlerhood, specifically during Mahler's practicing subphase of the separation-individuation stage, which occurs from approximately 10-12 to 16-18 months of age. A proposed model of shame suggests that when the infant is overly stimulated and feeling grandiose and narcissistic, these feelings are exhibited upon reuniting with the caregiver (Schoore, 1991).

The accelerated development of motor skills during the practicing period allows the child to act more independently from the mother than in previous periods. With these newly developed skills, the child is at the peak of omnipotence and wants to share this experience with the mother during reunion moments (Mahler and McDevitti, 1980). In the experience of shame, characterized by heightened arousal and a narcissistically

charged state, the individual presents their self to another with the anticipation of a shared affective state. This anticipation is based on a memory of previous interactions with a caregiver, which were rewarding and reinforced the individual's grandiose self-concept. However, in moments of shame, there is an unexpected mismatch between the anticipated affective state and the actual response received (Schoré, 1991).

The initial steps of separation from the mother, as the neo toddler begins to explore the world independently, mark the onset of the separation-individuation period. These exploratory endeavors represent critical attempts by the toddler to establish autonomy and define their identity apart from the mother (Rheingold and Eckerman, 1969).

Upon returning from these brief separations, the practicing toddler, in a state of "excited expectation," anticipates a reunion characterized by shared elation and emotional attunement with the mother. However, instead of the anticipated satisfaction, the toddler encounters a sudden stress and deflation. The expected maternal smile of recognition and the fulfillment of the toddler's need for mirroring and validation are not forthcoming, leading to a sense of shock-induced deflation (Kohut, 1977).

In a study exploring the evolution of narcissistic constructs and their emotional manifestations, Parkin (1985) discusses the emergence of the "ideal ego," characterized by feelings of omnipotence, grandiosity, and elation. This construct serves as a precursor to the superego ego ideal component and embodies the "narcissistic perfection of childhood". The sense of omnipotence associated with the ideal ego typically stems from the experience of merging with the attuned, powerful mother figure. During the practicing phase, the child reaches the pinnacle of primary narcissism and the overestimation of their abilities. According to Parkin, the ideal ego is fully realized during this period. It is noted that this stage marks the onset of shame, self-consciousness, and embarrassment, as the toddler begins to perceive themselves as an object subject to observation and evaluation by others (Schoré, 1991). Schoré suggests that despite the initial anticipation of sharing an emotional connection, infants may unexpectedly encounter a mis-attunement in affect, leading to a sudden deflation induced by stress. This phenomenon, he proposes, emerges during the preverbal practicing subphase of the separation-individuation period. According to Schoré, this specific relational encounter and its internalization serve as the fundamental experience underlying shame.

The period Mahler calls the rapprochement stage, which coincides with the

developmental phases between 18 months and 3 years of age, is also important for the formation of the feeling of shame. In the rapprochement stage of Mahler's separation-individuation theory, the infant begins to assert their newfound autonomy while simultaneously experiencing a growing awareness of their dependence on their primary caregiver. This stage marks a crucial juncture in the development of the self, characterized by the infant's oscillation between seeking closeness with the caregiver and asserting independence (Mahler, Pine and Bergman, 2018).

During this stage, the emergence of the feeling of shame becomes particularly salient as the infant grapples with the tension between autonomy and dependency. As they strive to explore the world around them and assert their individuality, they may encounter limitations or failures that evoke feelings of inadequacy or self-doubt (Johnson, 1987). For example, if the infant attempts a task and fails, they may experience shame as they perceive their inability to meet expectations or achieve desired outcomes. Furthermore, the rapprochement stage is characterized by the infant's increasing awareness of the caregiver's responses to their behaviors. This heightened sensitivity to the caregiver's reactions can magnify feelings of shame, as the infant internalizes perceived disapproval or disappointment from the caregiver (Kohut, 1971). In this stage, the relationship between the emergence of shame and the dynamics of separation-individuation becomes evident. The infant's striving for autonomy and exploration of the world necessitates a delicate balance between assertiveness and vulnerability, which can predispose them to experiences of shame when faced with challenges or setbacks in their pursuit of independence.

As development progresses, the recollection and anticipation of repeated instances of separation and reunion form the foundational framework for increasingly diverse and nuanced emotional reactions. These reactions may range from fundamentally distressing to fundamentally rewarding (Pao, 1971). Therefore, the quality and coherence of the child's interaction with the mother during these developmental periods is important.

Explanations about the process of separation-individuation and the formation of guilt are not as frequent as with shame. However, when we look at the explanations pointing to the relationship between the feeling of guilt and the processes of separation-individuation, it is seen that the rapprochement stage is closely linked to the development of the feeling of guilt. Research suggests that the rapprochement stage is a critical juncture in the development of guilt. According to attachment theory, the

quality of the caregiver-infant relationship during this stage influences the formation of internalized working models of attachment, which in turn shape the individual's capacity for guilt and moral development (Thompson, 2008).

Modell (1971) introduced the concept of separation guilt in relation to the relationship between separation-individuation and guilt as one of the proposed relationships hypothesized in the current study. In this process where the separation and growth of the individual from the mother is equated with leaving the mother behind, harming or even destroying her. Gaining autonomy, having an independent existence and living one's own life causes this kind of guilt.

The stages of separation-individuation and the dynamics of the caregiver-infant relationship during these stages involve the infant's progression through separation from the mother, exploration, vitality, autonomy, and return to the mother. As outlined earlier, these processes are intricately linked to the development of shame and guilt. Consequently, understanding the connection between these processes and psychopathology holds significant importance.

#### ***1.4. Personality Organization***

In the psychoanalytic school, 'levels of personality organization' is a concept that has been used frequently from the late twentieth century until today to understand personality processes in both literary and clinical conditions. This concept was developed by Kernberg (1976) who argued that categorical (DSM, ICD) or dimensional (Five Factor Model) definitions of personality were inadequate in some areas. Kernberg (1996), who thinks that personality patterns that appear on the surface in categorical classifications have many comorbidities in terms of personality disorders, and that the factors developed in purely dimensional classifications are insufficient in terms of defining personality disorders, has gathered these two classification systems under one roof. He called this structure, which includes both dimensional and categorical classifications of personality, the psychoanalytic integrated model. According to this model, personality was examined in terms of some dimensional classifications in terms of levels of organization and categorical classifications within these dimensions in terms of personality disorders.

Kernberg (1994) put affective disposition in the first place developmentally in determining personality and personality organizations. Accordingly, he thinks that affective disposition, which is determined by the baby's genetic temperament, that is,

this predisposition, which determines the intensity, rhythm and threshold of certain environmental stimuli, has the most important effect on personality and related levels of organization. These affective dispositions combine the pleasurable ones with libidinal impulses and the frustrating ones with aggressive impulses within the scope of their relations with environmental stimuli (Kernberg, 1994). In this sense, Kernberg put affect in front of the concept of drive satisfaction, which Freud presented as the primary motivation. In addition, he places the character component, which he sees as the behavioral expression of ego identity, at an important point in the process of personality formation (Kernberg, 1996). Kernberg explains the infant's psyche and the emergence of psychopathology in 5 developmental stages based on Mahler's separation/individuation theory (Kernberg, 1976). These stages are: the first stage in which the infant is not aware of the distinction between self and object and tries to make sense of affective experiences, the symbiosis period in which the self is not yet fully differentiated, the third stage in which self and object differentiation is achieved but self and object representations are split, the fourth stage in which splitting begins to disappear and psychological structures are clearly formed, and the fifth stage in which the superego integrates with the personality and ego power increases (Summers, 2014). Frustration and adversity in these stages are important in terms of the severity of personality disorders and the level of personality organization. The first and second stages define autistic psychosis and psychotic personality organization, the third stage defines low level borderline personality organization, the fourth stage defines higher level borderline personality organization and finally the fifth stage defines neurotic personality organization (Summers, 2014).

Explaining the relationship between the development of psychological structures and personality organization theoretically, Kernberg examines the distinction between personality organizations in terms of reality testing, identity integration and defense mechanisms used. Reality testing is a concept that refers to the self and object boundaries of the individual and also refers to the capacity to distinguish between intrapsychic and external stimuli (Kernberg, 1996). The concept of identity diffusion, on the other hand, refers to a disintegrated and partial perception of identity in which the individual's representations of self and others are experienced as splitted, far from coherence. Since these fragmented self and object experiences are far from integration, they create inconsistency and imbalance in both interpersonal and self experiences (Kernberg and Caligor, 2005).

The defense mechanisms used predominantly by the individual are another criterion used to determine the personality organization of that individual. Kernberg classifies defense mechanisms into two main groups: splitting-based (primitive) and suppression-based (mature) defenses. Accordingly, primitive defense mechanisms are basically based on splitting and are derivatives of splitting. These defense mechanisms are projective identification, denial, primitive idealization, omnipotence, omnipotent control and devaluation (Kernberg, 1996). These mechanisms help to separate the idealized and persecutory qualities of the individual's early object and self representations. As a result, the ego, which is still in a weak state, functions to relieve aggression against a good object on which one is dependent for care. More mature defense mechanisms operate as derivatives of repression, not splitting. The use of these mechanisms does not distort internal and external reality too much. It is through repression that the person resolves situations that cause anxiety about his/her psychic processes.

#### ***1.4.1. Psychotic Personality Organization***

Individuals in this level of organization primarily experience problems in terms of reality testing. These people who have difficulties with this period, which corresponds to the developmentally symbiotic stage where the boundaries of the internal and external world are intermingled, use intense primitive defenses that progress with the weakness of ego power. The intensive use of these primitive defenses causes identity diffusion by creating confusion in terms of self and object representations (Kernberg, 1996).

#### ***1.4.2. Borderline Personality Organization***

Borderline organization, which lies between psychotic and neurotic organizations, is characterized by identity diffusion and frequent use of primitive defense mechanisms (Kernberg, 1996). These individuals have neither the distortion of reality perception experienced by individuals in psychotic organization nor an integrated experience of self and object as seen in neurotic organization. Although the perception of reality is not completely distorted, it is preserved to a certain extent. These individuals reflect the problems in Mahler's separation-individuation stage (Kernberg, 1976). The symbiotic period seen in psychotic individuals has been overcome, but separation from or integration with the object causes high anxiety in these individuals. Along with

identity diffusion, which manifests itself due to the intensive use of primitive defense mechanisms, these individuals also have some degree of superego disorders. Due to identity diffusion, there is an intense sense of chronic emptiness, inconsistency and chaotic quality in close relationships. Although the person does not experience the self and objects consistently, these people do not have the dilemmas and anxieties about being or not being as in psychotics. In addition, when these individuals experience intense stress in their lives or are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they may experience the kind of disruptions in reality testing that psychotics experience (Wallerstein, 1967). Finally, these individuals suffer from a certain ego weakness. This weakness manifests itself as low anxiety tolerance, lack of impulse control, and lack of creative work due to lack of sublimation (Kernberg, 1996).

#### ***1.4.3. Neurotic Personality Organization***

At the healthiest end of the dimensionally classified personality organization level is the neurotic personality organization. These people have full ability to evaluate reality, they do not experience identity diffusion because they use suppression-based defense mechanisms more intensively. High ego strengths manifest themselves in the form of high anxiety tolerance, impulse control, and creative processes through the use of sublimating functions (Kernberg, 1996). Interpersonal relationships are more consistent and deeper. Representations of self and object are free from splitting and have been integrated. These people have problems with the shifting conflicts between the id and the superego rather than with disruptions in the separation-individuation processes. The person experiences problems related to the tension between id-based desires and the demands of an integrated and unpersonified superego (Kernberg, 1996). Due to their ability to reflect on themselves, their symptomatic experiences are extrinsic to the ego (ego-dystonic) (McWilliams, 2014).

#### ***1.5. Personality Organization and Psychopathology***

Personality organization and its relationship with psychopathology have been extensively studied, shedding light on the intricate interplay between these constructs (Kernberg, 1976; Lenzenweger et al., 2001).

According to psychodynamic theory, personality organization can be conceptualized along a continuum ranging from adaptive to maladaptive functioning (Clarkin et al., 2002). Individuals with well-integrated personality organizations typically exhibit

flexibility, resilience, and effective coping mechanisms, whereas those with impaired personality organizations may experience difficulties in managing emotions, forming stable relationships, and adapting to stressors.

Empirical evidence supports a robust association between personality organization and psychopathology (Coryell and Zimmerman, 1989; Clarkin et al., 2002). Individuals with maladaptive personality organizations are at heightened risk for developing various forms of psychopathology, including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, and substance use disorders (Zanarini et al., 1999; Skodol et al., 2005). For example, longitudinal studies have shown that individuals with borderline personality organization are more likely to develop borderline personality disorder and other comorbid psychiatric conditions ( Gunderson et al., 2011). Research shows that lower levels of personality organization are associated with a range of psychiatric symptoms, including those associated with borderline personality disorder, suggesting higher severity of personality pathology, higher levels of neuroticism, and a reduction in psychosocial functioning (Berghuis et al., 2009; Preti et al., 2015; Esguevillas et al., 2017).

Several mechanisms have been proposed to elucidate the relationship between personality organization and psychopathology. Emotion dysregulation is considered a core mechanism underlying the association between maladaptive personality organization and psychopathological symptoms (Linehan, 1993). Individuals with impaired personality organizations often exhibit deficits in emotion regulation, leading to heightened vulnerability to psychopathological distress (Bredemeier and Berenbaum, 2008). The relationship of shame, which is one of the main variables of this study, with the level of personality organization raises questions about the regulation of this emotion (Kernberg, 1985).

### ***1.5.1. Personality Organization and Separation Individuation***

The relationship between personality organization and separation-individuation is a crucial area of study within developmental psychology and psychoanalysis. Research has shown that successful separation-individuation is critical for healthy personality organization. During early childhood, particularly from infancy to toddlerhood, a child begins to develop a sense of self that is separate from the mother or primary caregiver. This process involves several subphases, including differentiation, practicing, rapprochement, and consolidation (Mahler, Pine and Bergman, 1975).

Each phase is marked by specific developmental tasks and challenges that influence the child's emerging personality structure.

The similarity between these two concepts can be seen in the formulations of various researchers on this subject. For example, the diffusion between self and object in Kernberg's definitions of psychotic personality organization (Kernberg, 1974) resembles the symbiotic processes of mother and infant, which Mahler defines as autistic and symbiotic phases (Mahler, 1971).

In addition, the conflict between autonomy and maternal dependency in the rapprochement period is examined in parallel with the phenomenon of approach and distance in borderline organization (Mahler, 1971). Empirical studies support this connection. Fonagy, Gergely and Jurist, (2018) demonstrated that individuals with BPD often have a history of disrupted attachment and separation-individuation, leading to difficulties in emotional regulation and self-perception.

The concept of identity diffusion, which is one of the important variables in Kernberg's personality organization formulations, is closely related to the process of separation individuation since it shows the ability to differentiate between self and object. Therefore, according to Summers (2014), the fact that Kernberg was greatly influenced by Mahler's theory of separation individuation in the formation process of his own theory shows the relationship between these two concepts.

### ***1.6. Aim of the Present Study***

Emotions of shame and guilt are concepts that have been the subject of many studies both in many subfields of psychology and in different disciplines. The relationship between these emotions and psychopathology has been extensively studied in the literature. The relationship between non-adaptive experiences of these emotions and psychopathology raises questions about which other theoretical explanations can explain this relationship.

Separation-individuation theory examines the psychological birth of human infants in various stages (Mahler, 1975). The difficulties experienced in this process have been found to be closely related to the formation of psychopathology in adulthood (Christenson and Wilson, 1985). The 36-month period in which the infant first separates from the caregiver and then individuates coincides with the period when shame and guilt, two of the self-conscious emotions, begin to develop. While there are different opinions about the emergence period of guilt, it is thought that this emotion

begins to intensify with the oedipal period from the 36th month onwards (Pine, 1979). Based on this information, the effect of early parental separation on feelings of shame and guilt will be examined. Although the relationship between the emergence of shame and guilt emotions and the separation-individuation process has been explained in some sources (Schoore, 1991), there are no extensive research and studies on this subject. In addition, although the relationship between the separation-individuation process and borderline pathology has been mentioned by various theorists (Kernberg, 1996; Mahler, 1971; Christenson and Wilson, 1985), the relationship between the concept of personality organization has not been discussed much.

In addition, the relationship between personality organization and variables such as guilt, shame and other affect is available in the literature (Kernberg, 1996; Jakšić et al., 2022), but no study has examined the relationship between shame and guilt together with personality organization.

In conclusion, this study was conducted to understand the position of shame and guilt in the process of separation and individuation, and to explain the predictive role of these emotions with separation pathology and personality organization. After these analyses, the mediating role of these two emotions together in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization will be examined by making use of the similar characteristics of the negative self-conscious emotions of shame and guilt. Finally, considering the characteristics in which these emotions differ, this time the mediating roles of these emotions on this relationship will be examined separately. Together with these analyses, some of the determining roles of psychological separation on the experience of shame and guilt will be underlined. At the same time, it will be determined to what extent these emotions point to disturbances in the levels of personality organization and which one is more influential in these processes.

### ***1.6. Hypotheses***

- 1- Participants with a history of psychological admission are expected to have significantly higher scores on the shame/guilt, separation-individuation and personality organization scales scores than those without a history of psychological admission.
- 2- Participants who were separated from their parents in the first 5 years of their lives are expected to have significantly higher total scores on the shame/guilt, separation-individuation and personality organization scale than participants

who did not experience parental separation.

- 3- Participants' scores on the personality organization inventory are expected to differ significantly according to their three shame/guilt levels (low-medium-high).
- 4- Participants' scores on the separation-individuation inventory are expected to differ significantly according to their three shame/guilt levels (low-medium-high).
- 5- Positive and significant correlation is expected between shame/guilt, personality organization and separation-individuation scores.
- 6- Shame scores on Trait Shame and Guilt Scale are expected to positively predict maladaptive personality organization.
- 7- Guilt scores on Trait Shame and Guilt Scale are expected to positively predict maladaptive personality organization.
- 8- It was hypothesized that separation individuation scores would positively predict maladaptive personality organization.
- 9- Separation individuation scores will be positively predicted by shame and guilt scores.
- 10- The mediating effect of shame/guilt total score is expected in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization.
- 11- The mediating effect of shame is expected in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization, while the mediating effect of guilt is not expected.

## CHAPTER 2: METHOD

In this section, the characteristics of the sample, the data collection instruments used in the study, the research process and the statistical methods used will be explained.

### *2.1. Participants*

A total of 337 people participated in this study. Data were collected from participants between the ages of 18-65. Seven participants were excluded from the data due to the extreme reality testing score of the personality organization subscale. Other demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Demographics of the Participants

Variables	Levels	N	%
Gender	Female	295	89.4
	Male	35	10.6
Age	18-25	44	13.3
	26-30	74	22.4
	31-40	131	39.7
	41-50	66	20
	51-60	12	3.6
	60-65	3	0.9
Working Status	Employed	235	71.2
	Unemployed	31	9.4
	Retired	9	2.7
	Student	55	16.7
Psychological/Psychiatric Admission	Yes	241	73
	No	89	27
Kind of Treatment	Medication	35	10.6
	Psychotherapy	100	30.3
	Both	106	32.1
Current Treatment Status	Medication	31	9.4
	Psychotherapy	82	24.8
	Both	19	5.8
	Neither	109	33

Table 1. (continued) The Demographics of the Participants

Parental Separation	Mother	13	3.9
	Father	34	10.3
	Both	20	6.1
	Neither	263	79.7

## **2.2. Materials**

The data collection instruments used in this study are Demographic Information Form (see Appendix D), Trait Shame and Guilt Scale (see Appendix E), Personality Organization Inventory (see Appendix G), Separation-Individuation Inventory (see Appendix F).

### **2.2.1. Demographic Information Form**

This form was developed by the researcher to obtain some basic information from the participants. In addition to age, biological sex, employment status, mental health admission and treatment history, familial questions such as early parental separation experience, which may be important for the research, were also added.

### **2.2.2. Trait Shame and Guilt Scale**

Trait Shame and Guilt Scale was developed by Rohleder et. al. (2008) to measure participants' feelings of shame, guilt and pride. The scale consists of 15 items and three subscales measuring the feelings of shame, guilt, and pride and is five-item Likert type. Five items were used for each subscale. The scale items are organized as 1: 'I did not feel this way' and 5: 'I felt this very strongly'. Higher scores on the scale indicate higher feelings of shame, guilt and pride. Cronbach Alpha values for shame, guilt and pride subscales were found to be .83, .81 and .87, respectively.

The Turkish translation and adaptation of the scale was conducted by Demir and Bugay (2011) on a sample of university students. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .83, .81 and .87 for shame, guilt and pride subscales respectively. Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14 measure shame, items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15 measure guilt, and items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13 measure pride factors. The pride subscale was not used in this study.

For the sample of this current study, Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency)

coefficients were .92 for the total scale, 0.87 for the shame subscale, and 0.86 for the guilt subscale.

### ***2.2.3. Personality Organization Inventory***

The Personality Organization Inventory was developed by Kernberg and Clarkin (2012) to measure the level of personality organization of the individual. The scale, which is answered through self-report, consists of a total of 31 items and is five-item Likert type. The scale has 3 subscales; Primitive defenses, Identity diffusion and Reality Testing. Items 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 19, 22, 30 measure the Primitive Defenses sub-dimension, items 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 14, 16, 24, 26, 28 measure the Identity Diffusion sub-dimension and items 1, 2, 10, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 measure the Reality Testing sub-dimension. There are no reverse scored items in the scale. High scores in each subscale indicate the frequency of using primitive defenses, high identity diffusion and impaired perception of reality. In addition, the personality organization of the participants progresses from neurotic to psychotic as the scores on the total scale increase.

The scale was translated and adapted into Turkish by Yıldırım and Yüksel (2021). The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale were .77 for the primitive defenses subscale, .82 for the identity diffusion subscale and .85 for the reality test subscale. The total score of the scale was found to be .91. According to the data obtained from this study, the mean for the items in the primitive defenses subscale was 17.72, the mean for the items in the identity diffusion subscale was 23.63, and the mean for the items in the reality testing subscale was 19.08.

For the sample of this study, Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency) coefficients were .92 for the total scale, 0.81 for the primitive defenses subscale, 0.86 for the identity diffusion subscale and .80 for the reality testing subscale.

### ***2.2.4. Separation-Individuation Inventory***

The Separation-Individuation Inventory (SII) is a tool designed to assess difficulties arising from the separation-individuation process, as outlined in Mahler's theory. Christenson and Wilson (1985) developed this scale, comprising 39 items to be rated on a 10-point Likert scale (ranging from 1, indicating not characteristic, to 10, indicating very characteristic). Questions 7, 15, and 18 serve as reverse items on the scale. The total score is derived by summing all item scores, with a possible range of

total scores falling between 39 and 390. The scale consists of 3 sub-dimensions: the splitting sub-dimension, which measures the extent to which individuals separate good and bad representations of themselves and others, the differentiation sub-dimension, which measures the individual's psychological difference and intertwining experiences with others, and the relationship problems sub-dimension, which measures the relational problems experienced by the individual in close relationships.

The scale was translated and adapted into Turkish by Göral (2018). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the overall scale was .85, while the coefficients for the subscales were .82 for the splitting subscale, .77 for the differentiation subscale and .79 for the relationship problem subscale.

For the sample of this study, Cronbach's alpha (internal consistency) coefficients were .91 for the total scale, 0.82 for the splitting subscale, 0.82 for the differentiation subscale and .71 for the relationship problems subscale.

### ***2.3. Procedure***

The measures utilized in this study underwent approval from the Ethical Committee of Izmir University of Economics. Upon obtaining ethical clearance from the institutional committee at Izmir University of Economics, data collection commenced. Online questionnaires were created using a survey website (forms.google.com) and disseminated through various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Participants were required to provide informed consent, which outlined the study's purpose and procedures, as well as emphasized voluntary participation (refer to Appendix C for the Informed Consent). Those who consented to participate proceeded to answer demographic questions regarding gender, age, employment status, history of psychiatric admission, parental separation. Subsequently, participants were asked to complete several scales, including the Shame/Guilt Trait Scale, Personality Organization Inventory and Separation-Individuation Inventory. All scales were presented in the Turkish language.

## CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

In this section, the results of the study will be explained. Initially, the results pertaining to the normality, linear regression assumptions and descriptive features of the variables will be showcased. Secondly, in the main analysis part, the results of t-test, One-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation and regression analysis will be located.

### *3.1. Preliminary Analysis*

#### *3.1.1. Normality Testing*

Prior to delving into the analysis, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were assessed to determine if the distribution of the scale scores adhered to the assumption of normality. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), skewness and kurtosis coefficients falling within the range of -1.5 to +1.5 indicate normality. According to these values, normal distribution assumptions are met (See Table 2). Consequently, parametric tests were employed.

Table 2. Skewness and Kurtosis Values of the Variables

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
Shame/Guilt	.41	-.72
Personality Organization	.80	.46
Primitive Defenses	.81	.29
Identity Diffusion	.53	-.11
Reality Testing	1.33	1.47
Separation-Individuation	.35	-.27
Splitting	.58	.00
Differentiation	.47	-.10
Relationship Problems	.25	-.26

#### *3.1.2. Linear Regression Assumptions*

Normal probability plots of the variables were analyzed to check the assumption of linearity. Although there are some deviations in the data, it is seen that it generally follows a straight line.

To check the assumption of multicollinearity, variance increase factor (VIF) and

condition index (CI) values of independent variables were checked. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) when the variance increase factor (VIF) exceeds 10 and the condition index (CI) surpasses 30, multicollinearity becomes evident. According to the values calculated in this study, there is no multicollinearity problem (See Table 3).

Table 3. Results of the Multicollinearity Analysis

	VIF	CI
Model 1	1	5.98
Model 2	1.33	7.44

In addition, based on the Durbin-Watson coefficient calculated to examine the independence of the errors, the Durbin-Watson coefficient was found to be 2.04, which is acceptable since this value is between 1.5 and 2.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

### 3.1.3. Descriptive Statistics

In the current study, descriptive analyses of the variables were conducted. The mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores of the scales and subscales are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Guilt/Shame	26.8	10.44	10	50
Guilt	13.95	5.38	5	25
Shame	12.91	5.65	5	25
Separation/Individuation	148.50	51.09	44	322
Splitting	47.22	18.38	16	108
Differentiation	50.29	20.68	14	115
Relationship Problems	50.98	16.69	13	108
Personality Organization	59.29	17.28	31	123
Primitive Defenses	17.82	6.44	9	40
Identity Diffusion	24.36	7.95	10	49
Reality Testing	17.10	5.04	12	35

### 3.2. Comparison of Guilt/Shame and Separation–Individuation and Personality Organization by Demographic Variables

In this section, the effects of the demographic information obtained from the participants on the scale scores are reported.

#### 3.2.1. Parental Separation

Independent *t*-test was conducted to examine differences between participants with and without parental separation for guilt/shame, separation – individuation and personality organization (Table 5). According to the results, there was no significant difference in guilt/shame scores between participants with parental separation ( $M = 26.34$ ,  $SD = 8.77$ ) and without parental separation ( $M = 27$ ,  $SD = 10.83$ );  $t(122.67) = .52$ ,  $p > .05$ . There was not a significant difference in personality organization scores between participants with parental separation ( $M = 59.98$ ,  $SD = 17.24$ ) and without parental separation ( $M = 59.11$ ,  $SD = 17.32$ );  $t(328) = .36$ ,  $p > .05$ . There was not a significant difference in separation-individuation scores between participants with parental separation ( $M = 147.95$ ,  $SD = 47.19$ ) and without parental separation ( $M = 148.64$ ,  $SD = 52.12$ );  $t(328) = .09$ ,  $p > .05$ .

Table 5. Independent Samples T-Tests Results for Parental Separation

Variables	With Parental Separation		Without Parental Separation		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Shame/Guilt	26.34	8.77	27	10.83	.52	122.67	.60
Shame	12.58	4.82	13	5.84	.60	120.51	.54
Guilt	13.76	4.82	14	5.52	.36	114.26	.71
Personality Organization	59.98	17.24	59.11	17.32	.36	328	.71
Primitive Defenses	18.59	6.56	17.63	6.40	1.09	328	.27
Identity Diffusion	24.53	8.01	24.31	7.95	.20	328	.83
Reality Testing	16.85	4.88	17.17	5.09	.47	328	.64
Separation-Individuation	147.95	47.19	148.64	52.12	.09	328	.92

Table 5. (continued) Independent Samples T-Tests Results for Parental Separation

Splitting	47.35	17.06	47.18	18.74	.06	328	.94
Differentiation	50.59	19.35	50.21	21.04	.13	328	.89
Relationship Problems	50	15.93	51.23	16.90	.54	328	.58

### 3.2.2. Psychological/Psychiatric Admission

Independent *t*-test was conducted to examine differences between participants with and without psychological/psychiatric admission for guilt/shame, separation–individuation and personality organization (Table 6).

When two groups were compared regarding guilt/shame scores, the outcome showed that participants with a history of psychological/psychiatric admission scored higher than those without. This difference was significant  $t(328) = 2.20, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.28$ . There was a significant difference between two groups regarding shame subscale scores  $t(328) = 2.17, p < .05$ ; it also did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.28$ . There was also a significant difference between two groups regarding guilt subscale scores  $t(328) = 2, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.25$ .

Examining the comparison of personality organization scores in terms of psychological/psychiatric admission showed that participants with a history of psychological/psychiatric admission scored higher than those without. This difference was significant  $t(328) = 2.04, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.25$ . There was a significant difference between two groups in terms of primitive defenses subscale scores  $t(328) = 2.18, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.27$ . There was a significant difference between two groups in terms of identity diffusion subscale scores  $t(328) = 2.95, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.37$ . There was not a significant difference between two groups in terms of reality testing subscale scores  $t(137.55) = .37, p > 0.5$ .

When two groups were compared regarding separation-individuation scores, the outcome showed that participants with a history of psychological/psychiatric admission scored higher than those without. However, this difference was not significant  $t(328) = 1.56, p > .05$ . Also, no significant difference was found in the splitting subscale according to the psychological/psychiatric admission of the participants  $t(328) = 1.41, p > .05$ . There was a significant difference between two

groups in terms of differentiation subscale scores  $t(328) = 2.49, p < .05$ ; it did represent a small-sized effect,  $d = 0.31$ . There was not a significant difference between two groups in terms of relationship problems subscale scores  $t(328) = .14, p > .05$ .

Table 6. Independent Samples T-Tests Results for Psychological/Psychiatric Admission

Variables	With Psychological Admission		Without Psychological Admission		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Guilt/Shame	27.63	10.68	24.79	9.51	2.20	328	.02
Shame	13.32	5.78	11.80	5.13	2.17	328	.03
Guilt	14.31	5.48	12.98	4.99	1.99	328	.04
Personality Organization	60.46	17.13	56.11	17.37	2.04	328	.04
Primitive Defenses	18.29	6.44	16.56	6.29	2.18	328	.03
Identity Diffusion	25.13	8.01	22.25	7.42	2.95	328	.00
Reality Testing	17.03	4.80	17.29	5.65	.37	328	.70
Separation Individuation	151.16	51.27	141.29	50.18	1.56	328	.11
Splitting	48.09	18.41	44.86	18.19	1.41	328	.15
Differentiation	52	21.03	45.66	19.04	2.49	328	.01
Relationship Problems	51.07	16.21	50.76	18.01	.14	328	.88

### 3.3. Comparison of Variables According to Shame/Guilt Levels

In this section, the participants' scores from personality organization and its subscales, separation individuation and its subscales were compared according to their shame/guilt levels. Shame and guilt levels were obtained by grouping the total score of the participants from the Trait Shame and Guilt scale into three equal groups according to percentiles.

### 3.3.1. Comparison of Personality Organization Scores According to Shame/Guilt Levels

A one-way independent ANOVA was conducted in order to see the difference of personality organization and its subscales; primitive defenses, identity diffusion, reality testing according to participants level of shame/guilt. See the Table 7 for the means and standard deviations for each of the three groups. Levene's test was conducted in order to investigate the equality of variance in different groups. Result of the Levene's test showed that the variances were not equal for three levels of shame/guilt groups personality organization scores  $F(2, 327) = 6.78, p < .05$ , primitive defenses  $F(2, 327) = 14.54, p < .05$ , identity diffusion  $F(2, 327) = 5.89, p < .05$  and reality testing  $F(2, 327) = 9.84, p < .05$ . Since the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met for these data, the *Welch's F* test was used. There was significant difference of three groups' personality organization *Welch's F*  $F(2, 210.61) = 66.13, p < .05, \eta^2 = .30$ , primitive defenses *Welch's F*  $F(2, 210.61) = 57.91, p < .05, \eta^2 = .28$ , identity diffusion *Welch's F*  $F(2, 212.62) = 71.02, p < .05, \eta^2 = .31$  and reality testing *Welch's F*  $F(2, 209.39) = 18.77, p < .05, \eta^2 = .10$  (See table 8). Since the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met, Games-Howell test was used to examine differences between groups (See Table 9).

Table 7. Descriptive of Variables According to Shame/Guilt Levels

Variables	Shame/Guilt Levels					
	Low (1)		Medium (2)		High (3)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Personality Organization	48.61	11.76	58.09	13.54	71.80	17.64
Primitive Defenses	14.04	4.48	17.29	4.94	22.37	6.77
Identity Diffusion	19.23	5.62	24.07	6.37	30.07	7.75
Reality Testing	15.34	3.75	16.72	4.72	19.35	5.70

Table 8. ANOVA Results of Personality Organization, Primitive Defenses, Identity Diffusion and Reality Testing According to Shame/Guilt Levels

Means	<i>Welch's F</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	$\eta^2$
Personality Organization	66.13	2	210.61	.00	.30
Primitive Defenses	57.91	2	210.61	.00	.28
Identity Diffusion	71.02	2	212.62	.00	.31
Reality Testing	18.77	2	209.39	.00	.10

Table 9. Games-Howell Test Result for Personality Organization and Subscales

<i>DV</i>	<i>Test</i>	<i>Shame/Guilt Level</i>	<i>Shame/Guilt Level</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Personality Organization	Games-Howell	1	2	-9.47	1.70	.00
		2	3	-13.71	2.13	.00
		3	1	23.18	2.03	.00
Primitive Defenses	Games-Howell	1	2	-3.24	.63	.00
		2	3	-5.08	.80	.00
		3	1	8.32	.77	.00
Identity Diffusion	Games-Howell	1	2	-4.84	.80	.00
		2	3	-6	.96	.00
		3	1	10.84	.91	.00
Reality Testing	Games-Howell	1	2	-1.38	.57	.04
		2	3	-2.62	.71	.00
		3	1	4.01	.65	.00

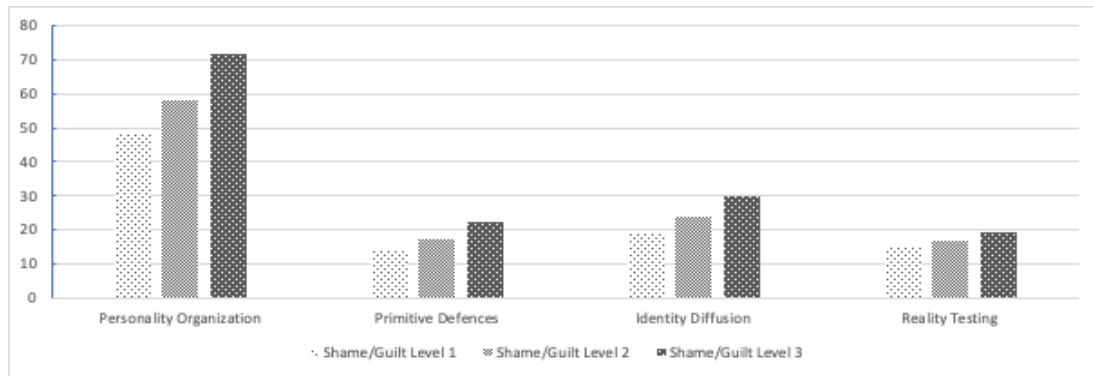


Figure 1. Personality Organization, Primitive Defences, Identity Diffusion, Reality Testing Means Across Shame/Guilt Levels

According to the results, as the shame/guilt levels of the participants increase, the scores obtained from personality organization and its subscales increase significantly.

### 3.3.2. Comparison of Separation-Individuation Scores According to Shame/Guilt Levels

A one-way independent ANOVA was conducted in order to see the difference of separation-individuation and its subscales; splitting, differentiation, relationship problems according to participants level of shame/guilt. See the Table 10 for the means and standard deviations for each of the three groups. Levene's test was conducted in order to investigate the equality of variance in different groups. Result of Levene's test indicated that the variances were equal for three groups' separation-individuation total scores  $F(2, 327) = 1.18, p > .05$ , splitting  $F(2, 327) = 3.01, p > .05$  and relationship problems  $F(2, 327) = .99, p > .05$ . However, variances were not equal for three groups' differentiation scores  $F(2, 327) = 4.76, p < .05$ . Since the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met for separation-individuation, splitting and relationship problems' scores, the  $F$  test was used. Result of the  $F$  test showed that there is significant difference for three groups' separation-individuation  $F(2, 327) = 59.76, p < .05, \eta^2 = .26$ , splitting  $F(2, 327) = 67.43, p < .05, \eta^2 = .29$  relationship problems  $F(2, 327) = 32.05, p < .05, \eta^2 = .16$ . Since the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met for differentiation scores, the Welch's  $F$  test was used. There was significant difference of three groups' differentiation scores *Welch's*  $F(2, 212.86) = 49.35, p < .05, \eta^2 = .22$  (See Table 11). Since the equal variances assumed for separation-individuation, splitting and relationship problems mean scores were examined in detailed with post hoc procedures by using Tukey test and since equal variances not assumed for differentiation mean scores Games-Howell test was

used to examine differences in detailed with post hoc procedures (See Table 12).

Table 10. Descriptive of Variables According to Shame/Guilt Levels

Variables	Shame/Guilt Levels					
	Low (1)		Medium (2)		High (3)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Separation- Individuation	116.19	39.38	150.27	43.37	180.80	48.58
Splitting	35.58	12.99	46.85	15.42	59.88	17.88
Differentiation	37.66	15.60	52.43	17.51	61.42	21.33
Relationship Prob	42.94	15.14	50.98	14.37	59.48	16.39

Table 11. ANOVA Results of Separation Individuation, Splitting, Differentiation, Relationship Problems According to Shame/Guilt Levels

<i>Means</i>	<i>F Statistic</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	$\eta^2$
Separation- Individuation	59.76	2	327	.00	.26
Splitting	67.43	2	327	.00	.29
Differentiation	49.35	2	212.86	.00	.16
Relationship Problems	32.05	2	327	.00	.22

Table 12. Tukey and Games-Howell Test Result for Separation-Individuation and Subscales

<i>DV</i>	<i>Test</i>	Shame/Guilt Level	Shame/Guilt Level	<i>MD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Separation- Individuation	Tukey	1	2	-34.07	5.87	.00
		2	3	-30.53	5.95	.00
		3	1	64.60	5.91	.00
Splitting	Tukey	1	2	-11.27	2.07	.00
		2	3	-13.03	2.10	.00
		3	1	24.30	2.09	.00

Table 12. (continued) Tukey and Games-Howell Test Result for Separation-Individuation and Subscales

Differentiation	Games-Howell	1	2	-14.77	2.22	.00
		2	3	-8.99	2.65	.00
		3	1	23.76	2.53	.00
Relationship Problems	Tukey	1	2	-8.03	2.05	.00
		2	3	-8.50	2.07	.00
		3	1	16.53	2.06	.00

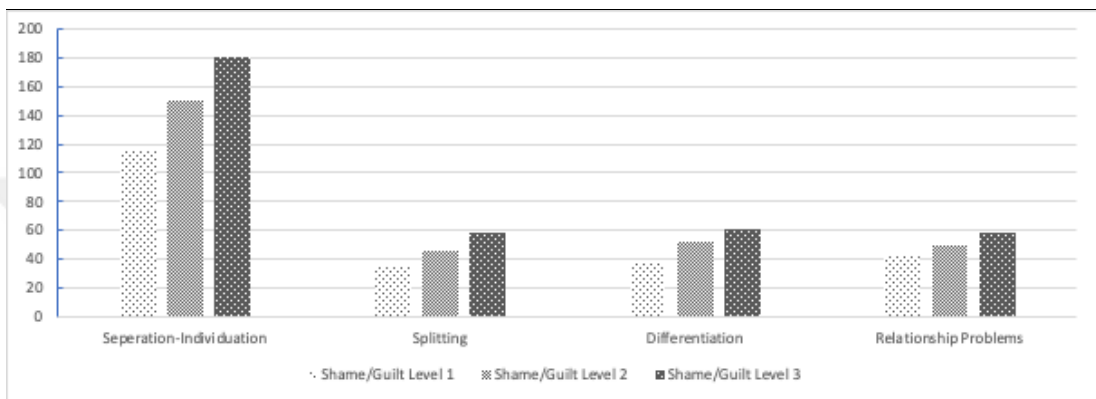


Figure 2. Separation-Individuation, Splitting, Differentiation and Relationship Problems Means According to Shame/Guilt Levels

According to the results, as the shame/guilt levels of the participants increase, the scores obtained from separation and its subscales increase significantly.

### 3.4. Correlation Analysis of Variables

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between total guilt/shame, guilt, shame, total personality organization, primitive defenses, identity diffusion, reality testing, total separation-individuation, splitting, differentiation, relationship problems (Table 13). Guilt/shame was positively correlated with personality organization ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ), primitive defenses ( $r = .54, p < .01$ ), identity diffusion ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ), reality testing ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ). Showed that higher guilt/shame was associated with higher personality organization scores which means lower personality organization. Guilt/shame was positively correlated with total separation-individuation ( $r = .51, p < .01$ ), splitting ( $r = .54, p < .01$ ), differentiation ( $r = .46, p < .01$ ) and relationship problems ( $r = .41, p < .01$ ). Indicated that higher guilt/shame was associated with higher separation-individuation pathology. Shame subscale was positively correlated with personality organization total scores

( $r = .53, p < .01$ ), primitive defenses ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ), identity diffusion ( $r = .54, p < .01$ ) and reality testing ( $r = .29, p < .01$ ). Showed that higher shame was associated with higher personality organization scores which means lower personality organization. Shame was also positively correlated with total separation-individuation ( $r = .50, p < .01$ ), splitting ( $r = .52, p < .01$ ), differentiation ( $r = .45, p < .01$ ) and relationship problems ( $r = .40, p < .01$ ). Showed that higher shame was associated with higher separation-individuation pathology. Guilt was positively correlated with personality organization ( $r = .51, p < .01$ ), primitive defenses ( $r = .49, p < .01$ ), identity diffusion ( $r = .51, p < .01$ ), reality testing ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ). These results showed that higher guilt was associated with higher personality organization scores (more psychopathology) which means lower personality organization. Guilt was also positively correlated with total separation-individuation ( $r = .47, p < .01$ ), splitting ( $r = .49, p < .01$ ), differentiation ( $r = .42, p < .01$ ) and relationship problems ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ). Showed that higher guilt was associated with higher separation-individuation pathology. Separation-individuation was positively correlated with personality organization ( $r = .77, p < .01$ ). Showed that higher separation-individuation pathology associated with higher personality organization scores, which means lower personality organization

Table 13. Pearson Correlation Analysis Between Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 SGTS	1									
2 SGTSS	.949**	1								
3 SGTGS	.944**	.792**	1							
4 POI	.554**	.535**	.512**	1						
5 POIPD	.547**	.538**	.497**	.921**	1					
6 POIID	.558**	.541**	.514**	.935**	.820**	1				
7 POIRT	.319**	.294**	.311**	.776**	.585**	.580**	1			
8 SII	.517**	.503**	.475**	.779**	.763**	.760**	.498**	1		
9 SIIS	.541**	.524**	.498**	.783**	.764**	.756**	.516**	.936**	1	
# SIID	.464**	.453**	.424**	.685**	.674**	.681**	.413**	.924**	.808**	1
# SIIRP	.412**	.400**	.380**	.674**	.658**	.649**	.445**	.884**	.763**	.700**

\*\* $p < .01$ .

Notes. SGTS: Shame Guilt Trait Scale, SGTSS: Shame Guilt Trait Shame Subscale, SGTGS: Shame Guilt Trait Guilt Subscale, POI: Personality Organization Inventory, POIPD: Personality Organization Inventory Primitive Defenses Subscale, POIID: Personality Organization Inventory Identity Diffusion Subscale, POIRT: Personality Organization Inventory Reality Testing Subscale, SII: Separation Individuation Scale, SIIS: Separation Individuation Splitting Subscale, SIID: Separation Individuation Differentiation Subscale, SIIRP: Separation Individuation Relationship Problems Subscales

### 3.5. Regression Analysis

#### 3.5.1. Findings on the Shame, Guilt and Separation Individuation in Predicting Personality Organization

Stepwise regression analysis was performed to determine the level of prediction of participants' personality organization scores by shame, guilt and separation-individuation scores. The analysis was completed in two steps. According to the regression model determined in the last step, personality organization score was significantly predicted by the independent variables in the model  $F(2, 327) = 284.06, p < .001$ . The calculated  $R^2$  value shows that 63.2% of the variance in personality organization score can be explained by the regression equation.

According to the regression model in the last step, separation-individuation and shame scores were found to have a statistically significant linear relationship with personality organization score (See Table 14). However, no significant relationship was found between the guilt score and the personality organization score and this measure was not included in the equation in the last step of the regression model.

Table 14. Multiple Regression Analysis Results Regarding the Prediction of Personality Organization Scores by Shame, Guilt and Separation-Individuation Scores

<i>Model</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std Error</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	(Constant)	.779	.607	20.154	1.838		10.964	.000
	SI			.264	.012	.779	22.514	.000
2	(Constant)	.797	.635	17.420	1.859		9.372	.000
	SI			.231	.013	.683	17.654	.000
	Shame			.587	.118	.192	4.966	.000

SI: Separation-Individuation

#### 3.5.2. Findings on the Shame and Guilt in Predicting Separation Individuation

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the extent to which the score obtained from the separation-individuation scale was predicted by the scores obtained from the shame and guilt scales. Stepwise method was used during the analysis. The analysis was completed in two steps. According to the regression model determined in the

last step, separation-individuation score was significantly predicted by the independent variables in the model  $F(2, 327) = 60.08, p < .001$ . The calculated R<sup>2</sup> value shows that 26.9% of the variance in the separation-individuation score can be explained by the regression equation.

According to the regression model in the last step, shame and guilt scores were found to have a statistically significant linear relationship with separation-individuation score (See Table 15). In addition, shame was the most important predictor of the separation-individuation scores.

Table 15 Multiple Regression Analysis Results Regarding the Prediction of Separation-Individuation Scores by Shame, Guilt Scores

<i>Model</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Std Error</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	(Constant)	.503	.253	89.798	6.082		14.765	.000
	Shame			4.545	.431	.503	10.534	.000
2	(Constant)	.518	.269	81.515	6.778		12.026	
	Shame			3.066	.700	.339	4.378	.000
	Guilt			1.963	.735	.207	2.669	.008

### **3.6. Mediation Analysis**

In this section, firstly, the results of the mediating effect analysis of the total shame/guilt scores of the participants on the Trait Shame and Guilt scale on the relationship between separation individuation scores and personality organization scores will be reported. Then, the results of the parallel mediation analysis of shame and guilt from the same scale as separate mediator variables will be reported.

#### **3.6.1. The Mediating Role of Shame/Guilt Total Score in the Relationship Between Separation-Individuation and Personality Organization**

Mediation analysis was conducted to investigate the mediating role of shame/guilt total score in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization (See Figure 3). Utilizing PROCESS Model 4 Hayes (2022) separation individuation was designated as predictor variable, personality organization as the outcome variable, while

shame/guilt total score served as the mediating variable in this study. The significance of the mediator variable was evaluated via using 5000 bootstrap samples, while a 95% confidence interval was used to assess the results of the analysis.

The results indicated that separation individuation significantly and positively predicted shame and guilt,  $b = .11, t = 10.93, p < .001$ ; and shame and guilt significantly predicted personality organization in a positive direction,  $b = .34, t = 5.29, p < .001$ . The relationship between separation individuation and personality organization, when shame and guilt were not in the model, was significant in a positive direction,  $b = .26, t = 22.51, p < .001$ . The model explained 61% of the variance in personality organization,  $R^2 = .61, F(1, 328) = 506.89, p < .001$ . In addition, when the mediator was present in the model, the direct effect of separation individuation on personality organization was significant,  $b = .23, t = 17.31, p < .001$ , and the model explained 64% of the variance in personality organization,  $R^2 = .64, F(2, 327) = 288.37, p < .001$ . The indirect effect of separation individuation on personality organization through the mediating role of shame and guilt was found significant,  $b = .04, SE = .01, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [.022, 0.052]$ . For the standardized indirect effect,  $B = .10, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [.067, .152]$  Including the mediator in the model led to a decrease in the direct effect of the predictor on the outcome, yet this effect remained significant. Additionally, the bootstrapped confidence intervals for the indirect effect did not include zero, signifying partial mediation.

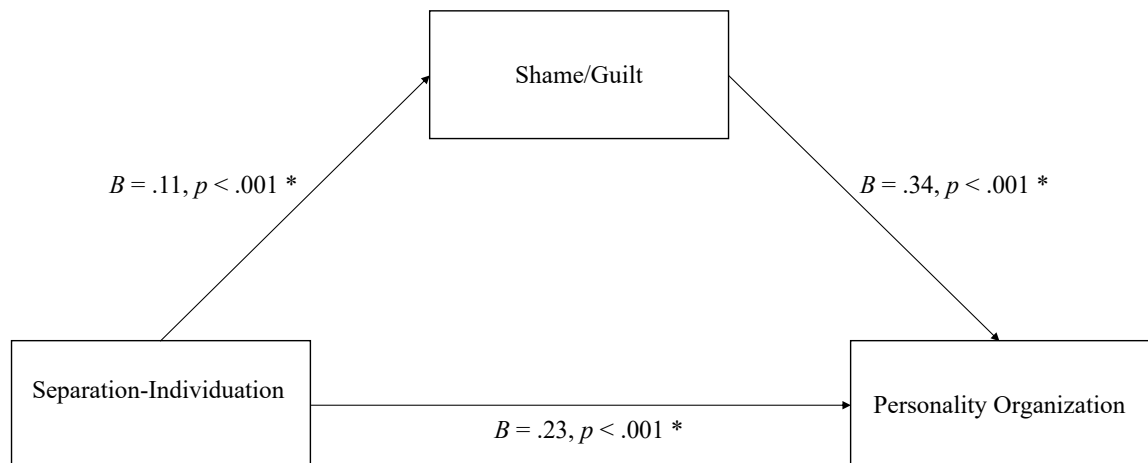


Figure 3. The mediating effect of shame/guilt total score in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization

### ***3.6.2. The Mediating Role of Shame and Guilt in the Relationship between Separation Individuation and Personality Organization***

Parallel mediation analysis was conducted to investigate the mediating role shame and guilt in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization. Utilizing PROCESS Model 4 Hayes (2022), separation individuation was designated as the predictor variable, personality organization as the outcome variable, while shame and guilt served as the mediating variables in this study. The significance of the mediator variables was evaluated via using 5000 bootstrap samples, while a 95% confidence interval was used to assess the results of the analysis.

Results of the mediation analysis demonstrated that separation individuation, positively predicted shame,  $b = .06$ ,  $t = 10.53$ ,  $p < .001$ . Additionally, shame positively predicted personality organization,  $b = .37$ ,  $t = 2.13$ ,  $p < .05$ . Separation individuation explained 25% variance in shame,  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $F(1, 328) = 110.97$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Moreover, separation individuation significantly, positively predicted guilt,  $b = .05$ ,  $t = 9.78$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, guilt did not significantly predict personality organization,  $b = .32$ ,  $t = 1.78$ ,  $p > .05$ . Separation individuation explained 23% variance in guilt,  $R^2 = .23$ ,  $F(1, 328) = 95.69$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Furthermore, separation individuation significantly and positively predicted personality organization,  $b = .23$ ,  $t = 17.27$ ,  $p < .001$ . This model explained 64% variance of personality organization,  $R^2 = .64$ ,  $F(3, 326) = 191.69$ . When the mediator variables (shame and guilt) were excluded from the model, separation individuation significantly, positively predicted personality organization,  $b = .26$ ,  $t = 22.51$ ,  $p < .001$ . Separation individuation explained 61% of the variance in personality organization,  $R^2 = .61$ ,  $F(1, 328) = 506.89$ ,  $p < .001$ .

A significant total indirect effect of separation individuation on personality organization through shame and guilt was found,  $b = .04$ , 95% BCa CI [.022, .051]. For the standardized indirect effect,  $B = .10$ , %95 BCa CI [.066, .150]. The bootstrapped confidence intervals for the indirect effects did not include zero.

Additionally, a significant indirect effect of separation individuation on personality organization through shame was found,  $b = .02$ , 95% BCa CI [.002, .040]. For the standardized indirect effect,  $B = .60$ , 95% BCa CI [.006, .117]. However, there was not a

significant indirect effect of separation individuation on personality organization through guilt,  $b = .02$ , 95% BCa CI [-.0002, .032]. The bootstrapped confidence intervals encompass zero. The standardized indirect effect is  $B = .04$ , 95% BCa CI [-.000, .095]. Therefore, shame mediates the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization, whereas guilt does not serve as a mediator.

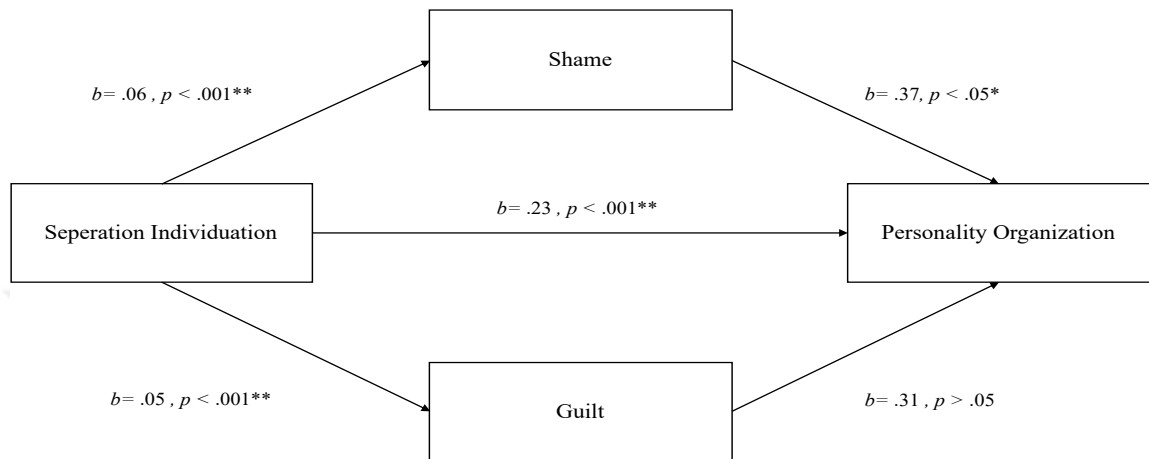


Figure 4. The mediating effect of shame and guilt in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization

## CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the role of shame/guilt feelings and separation-individuation process on personality organization and the role of shame/guilt feelings on separation-individuation process. To achieve this purpose, the first step was to examine the relationship of these variables with the participants' history of psychological or psychiatric admission and their history of parental separation. Furthermore whether personality organization and separation-individuation scores of the participants differed significantly according to their shame/guilt levels was also studied. Then, the predictive effect of shame, guilt and separation-individuation variables on personality organization was examined. Another regression analysis was performed to see which of the shame and guilt emotions had more predictive effect on the separation-individuation processes. Finally mediation analysis was conducted to understand the mediating roles of shame and guilt both together and separately in the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization.

In the following paragraphs, the results obtained from this study will be discussed in the light of the literature.

### ***4.1. Comparison of Variables According to Participants' History of Parental Separation***

The present study aimed to compare feelings of shame, guilt, personality organization scores, and separation-individuation scores between participants who were separated from their parents for various reasons in the first five years of their lives and those who were not. Using independent t-test analysis, no significant differences were found between these two groups on the variables mentioned. These results are somewhat surprising given the existing literature, which often suggests that early parental separation can have lasting impacts on emotional and psychological development.

The findings of this study diverge from much of the existing research that emphasizes the negative effects of early parental separation. For example, Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek (2007) highlighted those disruptions in attachment, such as early parental separation, are associated with increased feelings of shame and guilt. Similarly, Kernberg (1984) suggested that early separation can lead to issues in personality organization,

potentially contributing to borderline personality organization due to insecure attachment and inconsistent caregiving.

However, other research provides a different perspective. Rutter (1972) found that not all children experiencing early separation exhibit negative outcomes, suggesting that individual differences and subsequent caregiving environments play significant roles. This aligns with findings by Werner (2004), who identified various protective factors, such as supportive relationships with other caregivers and positive school experiences, that can mitigate the negative effects of early parental separation.

The lack of significant differences in the current study may be due to several factors. First, the timing and context of the separation could vary greatly among participants. For instance, children who were separated at different ages within the first five years or who had varying lengths of separation might experience different outcomes. Bowlby (1969) emphasized that prolonged separations are more likely to lead to attachment disruptions and subsequent emotional difficulties. Without distinguishing between short-term and long-term separations, the study may not accurately capture the nuances of how early parental separation affects psychological outcomes.

Another possible explanation is the presence of resilience factors among the participants. Research by Kim, Thibodeau and Jorgensen (2011) suggests that resilience and adaptability can significantly influence how early adverse experiences impact individuals. Children with resilient temperaments or those who received high-quality care from alternative caregivers might not exhibit the same level of emotional and psychological difficulties as those without such support.

Additionally, the fact that the study did not collect data on the duration of parental separation may have contributed to the lack of significant findings. The literature suggests that the length of separation and the quality of subsequent caregiving are critical factors influencing the impact of early separation (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Future studies should include detailed information on these aspects to better understand their effects.

#### ***4.2. Comparison of Variables According to Participants' Psychological/Psychiatric Admission***

Independent t-test findings show that participants' shame, guilt and personality organization scores differ significantly according to whether they have a psychological or psychiatric history. However, no significant difference was found in this direction in separation-individuation scores.

The significant differences found in shame and guilt are consistent with previous research linking these emotions to various forms of psychopathology. Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek (2007) discuss how elevated levels of shame are often associated with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Moreover, Lewis (1992) suggested that chronic shame could contribute to the development of psychopathological conditions. Similarly, guilt, although typically less detrimental than shame, is linked to psychological distress, especially when it becomes maladaptive (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). Kim, Thibodeau and Jorgensen (2011) also demonstrated through a meta-analytic review that both shame and guilt are significantly related to depressive symptoms.

The differences in personality organization, particularly in the subscales of primitive defenses and identity diffusion, support the notion that individuals with a history of psychiatric or psychological admission often exhibit more severe personality pathology. Kernberg (1984) emphasized that primitive defenses and identity diffusion are core features of borderline personality organization, often seen in clinical populations. Additionally, Caligor, Kernberg and Clarkin (2007) noted that these features are indicative of severe disturbances in self-concept and interpersonal functioning.

The significant difference in the differentiation subscale of the separation-individuation process aligns with the developmental theories proposed by Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1975), who highlighted the importance of successful differentiation for healthy psychological development. Blos (1979) also noted that failures in the differentiation phase could result in unstable self-identity and problematic interpersonal relationships, which are common in individuals with significant psychological issues.

On the other hand, the lack of significant differences in reality testing, separation-individuation, splitting, and relationship problems scores may reflect the complexity of these constructs. Reality testing, which refers to the ability to distinguish between internal

fantasies and external reality, may not differ significantly between the groups because both groups could have maintained adequate reality testing despite other psychological difficulties. This finding is in line with studies indicating that reality testing can remain relatively intact in high-functioning individuals with personality disorders (Kernberg, 1996).

The absence of significant differences in the overall separation-individuation score and its subscales of splitting and relationship problems could suggest that these areas are influenced by a broader range of factors, including environmental and situational variables, rather than solely by psychiatric history. For example, Rutter (1972) emphasized that individual differences and the quality of subsequent caregiving environments significantly influence psychological outcomes. Werner (2004) also identified various protective factors, such as supportive relationships and positive school experiences, which can mitigate the negative effects of early psychological challenges.

#### ***4.3. Comparison of the Variables According to Shame/Guilt Levels***

Personality organization and separation-individuation were compared at different levels of shame/guilt by ANOVA analysis.

##### ***4.3.1. Comparison of Personality Organization According to Shame/Guilt Levels***

The results indicated a significant linear relationship. As the shame/guilt levels of the participants increase, their scores on the personality organization inventory also increase significantly. This finding contributes to our understanding of how emotional experiences, specifically shame and guilt, are intricately connected to personality organization.

The observed linear increase suggests that higher levels of shame and guilt are associated with more pronounced features on the personality organization inventory. This relationship can be interpreted in several ways. Firstly, individuals who experience high levels of shame and guilt may have more maladaptive personality traits, as these emotions are often linked with self-critical and perfectionistic tendencies. This aligns with existing literature which posits that personality organizations, characterized by high levels of self-criticism and low self-esteem, are susceptible to emotions of shame and guilt (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). According to Stern et al. (2010), the positive relationship between

personality organization pathology and the experience of negative affect also supports the findings of this study.

In addition, it was also analyzed whether the subscales of the personality organization inventory, namely primitive defenses, identity diffusion and reality testing, differed according to the shame/guilt levels of the participants. The results show that the scores obtained from all 3 subscales increase significantly according to the shame/guilt levels of the participants.

Primitive defenses are mechanisms that individuals employ to protect themselves from anxiety and internal conflicts. These defenses often involve denial, splitting, and projection and projective identification. The significant association between higher levels of shame and guilt with increased primitive defenses aligns with existing literature suggesting that these emotions can trigger defensive mechanisms to manage psychological distress. For instance, Tangney and Dearing (2002) found that individuals experiencing high levels of shame are more likely to employ maladaptive defenses, such as denial and projection, to cope with the intense negative self-evaluation associated with shame.

Identity diffusion refers to the lack of a coherent and stable sense of self, often leading to difficulties in making decisions, maintaining consistent roles, and feeling a continuous sense of identity. The positive correlation between shame and identity diffusion found in this study supports the notion that shame can disrupt self-concept. This finding is consistent with research by Rüsç et al. (2007), which highlights that shame is significantly associated with identity disturbances in individuals with borderline personality disorder. The internalized negative self-views inherent in shame can fragment an individual's identity, making it difficult for them to sustain a cohesive sense of self.

Reality testing is the capacity to perceive and assess the external world accurately and to distinguish between internal and external experiences. The increase in reality testing scores with higher shame and guilt suggests that these emotions might impair an individual's ability to accurately interpret reality. This relationship is supported by research indicating that intense shame can lead to distorted perceptions of oneself and others, potentially resulting in paranoid and suspicious thinking (Rüsç, et al., 2007). Guilt, similarly, can lead to an excessive preoccupation with perceived wrongdoings,

affecting one's interpretation of social interactions and reality.

#### ***4.3.2. Comparison of Separation-Individuation Scores According to Shame/Guilt Levels***

The results revealed a significant increase in separation-individuation scores in accordance with heightened levels of shame and guilt, as determined by ANOVA analysis. These findings provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between emotional experiences and developmental processes.

Separation-individuation is a crucial developmental phase during which individuals establish their own identity while maintaining an appropriate level of connection with significant others. This process involves the development of autonomy, self-reliance, and a coherent sense of self, independent from parental or other external figures (Pine, 1979). The observed increase in separation-individuation scores with higher levels of shame and guilt aligns with theoretical and empirical literature suggesting that these emotions can significantly impact developmental processes. Shame and guilt are complex emotions that often arise from perceived failures or moral transgressions, leading to intense self-scrutiny and internal conflict (Tangney and Dearing, 2002). These emotions can profoundly affect the way individuals navigate the separation-individuation process.

Research has demonstrated that shame and guilt can hinder healthy separation-individuation. A study by Gross and Hansen (2000) found that individuals experiencing high levels of shame reported greater difficulties in developing a stable and autonomous sense of self. The internalization of shame, characterized by a negative self-evaluation, can disrupt the individuation process by fostering feelings of inadequacy and dependency. Similarly, guilt has been linked to problems in separation-individuation. A study by Luyten, Fontaine and Corveleyn (2002) highlighted that excessive guilt can lead to heightened sensitivity to others' expectations and a diminished sense of personal autonomy. Individuals with high guilt levels often experience a conflict between their own needs and the perceived obligations to others, complicating the process of establishing a separate identity. According to Tilghman-Osborne, Cole and Felton (2012) maladaptive guilt, characterized by excessive rumination and self-blame, can impair the separation-individuation process by perpetuating self-critical thoughts and dependency.

Additionally, Nathanson (1994) and Morrison (1996) have both highlighted the pervasive effects of shame on personality development and interpersonal relationships. Their work suggests that shame can lead to chronic feelings of inadequacy and dependency, further complicating the process of individuation and the formation of a stable identity.

In addition to these results, splitting, differentiation and relationship problems scales, which are the subscales of the separation-individuation inventory, were found to differ significantly according to the shame/guilt levels of the participants.

Research by Kernberg (1976) and later by Kohut (1977) has highlighted the role of splitting as a defense mechanism in individuals with high levels of shame and guilt. Kohut's self-psychology theory suggests that individuals with impaired self-cohesion, often due to overwhelming shame, rely on splitting to manage internal conflicts. Kernberg further elaborates that this defense mechanism is prevalent in borderline personality organization, where intense shame and guilt disrupt the integration of self-concepts, leading to polarized thinking.

High levels of shame and guilt can hinder the development of a distinct and autonomous self. A study by Thompson and Zuroff (2004) examined the relationship between self-critical perfectionism (often associated with high guilt and shame) and difficulties in differentiation. Their findings suggested that individuals who are excessively self-critical struggle with establishing a distinct and autonomous self. This struggle is often due to their constant fear of failing to meet their own and others' standards, which can impede their ability to differentiate and assert their own needs.

Relationship problems linked to high shame and guilt levels have been well-documented. Nathanson (1994) and Morrison (1998) have both discussed how pervasive feelings of shame can lead to chronic relationship difficulties. Nathanson's research highlights that individuals with high shame often experience fear of rejection and abandonment, leading to clingy or overly dependent relationships. Morrison's work further suggests that guilt can complicate relationships by fostering excessive self-blame and conflict avoidance, which hinder the development of healthy, reciprocal interactions. Additionally, Tangney, Wagner and Gramzow's (1992) investigation into the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA) provides empirical support for these findings. Their study suggests that maladaptive aspects of guilt and shame are closely related to interpersonal difficulties and

problems in emotional regulation, which are crucial for maintaining healthy relationships.

#### ***4.4. Correlation Analysis***

Pearson correlation analysis revealed positive and significant correlations among all these variables, suggesting that higher levels of maladaptive personality organization and separation-individuation difficulties are associated with higher levels of shame and guilt. These findings are consistent with and supported by the existing literature.

Primitive defenses, such as splitting and denial, are indicative of less mature psychological functioning. These defenses are often used by individuals who struggle with integrating complex emotional experiences, leading to a fragmented sense of self (Kernberg, 1976). The positive correlation between primitive defenses and shame and guilt in this study aligns with research by Tangney and Dearing (2002), who found that individuals prone to shame and guilt are more likely to engage in maladaptive defensive mechanisms to cope with their intense emotional states.

Identity diffusion refers to a lack of stable and coherent self-identity, often manifesting as confusion about one's role and purpose. Research by Wilkinson-Ryan and Westen (2000) demonstrated that individuals with high levels of identity diffusion often experience heightened shame and guilt due to their unstable self-concept and reliance on external validation. This relationship is reflected in the significant positive correlations observed in this study.

Reality testing, the ability to accurately perceive and interpret external reality, is often compromised in individuals with severe personality organization issues. Poor reality testing can lead to misinterpretations and exaggerations of social interactions, which can exacerbate feelings of shame and guilt. Fonagy et al. (1997) have highlighted the link between impaired reality testing and increased susceptibility to shame and guilt, supporting the correlations found in this study.

Splitting is closely related to primitive defenses and identity diffusion, and its association with shame and guilt has been well-documented. Research by Kohut (1977) and Kernberg (1976) underscores how splitting is frequently employed by those with high levels of shame and guilt to manage their internal conflicts and perceived inadequacies.

Differentiation, the ability to maintain a sense of self while being emotionally connected

to others, is crucial for healthy psychological development. High levels of guilt and shame can impede this process, as individuals may feel overly responsible for others' emotions or fear judgment and rejection. Skowron and Friedlander (1998) found that individuals with poor differentiation often experience higher levels of shame and guilt, which is consistent with the positive correlations observed in this study.

Relationship problems, including difficulties in forming and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships, are often exacerbated by high levels of shame and guilt. Nathanson (1992) and Morrison (1998) have discussed how these emotions can lead to chronic relationship difficulties, including fear of intimacy and dependence, conflict avoidance, and excessive self-blame. The significant correlations between relationship problems and shame and guilt in this study align with these findings, suggesting that unresolved emotional conflicts can severely impact relational functioning.

#### ***4.5. Regression Analysis***

##### ***4.5.1. Findings on the Variables That Predict Personality Organization***

The present study aimed to identify the predictors of personality organization scores using variables such as separation-individuation, shame, and guilt. Through a stepwise linear regression analysis, it was found that separation-individuation was the most significant predictor of personality organization scores, followed by shame, whereas guilt did not significantly predict personality organization scores. These findings underscore the central role of separation-individuation processes in personality organization and highlight the significant, albeit secondary, impact of shame on these scores.

Research has consistently shown that difficulties in separation-individuation are associated with a range of personality organization issues, including identity diffusion, impaired reality testing, and the use of primitive defenses. Blos (1967) identified that failures in the individuation process often result in identity disturbances and reliance on maladaptive defenses. Skowron and Friedlander (1998) found that individuals with poor differentiation—an aspect of separation-individuation—are more likely to experience fragmented self-concepts and interpersonal difficulties. Additionally, studies by Allen, and Hauser (1996) highlighted that adolescents with disrupted individuation processes often exhibit higher levels of psychopathology and dysfunctional personality traits. The

results of this study, which highlight separation-individuation as the strongest predictor of personality organization scores, align with these theoretical perspectives and empirical findings. They suggest that successful navigation of the separation-individuation process is crucial for healthy personality development and organization.

Shame, characterized by feelings of worthlessness and a desire to hide or disappear, emerged as the second significant predictor of personality organization scores. This finding indicates that while separation-individuation processes are paramount, shame also plays a critical role in influencing personality organization.

Shame has been extensively studied in relation to its impact on self-esteem, identity, and psychological well-being. Tangney and Dearing (2002) noted that shame is associated with a global negative evaluation of the self, which can disrupt the formation of a coherent and stable identity. This disruption can manifest in various aspects of personality organization, such as increased identity diffusion and reliance on primitive defenses to manage the overwhelming feelings of inadequacy and self-loathing.

Studies by Nathanson (1992) and Morrison (1998) support the significant role of shame in personality pathology. Nathanson described shame as a central affect in many personality disorders, particularly those characterized by identity disturbances and impaired self-cohesion. Morrison emphasized that chronic shame can lead to maladaptive coping strategies, such as splitting and denial, which are hallmark features of disorganized personality structures. Further research by Gilbert (1998) highlighted the role of shame in the development of self-critical thoughts and behaviors, which can exacerbate personality organization dysfunctions.

The finding that guilt did not significantly predict personality organization scores, in contrast to shame, suggests that these two self-conscious emotions have distinct impacts on personality functioning. Guilt, which involves negative feelings about specific behaviors rather than the self as a whole, may not disrupt the core aspects of personality organization to the same extent as shame.

Tangney, Wagner and Gramzow's work (1992) differentiates between shame and guilt, noting that guilt is more likely associated with reparative actions and less severe psychological outcomes compared to the pervasive and debilitating nature of shame. Consequently, while guilt can lead to distress and a desire to make amends, it does not

typically result in the profound self-concept disturbances that characterize severe personality organization issues. Baumeister, Stillwell and Heatherton (1994) also suggested that guilt might have adaptive functions, promoting social harmony and personal responsibility, which might explain its non-significant role in predicting personality dysfunctions. According to Kernberg (1996), individuals with neurotic personality organization, which he defines as a healthier personality organization, suffer more from feelings of guilt. According to these explanations, it can be interpreted that guilt has less pathogenic effect than shame.

#### ***4.5.2. Findings on the Variables That Predict Separation-Individuation***

The present study aimed to determine the predictive power of shame and guilt on separation-individuation scores through a stepwise linear regression analysis. The results indicate that both shame and guilt significantly predict separation-individuation scores. However, shame emerged as a stronger predictor of separation-individuation scores compared to guilt. This finding suggests that individuals who experience higher levels of shame are more likely to encounter difficulties in the separation-individuation process.

These results are consistent with existing literature that highlights the profound impact of shame on an individual's sense of self and identity development. Shame is often characterized by feelings of worthlessness, inferiority, and the belief that one is fundamentally flawed (Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek, 2007). Such pervasive self-evaluations can significantly hinder the process of separation-individuation, which is crucial for developing a distinct and autonomous self (Mahler, 1975). Research by Kim, Thibodeau and Jorgensen (2011) supports this view, showing that shame is associated with maladaptive coping strategies and higher levels of psychological distress, both of which can obstruct the individuation process.

In contrast, guilt typically pertains to specific behaviors rather than the core self. Guilt involves a focus on a particular action or inaction that is perceived as wrong or harmful to others, which can lead to reparative actions and pro-social behavior (Tangney and Fischer, 1995). This behavioral focus makes guilt less likely to interfere with the overall process of separation-individuation compared to shame, which implicates the whole self and can lead to a pervasive sense of personal deficiency. Research by Bybee and Quiles (1998)

highlights that adaptive guilt can actually foster social cohesion and individual growth by promoting reparative actions and empathy.

The finding that shame is a more powerful predictor of separation-individuation pathology than guilt is supported by similar studies in the literature. For instance, Tangney and Dearing (2002) found that shame, but not guilt, was significantly associated with a variety of psychological difficulties, including those related to identity formation and self-concept. Similarly, research by Velotti et al. (2017) demonstrated that high levels of shame are linked to problems in developing a cohesive and differentiated self, which is a critical aspect of the separation-individuation process. Andrews, Qian and Valentine (2002) also found that shame is more closely linked to depression and low self-esteem, further illustrating its pervasive impact on self-concept and individuation.

Lewis (1971) posited that shame involves a negative evaluation of the self as a whole, leading to feelings of being unworthy and defective. This global self-critique can inhibit individuals from viewing themselves as capable and autonomous beings, which is essential for healthy separation-individuation. This perspective is supported by subsequent research, including the work of Tracy and Robins (2006) who found that shame is more closely linked to feelings of global self-worth and identity issues, whereas guilt is more about specific behaviors and less about one's overall self-concept. Additionally, a study by Ferguson et al. (2007) corroborated that shame, rather than guilt, is associated with a more pervasive impact on one's identity and interpersonal relationships.

#### ***4.6. Mediation Analyses***

##### ***4.6.1. The mediating effect of shame/guilt total scores on the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization***

The findings suggest that the impact of separation-individuation on personality organization is significantly mediated by feelings of shame and guilt. This underscores the critical role of addressing these emotional experiences in the developmental processes associated with personality organization.

Separation-individuation is a crucial developmental process where an individual gradually becomes independent and forms a distinct identity separate from their primary caregivers

(Mahler, Pine and Bergman, 1975). Previous research has highlighted the importance of this process in the development of a stable personality structure (Blass and Blatt, 1996). However, this study extends the understanding by demonstrating that the emotional responses of shame and guilt play a significant mediating role.

Shame and guilt are complex emotions that are often experienced during the separation-individuation process (Tangney, Stuewig and Mashek, 2007). Shame involves a painful feeling of being inherently flawed, while guilt involves a sense of remorse for specific actions (Lewis, 1971). These emotions can significantly influence personality organization, which refers to the integration of various aspects of the self into a coherent identity (Kernberg, 1984).

The mediation analysis in this study revealed that individuals who experience higher levels of shame and guilt during the separation-individuation process are more likely to exhibit maladaptive personality organization. Given the common and simultaneous experience of these emotions, the mediating effect of these two self-conscious emotions together on this relationship underlines the interconnectedness of psychopathology and separation processes with negative self-conscious emotions. This finding aligns with existing literature suggesting that unresolved feelings of shame and guilt can lead to various psychological difficulties, including impaired self-concept and identity diffusion (Morrison, 1989; Tangney and Dearing, 2002).

#### ***4.6.2. The mediating effect of shame and guilt on the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization***

The analysis demonstrated that shame significantly mediates the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization. Specifically, individuals experiencing difficulties with separation individuation are likely to develop higher levels of shame, which in turn negatively affects their personality organization. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that shame is a critical emotion in the development and maintenance of personality disorders (Rüsch et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2011; Tangney and Dearing, 2002). The debilitating nature of shame can lead to maladaptive coping strategies and exacerbate psychological distress, thereby disrupting personality organization (Tangney et al., 2007; Andrew et al., 2002).

However, guilt did not significantly mediate the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization. While separation individuation was associated with higher levels of guilt, guilt did not significantly predict personality organization. This finding may suggest that while guilt is a critical emotional response, its impact on personality organization is not as profound as that of shame. Previous studies have shown mixed results regarding the role of guilt in personality development, with some suggesting that guilt can sometimes lead to positive outcomes such as reparative actions and moral behavior (Tangney et al., 1996; Baumeister et al., 1994). The differentiation between guilt and shame in personality traits and behaviors further supports this distinction (Cohen et al., 2011).

The overall indirect effect of separation individuation on personality organization through both shame and guilt was significant, indicating that these mediators together contribute to the relationship. However, the significant mediation was primarily driven by shame. These findings underscore the significant role of shame in mediating the relationship between separation individuation and personality organization, while guilt appears to play a less critical role. Contrary to the previous analysis, this finding underlines the difference between these two self-conscious emotions.

#### ***4.7. Limitations and Future Suggestions***

This section will discuss some limitations of this study and suggestions for future studies. The fact that the question about parental separation in the demographic form presented to the participants did not ask specific questions such as at what age and for how long the parental separation was experienced is considered as one of the limitations of this study. Measuring how long and at what age intervals early parental separation is experienced and the social support factors and psychological resilience of the individual in experiencing this separation will provide stronger results for future studies.

Another limitation of the study is that due to issues such as the size of the sample, the distribution of the data, and some similarities between shame and guilt, which are separate emotions but have an important intersection, various analyses could not be conducted between those who experienced shame more and those who experienced guilt more. In future studies, eliminating these limits and examining various psychopathological

processes among participants who experience one of these two emotions more may make important contributions to the literature.

Finally, the fact that the gender distribution of the participants was not equally distributed is considered as one of the limitations of this study. The fact that female participants are represented more than male participants in this study reduces the generalizability of the results of the study in terms of gender.



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to examine various aspects of the relationships between feelings of shame and guilt, the separation individuation process and personality organization. In order to achieve this aim and to observe the different relationships between the variables, different analysis methods were used. First, preliminary analyses were performed to see the relationship between various demographic variables and shame/guilt, separation individuation and personality organization.

ANOVA tests were conducted to understand the effect of participants' shame/guilt levels on separation individuation and personality organization variables. This analysis shows that an increase in shame/guilt levels significantly increases both the level of maladaptive personality organization and the pathology of separation individuation.

According to the regression analysis conducted to see which of the variables in the study predicts maladaptive personality organization more, the process of separation individuation and shame have significant predictive effects on personality functioning. According to the results of the regression analysis performed in this study to determine the predictive power of shame and guilt emotions in the separation-individuation process, the predictive power of shame is higher than guilt. This result shows that shame is more closely related to the struggles and injuries in the separation process than guilt. This suggests that guilt may be more closely related to self and object differentiation.

The mediation analysis examined how emotions of shame and guilt mediates the significant association between the separation-individuation process and personality organization. The results showed that shame significantly mediates this relationship, meaning it plays an important role in relating the two. In contrast, guilt does not have a significant mediating role. This indicates that shame is more closely intertwined with the separation-individuation process and personality organization than guilt is.

This study underlines the effect of shame and guilt on the processes of separation individuation and personality organization, which have been studied separately in the literature, but it has some strengths and special qualities as the first study to use these three variables together.

### ***5.1. Clinical Implications***

The findings of this study have several important clinical implications, especially concerning the treatment and understanding of individuals struggling with issues related to shame, guilt, separation-individuation, and personality organization. These implications can inform therapeutic approaches and interventions to improve mental health outcomes.

Based on the importance of these two emotions in psychopathology and personality processes, patients' conscious or unconscious experience, coping and avoidance of these emotions should be observed and necessary interventions should be made in therapy processes. According to the findings in the literature and in this study, the fact that feelings of shame and guilt are also experienced unconsciously suggests that a psychoanalytic perspective on these processes may be necessary. Interventions should aim to reduce maladaptive shame and guilt, helping individuals develop healthier emotional responses. In parallel with the findings in the literature, the results of this study suggest that shame has a more pathogenic effect than guilt. It should be taken into consideration that patients who experience shame more than guilt may have more difficulties in differentiation processes according to the results of this study. Clinicians can generate hypotheses about the separation individuation processes of patients according to the nature of the experience of these two emotions.

Similarly, according to the findings of the study, individuals with high levels of shame and guilt may be expected to be at borderline and psychotic organization levels in the personality organization classification. Clinicians may benefit from additional measurements and research on the personality organization of patients with complaints of high levels of shame and guilt.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Ethics Committee Approval

SAYI: B.30.2.İEÜ.0.05.05-020-345

01.02.2024

**KONU :** Etik Kurul Kararı hk.

**Sayın Prof. Dr. Falih Köksal ve Arslan Aygün,**

**“Utanc ve Suçluluk Duygularının Ayrılma/Bireyleşme ve Psikodinamik Kişilik Organizasyonları ile İlişkisi”** başlıklı projenizin etik uygunluğu konusundaki başvurunuz sonuçlanmıştır.

Etik Kurulumuz 29.01.2024 tarihinde sizin başvurunuzun da içinde bulunduğu bir gündemle toplanmış ve Etik Kurul üyeleri projeleri incelemiştir.

Sonuçta 29.01.2024 tarihinde **“Utanc ve Suçluluk Duygularının Ayrılma/Bireyleşme ve Psikodinamik Kişilik Organizasyonları ile İlişkisi”** konulu projenizin etik açıdan uygun olduğuna oy birliğiyle karar verilmiştir.

Gereği için bilgilerinize sunarım.

Saygılarımla,

**Prof. Dr. Murat Bengisu**

**Etik Kurul Başkan**

## Appendix B: Participant Information Form

### Katılımcı Bilgi Formu

Sayın katılımcı,

Bu araştırmanın amacı, 18-65 yaş arasındaki bireylerde Utanç/Suçluluk Duyguları, Ayrılma/Bireyleşme süreçleri ve Kişilik Organizasyonları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Bu amaçla size cevaplamanız üzere birtakım sorular sorulacaktır.

Çalışma sonuçlarıyla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz Arslan Aygün ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katılımınız ve katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.



## Appendix C: Participation Consent Form

### Katılımcı Onam Formu

Bu araştırma, İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Psikolog Arslan Aygün'ün, Prof. Dr. Falih Köksal danışmanlığında yürüttüğü yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, 18-65 yaş arasındaki bireylerde Utanç/Suçluluk Duyguları, Ayrılma/Bireyleşme süreçleri ve Kişilik Organizasyonları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir.

Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Çalışmaya katılmama veya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir anda çalışmadan çıkma hakkında sahibsiniz. Çalışma yürütülürken sizden hiçbir kimlik bilgisi talep edilmeyecektir. Cevaplarınız gizli tutulacak, yalnızca araştırma görevlisi tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Çalışma başında size bir katılımcı numarası verilecek ve isminiz araştırma raporunda yer almayacaktır.

Ölçeklerden elde edilen sonuçlar, yalnızca bilimsel amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacaktır. Ölçeklerde bulunan sorulara vereceğiniz yanıtların doğruluğu, araştırmanın niteliği açısından oldukça önemlidir. Lütfen her bir ölçeğin yönergesini dikkatli okuyunuz ve sorulara sizi en iyi ifade eden cevabı vermeye çalışınız.

Bu araştırmaya katılarak, sizden toplanan verilerin bu proje kapsamında ve bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılmasına izin verdiğinizi ve katılımınızın gönüllülük esasına dayalı olduğunu kabul etmiş olmanızdır.

Çalışma sonuçlarıyla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz Arslan Aygün ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katılımınız ve katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılmayı kabul ediyorum ve istediğim zaman çalışmadan çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Evet Hayır

## Appendix D: Demographic Questions

1. Yaş:
2. Biyolojik Cinsiyetiniz:
3. İş Durumu:  Öğrenci  Çalışıyor  Diğer (.....)
4. Herhangi bir psikolojik sorun nedeniyle psikiyatri ya da psikolog başvurunuz oldu mu? (Cevabınız evet ise diğer soruları da yanıtlayınız)  
 Evet  Hayır
5. Nasıl bir tedavi aldınız?  İlaç  Psikoterapi  Her ikisi de
6. Tedaviniz devam ediyor mu?  İlaç devam ediyor  Psikoterapi devam ediyor  Her ikisi de devam ediyor  Her ikisi de devam etmiyor
6. Yaşamınızın ilk 5 yılında herhangi bir sebeple anne ya da babanızdan uzun süre ayrı kaldınız mı?  
 Annemden ayrı kaldım  Babamdan ayrı kaldım  Her ikisinden de ayrı kaldım

Yukarıdaki soruya cevabınız evet ise kısaca sebebini yazınız (iş, kayıp, boşanma vb.)

.....

## Appendix E: Trait Shame and Guilt Scale

Aşağıda geçen ay süresince kendinizle ilgili hislerinizi tanımlamaya yönelik ifadeler bulunmaktadır. Bu ifadelerin sizin bu süre içindeki duygularınızı ne ölçüde anlatıp anlatmadığını her bir ifade için 5'li derecelendirme ölçeği kullanarak belirtiniz.

1 = Bu şekilde hissetmedim

5= Bunu çok güçlü bir şekilde hissettim.

1. \_\_\_ Yerin dibine girip, yok olmak istedim.
2. \_\_\_ Vicdan azabı ve pişmanlık hissettim.
3. \_\_\_ Kendimi önemsiz hissettim.
4. \_\_\_ Daha önce yaptığım şeylerle ilgili gerginlik hissettim.
5. \_\_\_ Kendimi kötü bir kişiymiş gibi hissettim.
6. \_\_\_ Yaptıklarım ile ilgili düşünmekten kendimi alıkoyamadım.
7. \_\_\_ Kendimi aşağılanmış ve rezil olmuş hissettim.
8. \_\_\_ Kendimi özür diliyor ve itiraf ediyormuş gibi hissettim.
9. \_\_\_ Kendimi değersiz ve güçsüz hissettim.
10. \_\_\_ Yaptıklarım hakkında kendimi kötü hissettim.

## Appendix F: Separation- Individuation Inventory

<p>Aşağıda bazı duygular ve deneyimler hakkında bir dizi ifade yer almaktadır. Lütfen ifadelerin sizi ne kadar yansıttığını ifadelerin yanına 1 ile 10 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtin. (1=Hiç katılmıyorum, 5=Kararsızım, 10=Tamamen katılıyorum). Sorular üzerinde çok durmadan ilk aklınıza gelen derecelendirmeyi yapın.</p>	
1. İnsanlar birbirine gerçekten çok değer verip bağlandığında, sıklıkla kendileri hakkında daha kötü hissederler.	
2. Bir kişi, başka birine duygusal olarak aşırı yaklaştığında çoğu zaman kendini kaybolmuş hisseder.	
3. İnsanlar birine gerçekten öfkelenildiğinde genelde kendilerini değersiz hisseder.	
4. İnsanların birine karşı duygusal olarak çok fazla yakınlaşmaya başladıkları zaman, büyük bir olasılıkla incinmeye en açık oldukları zamandır.	
5. İnsanlar zarar görmemek için başkaları üzerindeki kontrolü elinde tutmaya ihtiyaç duyar.	
6. İnsanları tanıdıkça değişmeye başladıklarını hissederim.	
7. Hem iyi hem kötü yanlarımı aynı anda görebilmek benim için kolaydır.	
8. Bana öyle geliyor ki insanlar benden ya gerçekten hoşlanıyor ya da nefret ediyorlar.	
9. İnsanlar bana karşı çoğu zaman sanki ben yalnızca onların her isteğini yerine getirmek için oradaymışım gibi davranıyor.	
11. Kendi başıma olduğumda bir şeylerin eksik olduğunu hissederim.	
12. İçimde bir boşluk hissetmemek için etrafımda başka insanların olmasına ihtiyaç duyarım.	
13. Başka biriyle aynı fikirde olduğumda bazen kendime ait bir parçamı kaybetmiş gibi hissederim.	
14. Herkes gibi ben de, ne zaman gerçekten saygı duyduğum ve hürmet ettiğim	

biriyle karşılaştıysam kendimi daha kötü görürüm, kendimle ilgili daha kötü hissedirim.	
15.Kendimi ayrı bir birey olarak görmek benim için kolaydır.	
16.Anne babamdan ne kadar farklı olduğumu fark ettiğim zamanlarda çok rahatsızlık duyarım.	
17.Önemli bir karar almadan önce neredeyse her zaman anneme danışırım.	
18.Diğer insanlarla bağlılık kurup bunun gereklerini yerine getirmek benim için oldukça kolaydır.	
19.Duygusal yönden biriyle yakınlaştığımda ara sıra kendime zarar veriyormuşum gibi hissediyorum.	
20.Ya birini çok sevdiğimi ya da kimseye katlanamadığımı hissediyorum.	
21.Sıklıkla, düşmekle ilgili beni korkutup tedirgin eden rüyalar görürüm.	
22. Gözlerimi kapatıp, benim için anlamı olan kişileri zihnimde canlandırmak bana zor geliyor.	
23.Birden fazla kere nasıl ya da neden olduğunu anlayamadığım şekilde, uykudan uyanır gibi kendimi biriyle bir ilişkide buldum.	
24.Kabul etmeliyim ki kendimi yalnız hissettiğimde çoğunlukla sarhoş olmak isterim.	
25.Ne zaman biriyle kavgalı ya da birine çok kızgın olsam kendimi değersiz hissedirim.	
26.En derin düşüncelerimi söyleyip paylaşacak olsaydım içimde bir boşluk hissedirdim.	
27. İnsanların benden hep nefret edermiş gibi olduklarını hissedirim.	
28. Anne-babama ne kadar çok benzediğimi fark ettiğim zamanlarda kendimi çok rahatsız hissediyorum.	
29. Biriyle yakın bir ilişki içinde olduğumda sıklıkla kim olduğum duygusunun kaybolduğunu hissedirim.	
30. Başkalarını aynı anda hem iyi hem kötü özelliklere sahip insanlar olarak görmek benim için zordur.	
31.Bana öyle geliyor ki kendim olabilmemin tek yolu diğerlerinden farklı	

olmaktır.	
32. Duygusal açıdan birine aşırı yakınlaştığımda, benliğimin bir parçasını kaybettiğimi hissediyorum.	
33. Ne zaman ailemden uzakta olsam kendimi çok rahatsız hissediyorum.	
34. Fiziksel yakınlığı ve şefkati almak, kendi başına, onu bana kimin verdiğiinden daha önemliymiş gibi olabiliyor.	
35. Bir başka insanı gerçekten iyi tanımak bana zor geliyor.	
36. Bir karar vermeden önce annemin onayını almak benim için önemlidir.	
37. İtiraf etmeliyim ki, başka birinin kusurlarını gördüğümde kendimi daha iyi hissediyorum.	
38. Diğer insanları yakınımnda tutabilmek için, içimde onları kontrol etme dürtüsü duyarım.	
39. İtiraf etmeliyim ki birine duygusal olarak yakınlaştığımda, bazen onlara acı çektirme isteği duyarım.	

## Appendix G: Personality Organization Inventory

Bu envanterde insanların hayatları boyunca sergilediği çeşitli tutum, duygu ve davranışlar ile ilgili ifadeler vardır. Lütfen aşağıdaki tüm yönergeleri dikkatle okuyun ve size uygun şekilde tamamlayın. Bu envanteri tamamlamak için uzman olmanız gerekmemektedir. Bu envanter, her bir soruyu olabildiğince dürüstçe ve içtenlikle yanıtlarsanız amacına ulaşacaktır.

Tutum, duygu ve davranışlarınızla ilgili olabildiğince açık şekilde bilgi verin lütfen. Kendinizi ve deneyimlerinizi düşünürken, sadece alkol ya da ilaç etkisi altında sergilemiş olabileceğiniz tutum, duygu ya da davranışları dikkate almayın.

- 1 Doğru Değil
- 2 Nadiren Doğru
- 3 Bazen Doğru
- 4 Sıklıkla Doğru
- 5 Her Zaman Doğru

1	İnsanları üzen şeyler yaptığımı; ancak bunların insanları neden üzdüğünü anlayamadığımı fark ederim.	
2	Bir şeyi sadece gerçek olarak algılamayı mı istiyorum yoksa o şey sahiden gerçek mi söyleyemem.	
3	Kaygılıyken ya da aklım karışık olduğunda, dış dünyadaki şeyler de bana anlamsız gelir.	
4	Cevremdeki her şey belirsizleştiyse ve karıştıysa iç dünyam da belirsiz ve karışık bir hal alır.	
5	Yakın bir ilişki içindeyken benlik duygumu yitirmekten korkarım	
6	İnsanlar beni başarılı bulduğunda çok mutlu, başarısız bulduğunda ise mahvolmuş hissederim.	
7	Sıcakkanlı ve fedakâr olmak ile soğuk ve ilgisiz biri olmak arasında gidip gelirim.	
8	İşte ya da okuldaki halime kıyasla evde daha farklı bir kişiymişim gibi hissederim.	
9	İnsanlar hayran olduğum kişilerin eksik yönlerini görmekte zorluk çektiğimi söyler.	

10	Duyduğum bir sesin ya da gördüğüm bir şeyin hayal dünyamın ürünü olup olmadığından emin olamam.	
11	Her nasılsa, insanlarla ilişkilerimi nasıl yürüteceğimi asla tam olarak bilemem.	
12	Benim için önemli olan insanların benimle ilgili duygu ve düşünceleri aniden değişecek diye korkarım.	
13	İnsanlar bana o kadar çok ihanet eder ve düşman olur ki, insanlara güvenmekte zorluk çekerim.	
14	Bir hevesle hobiler ve ilgi alanlarına yönelip sonra onlardan kolaylıkla vazgeçerim.	
15	İnsanlar bana, ya sevgiye boğarak ya da terk ederek karşılık verme eğilimindedir.	
16	Kendimi, farklı zamanlarda tamamen farklı huyları olabilen bir insan olarak görüyorum.	
17	Mantıklı bir açıklaması olmayan şeyler duyduğum veya gördüğüm olur.	
18	Bazı fiziksel duyular bedenimde gerçekten var mı yoksa hayal ürünü mü söyleyemem.	
19	Yanıldığım sonradan ortaya çıksa bile, insanlara taparcasına hayranlık duymaya devam ederim.	
20	Bir şeyi sadece gerçek olarak algılamayı mı istiyorum yoksa o şey sahiden gerçek mi söyleyemem.	
21	Gerçekte var olmayan şeyleri gördüğüm olur.	
22	Güvende hissedebilmem için birisine hayranlık duymam gerekir.	
23	Beni iyi tanıyan kişiler bile nasıl davranacağımı tahmin edemez.	
24	Beni çok iyi tanıyan insanlar da dahil olmak üzere, insanların benimle ilgili düşüncelerinden emin olmam zordur.	
25	Hiç kimsenin göremeyeceği ya da duyamayacağı şeyleri görebilirim ya da duyabilirim.	
26	Kendimi, neredeyse bir başkasıymışım, tanıdığım (arkadaş, akraba gibi) hatta tanımadığım birisiymişim gibi hissedirim.	

27	Hiç kimsenin anlayamayacağı ya da bilemeyeceği şeyleri anlarım ya da bilirim.	
28	Davranışlarımdaki değişimlere bir anlam veremem.	
29	Başkalarının gerçekte var olmadığını iddia ettiği şeylerin seslerini duyduğum olur.	
30	Duygularımı aşırı uçlarda, ya çok mutlu olarak ya da derin bir kederle yaşama eğilimindeyim.	
31	Gördüğüm şeylerin, onlara yakından baktığımda, başka şeylere dönüştüklerini düşünürüm.	

