

FAMILIAL MEMORIES OF YOUNG ADULTS: DO FAMILY CLIMATE AND  
SELF-CONSTRUALS PREDICT AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORIES ABOUT  
THE FAMILY?

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FEYZANUR YÖN

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ABOUT THE FAMILY?**

submitted by **FEYZANUR YÖN** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of **Master of Science in Psychology, the Graduate School of Social  
Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Sadettin KIRAZCI  
Dean  
Graduate School of Social Sciences

---

Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY BIYIKOĞLU  
Head of Department  
Department of Psychology

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak ŞAHİN ACAR  
Supervisor  
Department of Psychology

---

**Examining Committee Members:**

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT (Head of the Examining Committee)  
Middle East Technical University  
Department of Psychology

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak ŞAHİN ACAR (Supervisor)  
Middle East Technical University  
Department of Psychology

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek SARITAŞ ATALAR  
Ankara University  
Department of Psychology

---



**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

**Name, Last Name:** Feyzanur YÖN

**Signature:**

## ABSTRACT

### FAMILIAL MEMORIES OF YOUNG ADULTS: DO FAMILY CLIMATE AND SELF-CONSTRUALS PREDICT AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORIES ABOUT THE FAMILY?

YÖN, Feyzanur

M.S., The Department of Psychology

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak ŞAHİN-ACAR

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The present study aimed to examine the roles of individuals' self-construals, namely individuation and relatedness, and family climate in constructing personal narratives about familial memories. Within the purposes of the study, Turkish young adults aged between 18-25 were invited to the lab, and they narrated a familial memory for five minutes. They also reported their self-construals and family climate through an online survey. Personal narratives were coded in the context of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms. The findings revealed that individuation predicted familial narratives, specifically subjective perspective terms. An exploratory result displayed that gender also plays an essential role in memory characteristics. Nevertheless, none of the family climate variables predicted personal narratives in this study. The current study showed the predictive value of individuation and gender difference by replicating previous findings in the related literature. The findings of the present study were discussed within the framework of autobiographical memory literature.

**Keywords:** self-construals, family climate, familial memories, personal narratives, gender.

## ÖZ

### GENÇ YETİŞKİNLERİN AİLE İLE İLGİLİ ANILARI: AİLE İKLİMİ VE BENLİK KURGULARI AİLE İLE İLGİLİ OTOBİYOGRAFİK ANILARI YORDAR MI?

YÖN, Feyzanur

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Bu çalışma, bireylerin benlik kurguları olan bireyleşme ve ilişkililik ile aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinin, aile ile ilgili anılar hakkında kişisel anlatılar oluşturmada nasıl bir rol oynadığını incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışmanın amaçları doğrultusunda, 18-25 yaş arasındaki Türk genç yetişkinler laboratuvara davet edilmiş ve aileleri ile ilgili beş dakikalık anı anlatmışlardır. Ayrıca çevrimiçi bir anket yoluyla benlik kurgularını ve aile iklimini belirtmişlerdir. Kişisel anlatılar, tematik tutarlılık ve öznel perspektif terimleri bağlamında kodlanmıştır. Bulgular, bireyleşmenin ailevi anlatıları, özellikle öznel perspektif terimlerini yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Keşifsel analiz sonuçlarından bir bulgu olarak, cinsiyetin bellek özelliklerinde de önemli bir rol oynadığı anlaşılmıştır. Ancak, bu çalışmada aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinden hiçbiri kişisel anlatıları yordamamıştır. Mevcut çalışma, ilgili literatürdeki önceki bulguları tekrarlayarak bireyselleşme ve cinsiyet farklılığının yordayıcı değerini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları otobiyografik bellek literatürü çerçevesinde tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** benlik kurguları, aile iklimi, aile anıları, kişisel anlatılar, cinsiyet

*To my dear family*



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BID	Balanced Integration Differentiation
FCS	Family Climate Scale
METU	Middle East Technical University
SES	Socioeconomic Status
ToM	Theory of Mind

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Overview

We constantly talk about and share stories from our lives with others, and they also share their stories with us. By sharing or talking about the memories, the past comes out in the present through our memories; therefore, as Barnes (1998) calls it, the “story of me” becomes something between who we were in the past and who we wish to be in the future.

According to the literature, autobiographical memory is associated with several factors, such as cultural contexts and individual differences (Wang, 2021). Burgeoning cross-cultural research shows that people from different cultural backgrounds remember their past differently, but it depends on individuals' cultural characteristics (Ross & Wang, 2010). From this point of view, the role of individual factors has been profoundly investigated in the context of attachment styles (Chae et al., 2011), parenting behaviors (Reese, 2002), and reminiscing (Sahin-Acar et al., 2019). On the other hand, individual differences within the same cultural context might also influence memory characteristics (Sahin & Mebert, 2013). Yet, research on the cultural orientations of individuals on narrative indices in adulthood is scarce, although individuals' cultural orientations, and self-construals, in the same culture continue to form a considerable part of narrative identities of individuals throughout the lifespan (Wang, 2016). As a result, this study aims to fill the gap in the related literature by investigating individuals' self-construals and memory characteristics within the context of familial narratives.

One of the robust variables in predicting the social adaptation of individuals is referred to as the family in which individuals grow up (Kurock et al., 2022; Park & Schepp, 2015). In autobiographical memory literature, familial contexts have been examined and addressed that family relations are effective on emotion regulation (Fivush & Merrill, 2016), perceived family functioning (Trees & Kellas, 2009), and intrafamilial features (Bakir-Demir et al., 2020). However, research about levels and variations in broader family contexts is scarce, even though Fivush and Merrill (2016) described the exosystem as effective in the family narrative in the Adapted Ecological Family Model. Therefore, this study aims to test both individual differences regarding individuals' cultural tendencies, as well as individuals' views on familial context.

In addition, it has been excessively discussed in the related literature that gender differences are embedded in autobiographical memories and personal narratives of individuals (Fivush & Marin, 2018; Gryzman et al., 2016; Reese et al., 2002). A number of studies provide support for the idea that gender is a defining element in personal narratives, and it has been found that females' personal narratives are better compared to males' personal narratives in terms of detailedness, elaborativeness, and expressing emotional tone (Camia et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2021). Further, as already revealed in Bakir-Demir et al. (2020), memory characteristics of personal stories were connected to the narrator's age. It was found that narratives of young adults included more subjective perspective terms and were more coherent than narratives of older adults (Fivush et al., 2011; Pillemer et al., 2003). From these points of view, finally, the current study aims to control for some of the predominant variables, such as gender and age.

## **1.2 Autobiographical Memory**

Do you remember a funny childhood memory or a teenage memory that still embarrasses you? How often do you think about your memories? Have you ever had a past story where you evaluated it differently than you thought before?



The stories we have been told to different people in different places all the time. Thus, memories from the past take place in the present with new perspectives. Fivush (2019) describes the autobiographical self as a framework for who we are and want to be, based on the evolving integration between the past and present. Autobiographical memory takes place as a long-term memory component, an enormous storage system in humans (Fivush & Nelson, 2004). Tulving (1972) defines long-term memory as a system consisting of semantic and episodic memory. Semantic memory stores general knowledge and facts to acquire knowledge, comprehend language, and identify objects (Baddale, 2010). Episodic memory, conversely, is a conscious and personal recollection that plays an essential role in storing the location of experiences and specific details such as feelings and thoughts (Fivush & Graci, 2017; Schacter & Tulving, 1994). As a part of long-term memory, autobiographical memory refers to a recollection of personal experiences, life events from the past to the present, and information regarding the self (Gülgöz, 2018). By linking personal past, present conditions, and future expectations, it also helps individuals to form a consistent self and coherent story about the self (Fivush, 2019; Freeman, 2007).

Moreover, autobiographical memory is a uniquely human ability (Fivush, 2010a; McAdams, 2001; Nelson, 2003); all people showing typical development can integrate personal events into a coherent framework and explain it in a subjective way (Donald, 2001; Fivush, 2019). Furthermore, it is widely accepted that autobiographical memory is a deeply complicated, fluid, and dynamic system in which personal past, present self, and anticipated future play roles together and are embedded in life events and turn into a coherent story (Brown, 2016; McLean et al., 2007). Autobiographical memory is reconstructive since what people remember *now* depends on what they experienced *then* and how they recall it *over time* (Fivush et al., 2017). Hence, it was conceptualized that autobiographical memory is not a repetition of what happened in a specific time and place; it is a reconstructed version of the personal experience from then to now in a subjectively conscious way of perspective (Gülgöz & Sahin-Acar, 2020).

Aside from these characteristics, Wang (2013) describes autobiographical memory that there is a cognitive achievement in its process, and this cognition is scaffolded in a social-cultural way. Namely, in addition to several memory skills, autobiographical memory is also related to the interactions at the individual, family, and cultural levels.

### **1.2.1 Development of Autobiographical Memory**

The literature on autobiographical memory is enriched by tons of scientific research from different and various fields, such as medicine, psychiatry, neuroscience, cognitive, and developmental psychology. While each scientific branch asks essential questions and adds findings to the literature within the scope of its framework, developmental psychology examines a field that frames fundamental questions in terms of the development of autobiographical memory, such as how autobiographical memory develops, what factors have a role in its development and how differences between individuals influence its development. Indeed, the development of autobiographical memory has been examined throughout early childhood, the emergence of the self and consolidation of memories in adolescence, and social and cultural influences in adulthood.

Thelen and Smith (1994) investigated the development of autobiographical memory in their Dynamic Systems Theory, in which cognitive and social factors play roles correspondingly. Regarding cognitive factors, Smith and Thelen (2003) propose that memory development does not happen simultaneously and in one area. They argue that the emergence of different cognitive abilities goes hand in hand. For instance, while receptive language ability improves in one area, there is another development in expressive language skills (Nelson & Fivush, 2004). In this way, children who have mastered characteristics of their language, such as syntactic rules and vocabulary, become more capable of telling coherent and meaningful stories (Pillemer & White, 1989; Reese, 2002). According to Reese (2002), enhancement in self-consciousness and theory of mind (ToM) are also necessary cognitive milestones for autobiographical memory development.

In addition to cognitive factors enabling children to notice patterns in their language and increase their self-understanding, social interactions are also crucial. The Social Cultural Developmental Theory (Nelson & Fivush, 2004) assumes that autobiographical memory is intertwined with social and cultural models of discourse, and these individual and social processes follow various courses of development in autobiographical memory. According to Tomasello (1999), children experience social interaction from birth. That is, they are aware of self and others' intentions until the end of the first year. The period of two to six years of age is vital since children learn how to remember an event and which aspects of the event are worth remembering when they start to have conversations with their parents (Fivush et al., 2006; Sahin-Acar et al., 2019). Many studies show that parents, especially mothers, are quite effective in how children structure their narrative styles (Peterson et al., 1999). In the related literature, mother-child conversations are examined by two types of memory conversations: shared memory conversations called *reminiscing* and unshared memory conversations called *recounting* (Wang & Fivush, 2005; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015). Accordingly, elaborative mothers who ask open-ended questions, give more details and make explanatory comments have children who narrate more detailed and extensive memories that are rich in terms of context, emotions, actions, and evaluations (Jobson et al., 2018; McDonnell et al., 2016). On the other hand, mothers with low elaborative styles have conversations including repetitive questions and comments, a smaller number of words, fewer details, and limited information (Wang, 2007). Therefore, children's contribution to these conversations is limited because they remain passive in interrogative conversations and are generally not allowed to produce their content (Sahin-Acar, 2020). As children develop from middle childhood through adolescence and young adulthood, they become gradually more capable of comprehending an event with its angles and its connections between other events. Therefore, adolescents are more accomplished in collecting their personal life narratives embedded with more advanced perspectives (Bohanek et al., 2008). Further, autobiographical memory continues to develop and evolve into a more complex system with a greater sense of personal identity and the self (Ross & Wang, 2010). In the study of McAdams et al. (2006), it

was found that adults had stories with more positive emotions, displayed more self-differentiation, and had more understanding of their personal growth than before.

In a nutshell, individuals interact with various social and cultural contexts due to their socialization in the developmental process, and socialization practices in the family and society begin from an early age. The knowledge of the reminiscing style, what, who, in what detail, and how often the event should be talked about becomes a cognitive schema over time. Therefore, it is inevitable that culture has a profound influence on individuals' personal past and narratives.

### **1.3 Culture and Autobiographical Memory**

Have you ever thought that your life story might be different, or you might remember your life story differently if you were raised in another culture? One branch of autobiographical memory studies examines how individuals from diverse cultures remember personal narratives and how they narrate them. In cross-cultural autobiographical memory studies, the earliest memories, the age of earliest childhood memories, and the patterns of mother-child reminiscing from differing cultures have been examined (Pillemer, 1998; Wang, 2001). In most of these studies, it was found that people raised in different cultural contexts remember their personal past differently but following their cultural characteristics (Ross & Wang, 2010). Studies of earliest memories in the autobiographical memory literature have examined many aspects of these memories, from their emotional intensity to how specific an event they refer to, the persons mentioned, and the level of detail (Wang, 2016).

One of the most widely used theoretical structures by researchers conducting cross-cultural studies is the theory of individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama et al., 1991). Individuals who grow up in collectivistic cultures make choices and act depending on the values accepted in their social environment while regulating their attitudes and behaviors. In individualistic societies, however, people prioritize their preferences and tendencies and act accordingly. The goal is to realize one's potential in individualistic cultures, whereas

personal preferences are seen as something that can be sacrificed for society's good in collectivistic cultures. Studies in autobiographical memory have revealed significant differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. For instance, in cross-cultural studies examining the earliest memories in life, it has been found that memories of people in individualistic cultures are recalled at an earlier age, have a more coherent narrative, have more specific events, and have a higher total word count (Conway & Jobson, 2012; Fivush & Nelson, 2004).

Similar and consistent results of cross-cultural studies examining the earliest memories of individuals in individualistic and collectivistic cultures have been attributed to the reminiscing styles of their mothers. Leichtman et al. (2000) indicated that mothers born in North America considered an individualistic culture, see their children as an active part of the conversation and include them by asking open-ended questions and allowing the child to direct the conversation. However, in China, a collectivist culture, mothers follow a cognitive map in their minds and keep asking repetitive questions until they get the answer they expect from the child (Wang, 2016). The effect of cultural characteristics on the autobiographical narratives of individuals has been investigated by many studies. However, considerable studies show that individual characteristics and different orientations within the same cultural framework might also be effective on memory characteristics.

### **1.3.1 Self-Construals and Autobiographical Memory**

Numerous empirical studies have supported the notion that the culture and family in which individuals grew up influence their memories profoundly. At this point, the role of individual characteristics influencing memories apart from culture and family might be wondered.

*Self-construal* is defined as a way of identifying and construing selves (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The main component of self-construal is social interactions in the context of an environment (Markus & Kitayama, 2010); hence, people from various

backgrounds acquire different self-construals (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2020; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). Even though the concept of self-construal is influenced by Hofstede's (1980) approach to individualism and collectivism, it holds a view that culture is a dynamic component of diverse entities, such as social and economic conditions. Unlike considering cultural differences within polarized points, the concept of self-construal comprises differentiations of individuals from each other in the same culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010; Imamoglu, 2003). Thus, Kağıtçıbaşı (2017) proposes that since self-construals influence identity development, people can display two self-construals at the same time.

Moreover, specifically for the Turkish context, Kağıtçıbaşı (2017) indicated that due to social and economic changes and a spurt in industrialization and urbanization, families in the Turkish population were exposed to radical transformations. For instance, in terms of parenting and caregiving practices, parents started to appreciate autonomy-fostering parenting style and develop parenting practices in this framework. Parents in their child-rearing practices also emphasized interdependence, emotional closeness, and parental control, one of the patterns of collectivistic cultures. In other words, they acquired a composite parenting style that allows children to be autonomous and confident and to relate to family members emotionally simultaneously (Aytuğlu et al., 2023; Dost-Gözkan, 2022). The study of Ayçiçeği-Dinn and Sunar (2017) also supported the notion that Turkish young adults demonstrated autonomy and connectedness in varying circumstances. In addition, it was found in the same study that neither autonomy nor connectedness orientations outweighed in terms of self-construal of young adults. Therefore, it is important to specifically examine the differentiation in individual cultural orientations in the Turkish context in terms of its potential relationship with autobiographical memory and personal narrative styles.

### **1.3.2 Balanced Integration-Differentiation Model**

By suggesting a more contemporary approach to cultural studies, many researchers in the related literature focus on the fact that every culture consists of some degree of

individualistic and collectivistic trends. One of these researchers, Imamoglu (1998; 2003), pointed out Balanced Integration Differentiation Model (BID), in which she expressed self-construals as *integration* and *differentiation*, and she indicated that individuals inheritably require to have certain degrees of integration and differentiation at the same time. Hence, an individual can be both related and individuated simultaneously.

According to the Balanced-Integration Differentiation (BID) model, an individual might get high or low scores in the orientations of *self-development* (individuation) and *interrelational* (relatedness), which are independent but complementary trends. Thus, the model proposes four self-types consisting of combinations of high or low scores from these orientations. Accordingly, *separated-patterning* and *related-individuation* constitute the most unbalanced and balanced self-construals. While separation and integration requirements can be satisfied in the orientation of related-individuation, neither could be met in the orientation of separated-patterning. Individuals with related-individuation self-construal, which is the most balanced one, have high scores both from individuation and relatedness, and they get close emotional relationships with others but also develop in an individualistic way. Separated-patterning self-construal is characterized by low scores both from individuation and relatedness, and individuals with this self-construal succeed in neither forming relationships with others nor developing independently. In addition, between these two extremes, there are also *separated-individuation* and *related-patterning* self-construals in the model. Only the need for personal separation can be satisfied in the self-construal of separated-individuation. That is, individuals tend to prioritize their autonomy rather than emotional connectedness with the others. Lastly, in related-patterning orientation, only the need for interpersonal integration can be satisfied. In this orientation, individuals construct emotional closeness with others, but they might fail to explore their unique features (Imamoglu 1998; 2003; Imamoğlu & Güler-Edwards, 2007). The initial theoretical framework of Imamoglu (1998) examined self-construals typologically. Later, the two orientations namely as individuation and relatedness were used as continuous variables in most of the more recent research (Imamoglu, 2003; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015).

It is well-documented that cultural contexts and tendencies profoundly influence autobiographical memory development (McLean et al., 2018; Wang, 2021; Wang et al., 2018). By taking into consideration self-construal orientation in autobiographical memory research is also fruitful in terms of providing vital information. One of the first studies investigating self-construal in the context of autobiographical memory, Sahin and Mebert (2013) focused on the relationship between self-construals and memory characteristics of the earliest childhood memories of college students from Turkey and the US. Independent from the culture, it was revealed that students with high scores in individuation and relatedness recalled their earliest childhood memories from an earlier date, and they reported their narratives more easily than those with low scores in two of the orientations. In another cross-cultural study conducted by Sahin-Acar and Leichtman (2015), memory conversations of mother-child dyads were collected from the US and Turkish cities of İzmir and Gaziantep, and mothers' self-construals were examined. Findings showed that although mothers in Turkey were not significantly different from mothers in the US, individuation orientation significantly predicted an increment in elaborativeness and a decline in repetitiveness.

In addition to the cultural orientations that individuals are tended to, the influence of the family on the development of individuals continues to maintain its importance almost throughout life (Steinberg et al., 2012). Existing studies have shown that different parenting styles are related to many intercultural developmental processes (e.g., Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). Hence, the autobiographical memory literature has also extensively discussed the role of the family and family relationships between society and the self.

#### **1.4 Family Relationships and Autobiographical Memory**

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1974) considers the development of an individual in a complex system in which the surroundings influence interactions. The perspective of Bronfenbrenner (1974) concurs with Social Learning Theory and Sociocultural Theory in terms of pointing out the individual's environment.



Accordingly, dynamic relations play a role in the development of an individual, beginning from immediate ones, such as family, to broader contexts, such as social norms (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 2000). Ecological systems theory argues that the individual is located at the center of the systems. Besides, as the behaviors of individuals are affected by the interactions in which they are involved, the individual also influences and transforms the systems.

Family relations were also investigated by several theories in psychology. Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1973) points out that the bonding between parents and children is important throughout life. It was widely studied that securely attached people are low in the dimensions of anxiety and avoidance (Fraley & Roisman, 2014; Jones et al., 2015); in addition, they easily establish closeness with people and intimacy in their relationships (Selçuk et al., 2010; Sümer et al., 2016). Moreover, Kağıtçıbaşı (2017) suggests the Autonomy-Relatedness Self Model in which the family is seen as a bridge between conceptualizations of society and the socialization of an individual. Starting from these points of view, Fivush and Merrill (2016) expanded the Sociocultural Theory of Autobiographical Memory (Fivush, 2008) and adapted Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model to depict the family in the contexts of reminiscing and narrative. Hence, they adapted another version of the ecological family model focusing on family narratives.

The model shows that an individual's autobiographical memory was also placed on other systems, such as broader family and cultural narratives. Fivush (2019) explained the *microsystem* in this model as the first layer in which the child has his or her own experiences. In this system, the child learns to construct a personal and meaningful story about an experience with the parent's help. Fivush (2019) characterized the second system as the *exosystem* that enables children to learn about the experiences of the others. The events are not directly experienced by the child but are known by a narrated story about others' past. Lastly, the broadest one, the *macrosystem*, forms an understanding of individuals regarding socio-cultural schemes and family history, such as stories of greater grandparents or cultural myths. Within the framework of this adapted model, autobiographical memory researchers

conducted many studies to comprehend the family's place in the narratives. For instance, in the longitudinal study of Marin et al. (2008), parents and adolescents from the same family were assessed regarding self-esteem and emotion regulation. Families were asked to tell a shared and negative memory, and they were examined regarding each member's contribution to the story with codings of evaluation, explanation, repetition, and elaboration. Consequently, it was revealed that adolescents demonstrated higher self-confidence and intellectual capacity when their parents used more explanations and elaborations and had more resolutions while narrating the story. Also, it was found that adolescents have fewer behavioral problems, such as internalizing and externalizing problems, when parents, especially mothers, elaborate and express more negative emotions (Bohanek et al., 2008). Overall, the family provides a way to scaffold and develop coherent personal narratives; further, it plays a crucial role in constructing individuals' memories and the degree to which they contain emotion, elaboration, and volume.

#### **1.4.1 Family Climate and Autobiographical Memory**

A robust predictor of social adaptation during lifespan is having a family providing secure emotional bonding with its members and a peaceful home environment (Kurock et al., 2022). Burgeoning research also shows that family climate has a vital role in individuals' behavioral problems and well-being of individuals (Brinksma et al., 2020; Park & Schepp, 2015; Olson, 2019).

Even though the family climate is defined depending on the measurements, which have different approaches in terms of focusing on family characteristics, it might be defined as the psychological atmosphere involving a family's cohesion, adaptability, expressiveness, and organization (Kurock et al., 2022; Gönül et al., 2018). Vandeleur et al. (2007) stated that family climate is related to the concepts such as the quality of relations between its members, organization, social interactions, and intergenerational transfer of family values and skills.

A systematic review conducted by Kurock et al. (2022) indicated that family climate was significantly associated with adolescents' problem-solving skills and social

adaptation. Also, Vangelisti et al. (1999) studied college students, and they revealed that humor, cooperation, caring, and adaptability were related to higher levels of family satisfaction. In contrast, attributes of personality, contending values, disrespect, and confusion were linked to lower levels of family satisfaction in the same study. In another study carried out in Turkey by Bakir-Demir et al. (2021), findings showed that people with a positive family climate reported more identity connections with their family members and higher levels of well-being. Moreover, Trees and Kellas (2009) considered family climate and storytelling of familial memory. They found that when families jointly talked about their negative experiences in a more thematically coherent way, they addressed family supportiveness more and reported higher family functioning. In addition, they engaged in a perspective-taking attitude more, confirmed each other more, and used a more attentive way of talking while narrating in contrast to other families.

All in all, it can be stated that researching storytelling in the context of family relations might be fruitful. On the other hand, most of the research about shared family experiences corresponds to the microsystem in the adapted ecological family model as described in Fivush and Merrill (2016). Furthermore, research on broader family contexts and the effect of those kinds of family relationships on autobiographical memory is scarce. However, the exosystem in the adapted model (Fivush & Merrill, 2016) is also effective, especially in intergenerational and communicative family narratives (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021).

Given these results and the gap in the literature, it seems critical to study possible associations between family relationships and shared familial narratives in a context that lies in the niche of the exosystem. It is unclear how variations of familial environments might be reflected in narrative characteristics. To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to investigate family climate in personal narratives' characteristics of memories about the family.

#### **1.4.2 Narrative Identity of Young Adults in the Context of Self-Construals and Family Relations**

In the theory of psychosocial development of Erikson (1968), it is stated that after a coherent sense of self comes out, a further progress is obtained in early adulthood: People start to make vital life decisions, such as occupational trajectories or romantic partners which are going to influence their life stories thoroughly (McAdams & McLean, 2013; van Doeselaar et al., 2020).

Narrative identity is defined in the context of a life story involving personal narratives (McAdams, 2001; Wang et al., 2017). Personal narratives give a person a coherent perspective regarding the past, present, and anticipated self (Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010). While young adults scaffold their self-defining memories by the role of autobiographical reasoning, the ability to connect past and present senses of self logically, they organize more complicated memories in terms of thematically coherent and causally connected both in familial and cultural contexts (Bluck & Habermas, 2001; Gryzman & Hudson, 2010).

McLean and Pasupathi (2012) indicated in their study that more thematically coherent narratives of adults might emerge in healthy identity resolution, as Erikson (1968) defined. Many studies suggest that the extent of coherence in a narrative is associated with social competence, relatedness to others, and psychological well-being (Habermas & de Silveria, 2008; Vanaken et al., 2021; Waters & Fivush, 2015) since the extent of coherence refers to the capacity of autobiographical reasoning displaying continuing interactions and identity synthesis which in turn remarking cognitive skills in the individuals (Aytuglu et al., 2023). There is abundant evidence from empirical studies that higher levels of thematic coherence and causal connection in the narratives were related to higher scores of life satisfaction and self-confidence (Reese et al., 2017) and lower scores in anxiety and depression (Chen et al., 2021). Moreover, high coherence was found as related to positive self-view and positive intimate relationships (Hallford et al., 2021). In a two-years longitudinal study on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was revealed that participants

who had higher levels of well-being narrated their stories more coherently (Vanaken et al., 2022).

As Fivush (2019) indicated in the adapted ecological family model (Fivush & Merrill, 2016), family affects people's narrative coherence since they develop within the family relationships. Therefore, a body of research investigated the resemblance between parents' and children's characteristics of autobiographical memory. It was found that, especially between mothers and daughters, features of parents' memories in terms of volume, level of elaboration, detailedness, and cohesion were linked to children's memories (Peterson & Roberts, 2003). Sahin-Acar et al. (2017) examined grandmother-mother and daughter from the same family to understand how intrafamilial and intergenerational memories resembled and differed. It was revealed that their earliest memories were similar when they were investigated in terms of the total number of words and detailedness.

Besides, several studies (Imamoglu & Karakitapoglu-Aygun, 2004; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2017; Sumer et al., 2021) supported the approach that variations within the same culture influence dynamics at the societal and familial levels, and in turn, they are associated with the factors that may be affecting autobiographical memories. The studies of Sahin-Acar and Leichtman (2015) and Sahin et al. (2013) found that memory characteristics differed by the role of self-construals of the mothers both across and within the cultures. Similarly, Aytuglu et al. (2023) and Ayçiçeği-Dinn and Sunar (2017) also found that individuals' self-construals from the same family were associated with their personal narratives. As a striking finding from the two branches of autobiographical studies focusing on cultural and familial levels, individuals who scored higher in individuation orientation elaborated more in memory conversations and personal narratives (Aytuglu et al., 2023; Fivush, 2019; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015).

All in all, in the light of previous studies, cultural orientation and familial dynamics are likely to be vital components in reminiscing and narrative styles in autobiographical memory research. Hence, there is a clear need to understand how

cultural and familial variations, both at individual and family levels, associate with autobiographical narratives.

### **1.5 The Role of Gender on Personal Narratives**

The literature on autobiographical memory development showed that the parenting practices exhibited by the parents during the preschool years, are related to the gender differences that emerge in the future narratives. Fivush and Marin (2018) discuss that gender differences in personal narratives are intertwined with unconscious senses of self. Depending on their findings, they suggested that parenting behaviors have a significant role in scaffolding narratives of their children in terms of narrating them in a gendered way. The role of gender in the context of autobiographical memory has been framed with the notion that parents, especially mothers, elaborate more, use more emotional words and tell more complex stories to their daughters than to their sons; hence, most of the researchers in the related literature agree that the maternal reminiscing style stands for gender differences in autobiographical memory narratives (Adams et al., 1995; Bauer et al., 2003; Fivush et al., 2003; Reese et al., 1996).

In an attractive study conducted in Turkey, parents and children aged between five to six were invited to the laboratory. They were asked to discuss shared memories: one emotionally positive and one emotionally negative memory. The researchers encoded and analyzed the total number of words used, conversational turn-taking, and total emotion words during those triadic conversations. Accordingly, the parents used more emotion words and more different emotion words in the conversations with a daughter than in the conversations with a son. In essence, if the child in the triads of mother-father-child was a girl, each member of the family used more words and more various emotional expressions than in the triads of mother-father-son (Bürümlü-Kısa & Sahin-Acar, 2020). Various studies support the idea that gender is also a critical and defining element for personal identity and narratives throughout adolescence and adulthood (Gryzman et al., 2016; Pillemer et al., 2003). Accordingly, females reported personal narratives with more elaborations, emotional

expressions, and subjective perspective terms than males in adolescence and adulthood (Chen et al., 2021; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013). A longitudinal and follow-up study by Camia et al. (2021) investigated whether positive parenting practices are associated with life stories and how narrative characteristics of young adults change in coherence, complexity, and emotional tone. Interestingly, in addition to other findings, it was revealed that females, independent from the other variables in a familial context, provided more complicated personal narratives with diversified perspectives, more elaborations, and emotional tone expressions than males.

In this current study, gender is used as a controlled variable to explore gender differences in personal narratives about the family.

## **1.6 Current Study**

As documented in the sections above, existing studies have reviewed associations between cultural contexts and personal narrative identity in explaining the effect of cultural variations on families and individuals. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether variations within the same culture influence connections between personal narratives and familial circumstances. Furthermore, even though a limited number of studies examined individual tendencies in terms of self-construal and narrative identity, how variations of individual tendencies within the framework of the family are associated with narratives about familial memories needs to be explored. Also, there are a number of research indicating gender differences are embedded in personal narratives, and differences resulting from gender were found in various studies with different cultural or age groups. To control the role of gender in familial narratives, it was added to the study as a control variable.

Beyond these potential predictors and gender as a control variable, other individual differences, such as chronological age, might predict individual memory characteristics. Even if 18-25 is defined as young adulthood, the age of 18 is defined as the beginning of a new life chapter where reminiscing bump on and lots of novel developments occur compared to the age of 25, where a relatively certain lifestyle

takes place (Demiray et al., 2009; Grück & Bluck, 2007). Therefore, age was also a control variable in the current study.

Within the scope of the mentioned gaps in the literature, the first aim of the current study was to examine self-construals, by the role of individuation and relatedness orientations, in the link between constructing family narratives and familial memories in the Turkish cultural context. The second aim was to investigate how family climate affects personal narratives about familial memories in young adults. Thus, this study was intended to reveal how the psychological atmosphere in the family influences individuals' narratives while talking about a shared family memory. It was mainly targeted in this study to investigate how individuals' orientations in terms of self-construals and the family climate were reflected in the narrative identity by coding familial memories depending on thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms.

In concordance with the aims, the present study was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

- 1) It was hypothesized that both individuation and relatedness subscores of self-construals should predict memory characteristics of familial memories. Specifically, individuals who score higher both on individuation and relatedness should exhibit higher levels of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms in familial narratives.
- 2) There were no specific hypotheses on family climate subscales as predictors, and they were used for exploratory reasons.



## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### 2.1 Participants

Participants in the present study were mainly Middle East Technical University students from 16 different cities in Turkey. There were 192 participants aged between 17 to 36, consisting of 141 females and 51 males. The sample consisted of 146 participants who have intact families and aged between 18-25, including 112 females ( $M_{\text{years}} = 21.91$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ) and 34 males ( $M_{\text{years}} = 21.63$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ). The education level of the participants ranged from undergrad students to Ph.D. candidates. Regarding the participants' parents, their education level varied from being literate to having a postgraduate degree. Regarding the perceived socioeconomic status (SES), 21.2% of the participants evaluated their family income as high or very high, 59.6% classified their income as average, and 19.2% stated that they have low or very low SES.

##### 2.1.1 Sampling

In the current study, snowball sampling and convenience sampling were preferred. To reach more participants, the study was also added to the SONA system. Accordingly, participants enrolled in the study in SONA were invited to the lab for specific appointments and gained one bonus point corresponding to their participation. Subsequently, Child and Adolescent Development Lab students were asked to engage in a data collection process in the context of their internship program.

## 2.2 Measurements

### 2.2.1 Demographic Information Form

In the demographic information form, date of birth, gender, language, education level and type of residence, and the number of people in their residences were asked of the participants. In addition, there were questions about their parents' education level and marital status, monthly income, and perceived SES (see Appendix A).

### 2.2.2 Balanced Integration-Differentiation Scale (BID)

Balanced Integration-Differentiation Scale (BID), which was developed by Imamoglu (1998), is an assessment of four self-construal styles in individuals. The BIDS has two subscales, named *Relatedness* and *Individuation*, and it measures four styles: Related-Individuation, Separated-Individuation, Related-Patterning, and Separated-Patterning. In total, 29 items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

The subscale of Individuation consists of 13 items assessing self-development orientation. Exemplar items for the subscale might be given as “When alone, I find interesting things to do” or “As one develops, one emotionally gets more distant from his/her family”. The higher scores in this subscale indicate a higher level of individuation. Cronbach Alphas for this subscale were reported as .81 and .74 in the previous studies (Sahin & Mebert, 2013; Imamoglu, 1998). On the other hand, the Relatedness subscale with its 16 items focuses on interpersonal integration. Exemplar items for Relatedness subscale could be “I believe that I will always feel close to my family” or “I prefer to identify with the societal values rather than questioning them”. In this subscale, higher scores indicate a higher level of inter-orientation. Cronbach Alphas for Relatedness subscales were reported as .80 and .91 (Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015; Imamoglu & Karakitapoglu-Aygün, 2004). The current study used mean scores separately for Individuation and Relatedness subscales (see Appendix B).

### 2.2.3 Family Climate Scale (FCS)

The psychological atmosphere in the family was assessed by the Family Climate Scale (FCS) which was developed by Bjönberg and Nicholson (2007). Initially, the scale has six sub-scales: Open Communication (e.g., “We regularly talk about things that concern us”), Intergenerational Authority (e.g., “Family members of the older generation set the rules”), Intergenerational Attention (e.g., “The older generation is very responsive to the needs of the younger generation”), Cognitive Cohesion (e.g., “We have similar views on things”), Emotional Cohesion (e.g., “Family members make each other feel secure”) and Adaptability (e.g., “When we face difficulties we work together effectively”). Every subscale of the FCS has eight items; therefore, the scale consisted of 48 items in total, rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all; 5 = always). Gönül et al. (2018) adapted the FCS into Turkish and examined its psychometric properties. In this adaptation study, it was obtained that four dimensions of the original scale (Open Communication, Emotional Cohesion, Intergenerational Attention, Adaptability) loaded on a single factor that was called “Relatedness in the family”; the other two dimensions, Intergenerational Authority and Cognitive Cohesion remained the same as in the original one. Accordingly, the first subscale is *Relatedness in the family*, which examines the continuity of attachment styles and schemas established with parents during childhood. This category also explores how much older generations in the family care about and support younger generations' interests, needs, and goals. The second subscale is *Cognitive cohesion*, which concentrates on the extent of overlapping family members' values, perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs. Lastly, the subscale of *Intergenerational authority* investigates decision-making processes and mechanisms in the family and how family rules are enforced.

In the current study, it was decided to use the adapted version of the FCS (Gönül et al., 2018) since the study was conducted in a Turkish sample consisting of young adults (see Appendix C). Cronbach's alphas ranged from .89 to .92 for three subscales in this study.

#### 2.2.4 Coding Schemes

To investigate the association between familial memories, self-construals of the participants, and family climate, the memories were collected by a semi-structured interview in which participants were asked to tell a memory that they experienced with their families, and they were coded based on the coding schemes of *Thematic Coherence* (Reese et al., 2011; Reese et al., 2017) and *Subjective Perspective Terms* (Reese et al., 2017). In this regard, all verbatim transcriptions of familial memories were coded by the researcher. 25% of the narratives were coded independently by the two coders. Reliability analyses were carried out for thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms separately based on intraclass correlation coefficient indexes. Moreover, the composite scores of codings were used in this study. They were calculated as the ratio of coding score of each coding scheme to total number of words (*volume*) in the narratives. All calculations were conducted in the light of previous autobiographical memory characteristics literature.

##### *Thematic Coherence*

A general sense of a topic in the familial memory was coded on a Likert scale with 4-point. For a familial memory to be thematically coherent, it needs to contain a main topic in which the content of the memory is enriched by describing the topic, giving information about the chain of events, and expressing an affective atmosphere (Reese et al., 2011; Reese et al., 2017). Accordingly, a score of 0 indicates a familial memory, including a non-clear topic, multiple digressions, and lack of apparent gist of the memory. A score of 1 indicates a memory that has a clear topic, but no elaboration or minimal development of the topic with poor linkages and evaluations. A score of 2 indicates a memory with a substantially developed topic and several instances of causal linkages and interpretations, but it has a wrap-up statement at the end of the memory rather than a resolution with personal evaluations, future connections, or linkage to the personality. A score of 3 indicates a familial memory that was elaborated and interpreted as much as a memory representing a score of 2, but it also includes a well-developed resolution in the memory in which there are

links to other life experiences, such as future occurrences, social identity, or personal values. The score of thematic coherence was calculated as the ratio of thematic coherence score to the total number of words (volume) in the memory. In terms of intraclass correlations, it illustrated a high level of agreement between two independent coders in this study (ICC = .72, 95% CI [.548, .886]).

### ***Subjective Perspective Terms***

The Subjective Perspective Coding Scheme points out the extent of the thoughts and feelings of the narrator in a familial narrative (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021; Reese et al., 2017). Words in the memories were coded in terms of cognitive states including instances of thought, desire, and belief processes (e.g., think, realize, need) and they were identified and totaled. In addition, affective states including emotions (e.g., happy, sad), emotional behaviors (e.g., fighting), or general affective evaluations (e.g., sensitive, enjoyable) were identified by the coders and totaled. Both affection and cognition words were named internal states and the total number of internal states (a total of affection and cognition words) were used in the analyses. The score of subjective perspective terms was calculated as the ratio of number of subjective perspective terms score to the total number of words (volume) in the memory. The intraclass correlation was .96 (95% CI [.941, .984]), revealing a high intercoder agreement in this coding.

### ***Volume***

The total number of words in each familial narrative was counted in Microsoft Office Word.

In Table 1, coding examples of familial memories' narrative characteristics for thematic coherence and its ranging scores (a score of 0, 1, 2 and 3) and for subjective perspective terms (affection and cognition words) were displayed.

**Table 1**

*Examples of Familial Memories' Narrative Characteristics*

Narrative Characteristics	Examples
Thematic Coherence	
A score of 0	“It was snowing on a winter day...immm, then my father had just come home from work, I guess. Then, I think immm... we used to go downstairs and play snowball. Not sure.”
A score of 1	“We usually go on summer holidays as a family and by car. For example, instead of going to a certain hotel, we make holiday plans where we travel from city to city. We chart a course before we leave. For example, we went to the Black Sea. How can I talk about it? Immm... For example, we went to Amasra. I also recommend you see Amasra, a very beautiful place. I mean, I have a strong bond with my family, so I like to travel with them and see places. Then we arranged a place to stay in the evening. We stayed there. We continued our journey as a day trip rather than staying in a hotel.”
A score of 2	“I can actually tell you about the birth of my nephew. Umm. It was the time of the pandemic, just when the schools were closed. That night we slept. The call came from my elder brother. Because my aunt gave birth. They were in Istanbul. We all went to Istanbul together, my mother, father, brother, and me. Of course, we haven't seen the baby yet at first. Then, my aunt and brother stayed in the hospital for a day or two. Routine checks were conducted. Then they came home. That was a pretty good moment. He is the first grandchild in the family because we were three siblings in total. He was my eldest brother's child. We were all there. That was a pretty good moment for all of us. I became an uncle for the first time. My parents were so happy.”

**Table 1** (continued)

A score of 3

“We celebrated New Year's Eve as a family for the first-time last year. It was truly one of the happiest times I can remember. My mother came late that day because she works from school. We used to prepare appetizers to celebrate among ourselves in the kitchen and spend time at work. We started with my father. My brother joined us later. Then my mother came, and we prepared as a family. One of my mother's students gifted my mother a radio that day. We listened to songs like "jingle bells" on the radio and danced together. I really remember feeling such pure happiness. I don't have any negative memories with my family anyway. I always had a happy childhood, and I had nothing on their side. Since last year's New Year's Day was such a moment when we were all together and happy, I can call it pure happiness. Even remembering it still makes me happy.”

Subjective Perspectives

“The last time I went to my family was this holiday. It was a bit of a **nervous** moment since there were problems between my mom and dad. I didn't talk much to the two of them. I didn't talk too much with the two of them at the same time. I spoke separately. On the one hand, I was very **angry** with my father, but on the other hand, I was trying not to make **feel** because I **had a guilty conscience**. I tried not to **think** about the situation, but I was very **angry** with my mother and still tried to do something. I tried to talk to her more **calmly**, in a way that I **understood** her.”

---

**2.3 The procedure**

*Preparation for Data Collection*

For the data collection of this study, ethical approval and other necessary permissions were obtained from the Middle East Technical University Ethical Review

Board (see Appendix D). Following this, a departmental lab was booked to carry on the data collection phase of the study in the psychology department at the campus. Before collecting data, the researcher was trained by the academic supervisor of the study to be prepared for data collection, conducting an interview, and managing the whole process. Also, undergraduate students who were in METU Child and Adolescent Development Lab in the framework of their internship program were contacted to participate in the data collection phase of the study. Students who are willing to collect data were invited to extensive training within the scope of the study. The training was held on Zoom and then at the lab. During the training on Zoom, the main researcher gave information about interview techniques, ethical rules, and the focus of the study without openly revealing its purposes. After that, students were engaged in role-play sessions at the lab in which different interview scenarios and appropriate practices were discussed. The main researcher provided feedback about the scenario by correcting them if necessary.

The study was added to the SONA system in which students could participate in scientific studies in correspondence to bonus points for their selected courses. Students willing to participate in a study get an appointment from the SONA system. After the researcher and participant met in the lab, the researcher introduced herself and the study without explaining the hypotheses. The participants were informed about the duration and content of the study, the voice recording procedure, and confidentiality rules.

### ***Data Collection***

The present study included two tasks to complete. In the first, a structured interview was conducted by the researcher, and it was voice recorded. Once voice recording started, the researcher asked the participant to form a participant code to use as a nickname in the study. For this, the first two letters of the name and surname and the last 2 numbers of the date of birth were used for each participant. After writing nicknames on the paper and double-checking, participants were asked to tell a memory in which their parents and themselves experienced together a time of living for about five minutes with the instruction below:



*“Please think about all the times you have spent with your family since birth. I will ask you to tell me about any of the memories you have experienced with your parents for an average of five minutes during these times.”*

After the researcher and participant decided on the appropriateness of the memory, the participant started their memory, and the researcher listened without interruption while the voice recording was going on. Once the participant completed the memory, the researcher asked whether they wanted to add something other to the memory or not. If the participant declares it is done, the first part was completed, and the voice recording was stopped by the researcher.

In the second task, participants were asked to fill out survey questions on Qualtrics, including Demographics Form, Balanced-Integration and Differentiation Scale, and Family Climate Scale. Before finalizing the process, the researcher thanked the participants for their contribution and answered the questions participants had.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESULTS**

The main aim of the present study is to investigate predictors of the familial memories of young adults. For this purpose, the analyses were carried out in IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 28.0). In this chapter, results obtained from the analyses were introduced in four sections. In the first, preliminary data screening that are reports of outliers, exclusions and missing variables were presented. Descriptive statistics of the study were displayed in the second section. The third section involved bivariate correlations between the study variables. Lastly, in the fourth section, results from hierarchical regressions, which are main analyses of the study, were reported.

#### **3.1 Data Screening**

To examine data properties regarding outliers, excluded and missing variables and to detect whether normality, linearity and regression assumptions were violated, preliminary data screening was conducted. A total of 192 familial memories were collected; however, in the context of data cleaning, 32 participants were excluded because of having non-intact families, such as divorced families or parental loss. 6 participants were also eliminated since they were older than 25. Further, 8 of interviews were not involved since the interviewer did not follow semi-structured interview script properly. Consequently, 146 participants (112 females and 34 males) were involved in the study.

For data accuracy, study variables were checked in terms of minimum and maximum values, and there is no value that is below or above the range. Further, since online

survey questions were arranged as forced option on Qualtrics, there is no missing value in the data of the current study.

Dataset was screened in terms of univariate and multivariate outliers. For univariate outliers, standardized scores were examined whether they have higher than 3.29 of Z scores. One outlier for relatedness in family and one outlier for subjective perspective terms were detected. Also, multivariate outliers were investigated by using Mahalanobis distance, and no multivariate outliers were determined. In this respect, outliers in the dataset might be explained as individual differences in a qualitative study. Therefore, eliminating outliers in the study could result in ignoring unique characteristics of the study sample. Further, concerning the related literature of autobiographical memory, it is expected to observe variations among narrative styles resulting from individual differences. Consequently, it was decided to include outliers since not to eliminate them from the dataset facilitated characteristics of sample in a more accurate way and did not create drastic changes.

Regarding assumption checks, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity assumptions were checked if they were violated or not. Shapiro-Wilk test, Q-Q plots, skewness and kurtosis values, histograms, VIF and Tolerance scores were used. Accordingly, linearity assumptions were met. Values of kurtosis and skewness were obtained in the range of -1.5 and 1.5; therefore, the data was symmetric and not tailed. On the other hand, Shapiro-Wilk test showed that scores of relatedness in the family, intergenerational authority, cognitive cohesion, thematic coherence, and subjective perspective terms were not normally distributed ( $p < .05$ ). Q-Q plots and histograms also showed non-normality of the data. When qualitative purposes of the study, large sample size, and dependent variables that were ratio-based were taken into consideration, regression analysis were still conducted, and any transformation was applied in terms of normality assumptions.

On the other hand, even though VIF and Tolerance scores were in the accepted range (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), it was detected that correlation between the variables of relatedness in the family and relatedness self-construal was high and could pose a

problem in terms of multicollinearity ( $r = .747, p < .01$ ). Therefore, firstly, an interaction score of two variables (Relatedness in the family X Relatedness as self-construal) was added to the tested models. However, the models became worse in terms of both VIF and Tolerance scores and model predictions (*Relatedness as self-construal*, Tolerance = .01, VIF = 41.289; *Interaction of Relatedness as self-construal and Relatedness in the family*, Tolerance = .01; VIF = 101.037). Afterwards, to deal with multicollinearity in this case, it was decided to exclude one of the highly correlated variables and leave the most significant one in the models in the light of related literature (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Hence, relatedness in the family that is a subscale of family climate was excluded in the main analyses due to multicollinearity issue, and hierarchical regression analyses in this current study were conducted without including it.

### 3.2 Descriptive Analyses

To evaluate features of the sample, descriptive analyses were conducted. In Table 2, frequency and percentiles for the study variables and exploratory demographic information were demonstrated.

**Table 2**

*Frequency and Percentiles of Study Variables*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentile</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	112	76.7
Male	34	23.3
<b>Education of mothers</b>		
Primary School Drop-out	3	2.1
Primary School	20	13.7
Secondary School	17	11.6

**Table 2** (continued)

High School	30	20.5
Vocational School	14	9.6
University Drop-out	1	0.7
University	58	39.7
Post-Graduate	3	2.1
<b>Education of fathers</b>		
Primary School Drop-out	2	1.4
Primary School	9	6.2
Secondary School	10	6.8
High School	28	19.2
Vocational School	9	6.2
University Drop-out	4	2.7
University	61	41.8
Graduate Drop-out	3	2.1
Post-Graduate	20	13.7
<b>Perceived SES</b>		
Low	1	0.7
Low-middle	27	18.5
Middle	87	59.6
High-middle	30	20.5
High	1	0.7

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In addition to frequencies and percentile information about study variables, descriptive statistics indicating mean, standard deviation, minimum-maximum values

and sample size information were displayed in Table 3. According to the Table 3, mean for age of participants was 21.77 ( $SD = 1.39$ ). Regarding exploratory demographic information, it was found that mean of importance of memories was obtained as 8.12 ( $SD = 1.6$ ), mean of saving staff for memories was found as 7.26 ( $SD = 2.12$ ), and mean for frequency of talking about memories was 6.00 ( $SD = 2.06$ ). Self-construal scores of participants were calculated subscales of BID, which are individuation and relatedness. While mean of individuation orientation was obtained as 3.53 ( $SD = .41$ ), mean of relatedness was found as 3.81 ( $SD = .41$ ). In terms of family climate subscales, it was calculated that mean of relatedness in family was 82.42 ( $SD = 12.4$ ), mean of intergenerational authority was 19.84 ( $SD = 4.81$ ), and mean of cognitive cohesion was 17.10 ( $SD = 5.17$ ). Dependent variables of the study, thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms, were calculated as the ratio of coding score to the volume (total number of words) in the memory. Accordingly, mean of thematic coherence was found as .00637 ( $SD = .0034$ ), while mean of subjective perspective terms was obtained as .06537 ( $SD = .026$ ). Lastly, mean of volume that was calculated total number of words in the memory was found as 314.08 ( $SD = 165.315$ ).

**Table 3**

*Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum Values of Study Variables*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Age	21.77	1.385	19	25
Importance of memories	8.12	1.597	2	10
Saving staff for memories	7.26	2.121	1	10
Frequency of talking about memories	6.00	2.061	0	10
Relatedness	3.5300	.65321	1.50	4.88
Individuation	3.8130	.40933	2.85	4.92
Relatedness in family	82.42	12.425	41	105
Intergenerational authority in family	19.84	4.808	9	32
Cognitive cohesion in family	17.10	5.175	6	26
Thematic Coherence of memories	.00637	.00341	0	.0181
Subjective Perspective Terms of memories	.06537	.026	1	69
Volume	314.08	165.315	37	864

### 3.3 Correlations

Bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to investigate how study variables are related to each other. Age, education level of parents, perceived SES, importance of memories, collecting staff for memories, and frequency of talking about memories were used in this analysis. Moreover, correlation coefficient values of study variables which are relatedness, individuation, cognitive cohesion, relatedness in the family, and intergenerational authority were displayed in Table 4. Dependent variables of the study, coding of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms were also used in the correlation analyses.

It can be seen in Table 4 that education level of mothers was positively related to importance of memories ( $r = .226, p < .01$ ) and perceived SES ( $r = .439, p < .01$ ). Similarly, fathers' education level was positively correlated to perceived SES ( $r = .306, p < .01$ ). Perceived SES was also positively linked to importance of memories ( $r = .320, p < .01$ ), saving staff for memories ( $r = .176, p < .05$ ) and frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .165, p < .05$ ). Also, there was a positive relationship between importance of memories and saving staff for memories ( $r = .567, p < .01$ ) and between importance of memories and frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .448, p < .01$ ). Saving staff for memories and frequency of talking about memories with family members were positively related ( $r = .353, p < .01$ ).

In addition to these, it was found that individuation is negatively linked to age ( $r = -.207, p < .05$ ) and to cognitive cohesion in the family ( $r = -.298, p < .01$ ). Relatedness self-construal was positively related frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .339, p < .01$ ). Relatedness self-construal were also correlated to all family climate subscales, positively with cognitive cohesion ( $r = .500, p < .01$ ) and relatedness in the family ( $r = .747, p < .01$ ), but negatively with intergenerational authority ( $r = -.380, p < .01$ ).

Regarding family climate elements, it was found that relatedness in the family was positively linked to frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .386, p < .01$ ) and to cognitive cohesion ( $r = .550, p < .01$ ), but negatively linked to intergenerational authority ( $r = -.264, p < .01$ ). Cognitive cohesion was negatively correlated with intergenerational authority ( $r = -.249, p < .01$ ), but positively with frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .212, p < .05$ ).

In terms of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms coding schemes, it can be seen in Table 4 that thematic coherence was positively correlated with subjective perspective terms ( $r = .317, p < .01$ ) and negatively with volume ( $r = -.354, p < .01$ ). On the other hand, subjective perspective terms were positively related to perceived SES ( $r = .171, p < .05$ ) frequency of talking about memories with family members ( $r = .174, p < .05$ ), and negatively related to individuation self-construal ( $r = -.164, p < .05$ ) and volume ( $r = -.165, p < .05$ ). Regarding volume which was the total number of words in each familial memory, it was found that perceived SES was positively linked to it ( $r = .216, p < .01$ ), while it was negatively linked to thematic coherence ( $r = -.354, p < .01$ ) and subjective perspective terms ( $r = -.165, p < .05$ ).



**Table 4***Correlations between Study Variables*

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Age	1						
2 Education of mothers	-.084	1					
3 Education of fathers	-.092	.637**	1				
4 Perceived SES	-.002	.439**	.306**	1			
5 Importance of memories	-.065	.226**	.131	.320**	1		
6 Saving staff for memories	-.038	.092	-.017	.176*	.567**	1	
7 Frequency of talking about memories	-.053	.124	-.013	.165*	.448**	.353**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4**  
(continued)

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Individuation Self-construal	-.207*	-.148	-.136	-.048	-.051	-.032	-.140
9 Relatedness Self-construal	-.033	.078	.035	.147	.135	.134	.339**
10 Relatedness in family	.079	.136	.054	.182*	.070	.046	.386**
11 Intergenerational authority in family	-.020	-.087	-.126	.057	.038	-.035	-.054
12 Cognitive cohesion in family	.194*	.167*	.158	.115	.088	.079	.212*
13 Thematic coherence of memories	.001	.087	.004	.081	.094	.070	.113
14 Subjective Perspective of memories	.126	.003	.073	.171*	.058	-.002	.174*
15 Volume	.020	-.046	.034	.216**	.092	.058	-.006

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4**  
(continued)

Variable Names	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
8 Individuation Self-construal	1	.090	-.052	-.156	-.298**	.101	.028	.139
9 Relatedness Self-construal	.090	1	.747**	-.380**	.500**	.162	.010	.104
10 Relatedness in family	-.052	.747**	1	-.264**	.550**	.054	-.053	-.020
11 Intergenerational authority in family	-.156	-.380**	-.264**	1	-.249**	-.060	.082	-.032
12 Cognitive cohesion in family	-.298**	.500**	.550**	-.249**	1	-.034	.007	.105
13 Thematic coherence of memories	-.008	.071	.099	-.046	-.043	1	.317**	-.354**
14 Subjective Perspective of memories	-.164*	-.074	.029	.085	-.072	.317**	1	-.165*
15 Volume	.139	.104	-.020	-.032	.105	-.354**	-.165*	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 3.4 Main Analyses

In the current study, hierarchical regression analysis was selected as the main analysis to examine whether study variables, self-construals, and family climate subscales (cognitive cohesion and intergenerational authority) explain a statistically significant variance change in familial memories after controlling gender and age. In the present study, familial memories were investigated and coded by two different schemes of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms. Therefore, to be able to observe potential indirect effects of study variables, self-construals, individuation and relatedness, were entered in the first step in this study. As a second step, two subscales of Family Climate Scale (FCS), which are cognitive cohesion and intergenerational authority were added. In the last step, gender was entered as a dummy coded and control variable in the analysis. In addition, because familial memories were coded by two different coding schemes, thematic coherence and subjective perspective, two hierarchical regression analyses were conducted for each of coding schemes separately.

#### 3.4.1 Hierarchical Regression for Thematic Coherence

In order to test the predictors of the study, a hierarchical linear regression analysis was carried out with three steps of variables. As seen in Table 5, in the first step, self-construal variables which are individuation and relatedness orientations were entered to the analysis. The second step includes family climate variables which were cognitive cohesion and intergenerational authority. Gender (0 = female, 1 = male) was involved in the last step as a control variable<sup>1</sup>. Overall, the results showed that the first model was not significant,  $F(2,143) = .373, p = .689, R^2 = .005$ , adjusted  $R^2 = -.009$ . The second model did not show significant association between study variables,  $F(4,141) = .629, p = .643, R^2 = .018$ , adjusted  $R^2 = -.010$ . The third model had also no statistically significant result in terms of predicting thematic coherence

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that although age was also a control variable in this study, adding it to the models did not change goodness of fit values ( $F(6,139) = .518, p = .794$ , adjusted  $R^2 = -.020$ ). Therefore, to gain more statistical power, it was not included in hierarchical regression analysis steps.

of familial memories,  $F(5,140) = .626, p = .680, R^2 = .022$ , adjusted  $R^2 = -.013$ . None of study variables were significantly associated with thematic coherence of familial memories; hence, they did not explain any variance.

**Table 5**

*Results of The Analysis for Thematic Coherence*

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sign$	Adjusted $R^2$	95% Confidence Interval		$F$
					Lower	Upper	
Step 1				-.009			.373
Relatedness	.072	.858	.392		.000	.001	
Individuation	-.015	-.177	.860		-.002	.001	
Step 2				-.010			.629
Relatedness	.130	1.249	.214		.000	.002	
Individuation	-.068	-.730	.467		-.002	.001	
Intergenerational authority	-.042	-.453	.651		.000	.000	
Cognitive cohesion	-.138	-1.302	.195		.000	.000	
Step 3				-.013			.626
Relatedness	.142	1.350	.179		.000	.002	
Individuation	-.075	-.804	.423		-.002	.001	
Intergenerational authority	-.039	-.418	.676		.000	.000	
Cognitive cohesion	-.144	-1.351	.179		.000	.000	
Gender	.067	.789	.432		-.001	.002	

*Note:* Dependent variable is Thematic Coherence of memories

### 3.4.2 Hierarchical Regression for Subjective Perspective Terms

The same set and order of study variables were carried out for subjective perspective terms as dependent variable in another hierarchical regression analysis. In Table 6, results obtained from the analysis were presented. Overall, the results showed that the first model was not significant,  $F(2,143) = 2.246, p = .109, R^2 = .030$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .017$ . The second model also did not show significant association between study variables and subjective perspective terms in familial narratives,  $F(4,141) = 1.613, p = .174, R^2 = .044$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .017$ . In this step, although the overall model did not predict subjective perspective terms in familial memories, individuation as self-

construal predicted significantly ( $\beta = -.203, p < .05$ ). After gender was added to the model as a control variable<sup>2</sup>, the third model significantly predicted subjective perspective terms in familial memories,  $F(5,140) = 2.636, p < .05, R^2 = .086$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .053$ . The addition of gender as a control variable accounted for a statistically significant increase in the variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .042, p < .05$ ). Also, individuation as self-construal significantly accounted for subjective perspective terms ( $\beta = -.180, p < .05$ ). In other words, individuals who have higher scores in individuation orientation used more subjective perspective terms in their familial narratives. Collectively, 8.6% of the variance was accounted for subjective perspective terms in familial memories by all the study variables in the model.

**Table 6**

*Results of The Analysis for Subjective Perspective Term*

	$\beta$	$T$	<i>Sign</i>	Adjusted $R^2$	95% Confidence Interval		$F$
					Lower	Upper	
Step 1				.017			2.246
Relatedness	-.060	-.721	.472		-.009	.004	
Individuation	-.159	-1.920	.057		-.020	.000	
Step 2				.017			1.613
Relatedness	.023	.229	.819		-.007	.009	
Individuation	-.180	-2.214	.028		-.024	-.001	
Intergenerational authority	.028	.307	.759		-.001	.001	
Cognitive cohesion	-.137	-1.311	.192		-.002	.000	
Step 3				.053			2.636
Relatedness	-.015	-.145	.885		-.009	.007	
Individuation	-.180	-1.991	.048		-.023	.000	
Intergenerational authority	.018	.204	.839		-.001	.001	
Cognitive cohesion	-.119	-1.158	.249		-.002	.000	
Gender	-.209	-2.545	.012		-.023	-.003	

*Note:* Dependent variable is Subjective Perspective Terms of memories

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that although age was also a control variable in this study, adding it to the models did not change goodness of fit values ( $F(6,139) = 2.668, p < .05$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .052$ ). Therefore, to gain more statistical power, it was not included in hierarchical regression analysis steps for subjective perspective terms.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DISCUSSION**

The current study mainly investigated whether individual tendencies in the same culture are associated with familial narratives. Thus, in the present study, it was first aimed to examine how individuals' self-construals influence their familial narratives. With this aim, memories about families were coded depending on thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms, and the self-construals of Turkish young adults were assessed on whether self-construal and familial memories were associated with each other.

Moreover, this study also aimed to explore how family climate was associated with personal narratives about familial memories in Turkish young adults. With the focus of this aim, familial memories that young adults experienced with their parents in the past were coded in the context of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms, and it was examined whether the family climate was related to the familial narratives.

The first hypothesis was that both individuation and relatedness subscores of self-construals should predict memory characteristics of familial memories. Accordingly, individuals scoring higher on individuation and relatedness orientations should exhibit higher levels of thematic coherence and subjective perspective terms in their familial narratives. The results showed that self-construals, specifically individuation orientation seem to predict memory characteristics, especially in terms of subjective perspective terms. The findings indicating individuation predicted subjective perspective terms in familial memories could be explained by various studies revealing similar results in the related literature.

When autobiographical memory literature was reviewed regarding self-construals, individuation rather than relatedness produced significant results. In one of the earlier studies focusing on cultural orientations and memory characteristics, Wang (2004) found that American children describing more self-orientation in their memories produced richer and more detailed narratives than their Chinese peers who framed themselves in social roles and cultural interactions. The study by Sahin-Acar and Leichtman (2015) found that US mothers scoring higher than Turkish mothers in individuation were more elaborative, provided more details, and had more context-statement information in the conversations with their preschool children. Recently, Aytuglu et al. (2023) examined young adults and self-construals in terms of coherence in personal narratives, and they revealed that individuals who scored higher in autonomy and lower in relatedness orientations provided more thematically coherent memories.

In Imamoglu's (1998; 2003) perspective, individuation was the tendency to develop and behave in a distinctive and separating way of one's essence concerning self-potential, cognition, and interests. Therefore, an individuated individual could be described as one of their personal preferences and unique characteristics and healthily differentiated from the rest of the family and society. In addition, Pillemer (2009) views that "whatever about the past is worthwhile to remember" and suggests people higher in individuation orientation are also more knowledgeable about their ideas, emotions, and cognitions; therefore, they believe this was also reflected in their narratives.

This study revealed that individuation orientation predicted memory characteristics, particularly regarding subjective perspective terms. Within the scope of the coding scheme of subjective perspective terms, since affection and cognition words are counted, it was frequently preferred to explore personal narratives in the related literature. Habermas et al. (2010) and Habermas and de Silveria (2008) described using extended subjective perspective terms to create a narrative identity as a developmental accomplishment. This view was also supported by Chen et al. (2021), which found that adolescents who developed more self-understanding used more



subjective perspective terms in their narratives. Hence, it might be speculated that people who are more individualized and differentiated from the rest of significant others and explore their unique ways are more capable of expressing affection and cognition; thus, the finding showing individuation predicted subjective perspectives in the familial narratives could be confirmed in this way.

Even though the current study demonstrated significant results in the fact that individuation predicted subjective perspective terms in the familial narratives, the orientation of relatedness did not produce any significant results in the models. Likewise, the studies such as Sahin-Acar et al. (2019), Sahin-Acar and Leichtman (2015), and Sahin et al. (2013), which focused on different age groups and cultures also found that relatedness did not work as well as individuation in predicting memory characteristics. Therefore, we discuss that relatedness orientation may be typologically included in Balanced Integration Differentiation, and individuation might be a better predictor than relatedness, at least regarding predicting memory characteristics. Thus, the results of this study, in a way, replicated the findings in the existing literature.

As a second hypothesis, subscales of family climate were investigated, although there is no specific expectation. In order to delve deeper into which elements of social environments and developmental contexts are linked to autobiographical memories and to specify the roles of social groups such as family, this study also investigated family climate for exploratory purposes. Also, to examine memory characteristics in the exosystem in the context of adapted ecological family model (Fivush & Merrill, 2016) and to tap into broader family contexts in Turkey, which still has some traditional and more extended family features (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007), the conceptualization of family climate and Family Climate Scale (Björnberg & Nicholson, 2008) was chosen. Thus, it was aimed to explore how the view and understanding of the family were related to the personal narratives of the family and which aspects play a role in this process. On the other hand, none of the family climate subscales, including cognitive cohesion and intergenerational authority in

this study, did produce any significant results regarding predicting memory characteristics in terms of thematic coherence or subjective perspective terms.

There might be a couple of reasons why family climate subscales did not predict memory characteristics. Firstly, the influence of the family might be evident when the family is viewed as a unit. For instance, the studies of Elibol-Pekaslan (2019) investigating adolescents and their mothers, Burumlu-Kisa and Sahin-Acar (2020) examining mother-father-child as triads, and Bakir-Demir et al. (2020) exploring intrafamilial features found that familial variations influence memory conversations and characteristics. Also, Trees and Kellas (2009) examined individuals from the same family and found that when they engage in shared reminiscing, they display more perspective-taking and consideration. One of the essential features of these mentioned studies is that they examined the family as a unit with the family itself. However, this study measured the effect of family and family climate on personal narratives with a scale-based assessment; hence, it was novel in the related literature. From this point of view, it can be asserted that it is difficult to analyze the family and family climate by assessing them as a scale-based one. Secondly, Family Climate Scale (Bjönberg & Nicholson, 2007) might not be working in the context of autobiographical memories. Even though the scale was adapted to Turkish culture by Gönül et al. (2018) and the scale had good reliability and validity values in terms of psychometric properties, the construct validity, meaning how well an assessment measures a concept that was intended to evaluate might not be suitable specifically for autobiographical memories. Bakir-Demir et al. (2021) also investigated family climate with Family Climate Scale (FCS) and failed to find any significant results for memory characteristics.

Lastly, Family Climate Scale (FCS) was developed by Bjönberg and Nicholson (2007) to examine family climate and familial mechanisms associated with the Family Systems Theory's perspective, especially in business and industrial-organizational psychology. It has been frequently used in the samples of family companies where family members from several generations work together. In addition, the results of the study conducted to adapt the FCS to Turkish culture

supported the 3-factor structure consisting of 34 items instead of the 6-factor structure of the original scale composed of 48 items. The subscales of open communication, emotional cohesion, intergenerational interest, and compatibility in the original scale were combined under a single factor in the adapted version. Therefore, the FCS has been relatively modified from its original version. From this point of view, it can be discussed that the Family Climate Scale might not work suitably for this kind of study, especially for personal narratives. Further studies should examine family variations and investigate them in a familial context.

Although gender was not included in the main research questions and used as a controlled variable in the present study, it was found that gender predicted familial memory characteristics, particularly in subjective perspective terms. Depending on autobiographical memory and personal narratives literature, gender was chosen as a control variable in this study since it is inevitable that gender to add as a control variable. Indeed, numerous studies supported the notion of Fivush and Zaman (2014) that gender is a crucial factor while constructing autobiographical consciousness. A number of studies with a variety of methods, age groups, and cultural contexts revealed that autobiographical memories of women were more emotionally complex in contrast to men (Boals, 2010; Bohanek & Fivush, 2010; McLean, 2005; Pillemer et al., 2003; Rice & Pasupathi, 2010). Specifically, Bauer et al. (2003) found that female college students used more cognition, emotion, and perception terms in their narratives. Also, in this study, gender predicted memory characteristics, specifically for subjective perspective terms, including affection and cognition words, which might be because women use emotion words more than men. Therefore, it can be speculated that most of the variance might result from the number of emotion words women used in subjective perspective terms. Sahin-Acar (2020) argues gender differences in personal narratives that as one of the social roles assigned to women under the influence of patriarchy that has been going on for centuries, keeping the family system together and managing the family is learned from a very early age for women. Hence, women have more freedom than men to talk about their feelings in the context of gender roles. It could be argued that in addition to expressing their

emotions, managing the emotions of other members of the family system are among the primary gender roles expected from women.

Up to this point, all these speculations were found for subjective perspective terms, whereas we could not find any significant result for thematic coherence. There might be a couple of reasons why there was no relation between none of self-construal and family climate and thematic coherence. As a first reason, it might be asserted that as a coding scheme, thematic coherence is technically different from subjective perspective terms. Grysman and Mansfield (2020) described the coding of thematic coherence as a *zoom-out* technique in the context of narrative methods in autobiographical memory. However, the coding of subjective perspective is a *zoom-in* technique and frequency-based one where emotion and cognition words are counted and pooled. In this point, although coding schemes are evaluated regarding interrater reliability, the subjective perspective coding scheme is a continuous variable, in which Pearson's  $r$  assesses interrater reliability, and it is a comparatively objective method compared to thematic coherence. On the other hand, the coding of thematic coherence is defined as an ordinal variable in which interrater reliability is assessed by *Kappa*; therefore, it is evaluated more subjectively. In other words, although the ICC scores were high enough, a different technique is used for thematic coherence, and it is more challenging to evaluate it compared to subjective perspective terms relying on frequency count. Therefore, the reason why we could not find any significant results regarding thematic coherence may be due to the assessment. As a second reason, it might be speculated different focuses of coding schemes. While subjective perspective terms involve both affection and cognition words, thematic coherence is about the structure of the memory (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021). Thus, the coding of thematic coherence might be more about the grammatical rules of the language and the extent of proficiency in the language. As Fivush (2020) argues, language is key in enabling individuals to express their subjective perspectives. It may be fruitful to evaluate and analyze the language proficiency of adults in further studies of thematic coherence, which could not be predicted by two strong predictors such as gender and individuation, in this current study.

## **4.1 Contributions**

This study has made a number of contributions to the literature. The concept of familial memories has not been extensively studied in autobiographical literature. Even though several studies investigated vicarious memories in the framework of familial context (e.g., Bakir-Demir et al., 2020; Pillemer et al., 2015; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017), the current study has a unique aspect about collecting familial memories which were directly experienced by the individual and their parents.

This study evidently demonstrated that individuation and gender are robust predictors of autobiographical narratives. In the models in which family climate subscales and relatedness orientation were controlled, individuation and gender predicted memory characteristics, especially in subjective perspective terms. Thus, the present study not only emphasized that individuals with individuation orientation are more autonomous regarding affection, cognition, and self-fulfillment in constructing personal narratives but also gender differences play a critical role in shaping memory characteristics. Therefore, this study contributes to the notion that autobiographical narratives might be dramatically based on cultural orientations at the individual level, specifically individuation self-construal.

The current study contributed to the existing literature by testing a scale-based family climate assessment within the scope of personal narratives, even though it did not produce significant results. In this point, the current study also contributed to future studies in terms of using other family assessments, such as family conversations, might be more suitable for examining the psychological atmosphere in the family. Overall, to our knowledge, this study was the first one to collect data about familial memories. It examined both individual-level and family-level orientations by using the self-report assessment method.

## **4.2 Limitations of The Current Study and Future Directions**

The present study also has some limitations. Firstly, although the sample size is marginally enough to provide statistical power of the study, the results might have been different with a bigger sample size producing higher statistical power.

Secondly, some of the data was collected by three undergraduate psychology students who were trained within the framework of an internship in the Child and Adolescent Development Lab at METU. The students' style of conducting interviews and their individual differences might have intervened narratives of the participants even though they received extensive training on data collection for this study and were also guided during the data collection process.

Thirdly, the age group addressed by the study, young adults, are literally and figuratively in the period of separation from the family. The findings could have changed if the study had another design, such as investigating personal memories. Within the scope of this current study, we asked individuals who were in the differentiation stage from the family to narrate a familial memory, which might be why we obtained individuation as a strong predictor of memory characteristics.

Lastly, there were enough male participants that provided normal distribution in the study sample; however, most of the data was collected from the department of psychology and from departments of social sciences. Therefore, there were more female participants compared to males. Also, the results could have been different if the data was collected other from community sciences.

Future studies should examine all the components of the family by adapting novel methods, which are different from questionnaires or audio recordings, such as observational methods or video recording in which visual and verbal cohesion can be evaluated while family members narrate a memory or have conversations with each other. Moreover, future studies should also investigate individual characteristics, particularly cultural tendencies, and different familial context assessments to shed light on autobiographical memories at individual and family levels. In addition, this study's control variable of age did not produce significant results; however, it is well-documented that chronological age was found as an important variable in predicting memory characteristics in previous literature (Demiray et al., 2009; Bakır-Demir et al., 2017; Grück & Bluck, 2007). Therefore, future studies could compare the findings of emerging adults aged between 18-25 and adults, such as mothers since in

the age range of 18-25, individuals literally start to differentiate themselves from the family, and their narratives have more tendency to contain developmental trajectories and show reminiscing bump (Demiray et al., 2009); however, mothers talk about the others more and narrate more socially oriented memories, which means their narratives include more social and relational characteristics (Fiese & Skillman, 2000). Also, participants might differ in how specific their narratives are; therefore, future studies should investigate and code autobiographical narratives in terms of specificity and detail.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

The present study aimed to examine how individuals' self-construals, namely individuation and relatedness, and family climate subscales, had a role on constructing personal narratives. The findings indicated the importance of individuation self-construal in predicting familial narratives of Turkish young adults. In addition, an exploratory finding showed that gender played a critical role, not only in shaping personal narratives, but also affecting memory characteristics. The current study replicated previous results regarding predictors of individuation and gender in autobiographical memory literature. Further studies should examine familial context with different assessments, such as observational methods.

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## APPENDICES

### A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM / DEMOGRAFİK BİLGİ FORMU

Katılımcı kodunu giriniz.

Doğum gün/ay/yıl olarak belirtiniz.

Cinsiyetiniz:

Anadiliniz:

Yaşadığınız şehir:

Şu anda öğrenci misiniz?

Devam etmekte olduğunuz eğitim seviyesi:

Annenizin ulaştığı en yüksek eğitim seviyesi:

Okuma yazma bilmiyor () İlkokul () Ortaokul () Lise () Yüksekokul ()  
Üniversite terk () Üniversite () Lisansüstü Terk () Lisansüstü ()

Babanızın ulaştığı en yüksek eğitim seviyesi:

Okuma yazma bilmiyor () İlkokul () Ortaokul () Lise () Yüksekokul ()  
Üniversite terk () Üniversite () Lisansüstü Terk () Lisansüstü ()

Medeni Durumunuz:

Ebeveynlerinizin medeni durumu:

Evinize giren toplam aylık gelir:

Aşağıdakilerden hangisinde yaşamaktasınız?

Aile evi () Öğrenci Evi () Yurt/Apart () Diğer ()

Şu an yaşadığınız hanedeki kişi sayısı:

Lütfen sosyal sınıfınızı en iyi tanımlayan ifadeyi seçiniz:

Düşük () Düşük-orta () Orta () Yüksek-orta () Yüksek ()

Anılar genel olarak sizin için ne kadar önemlidir?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Hiç önemli değil

Çok önemli

Size önemli kişileri ya da olayları hatırlatacak şeyleri ne sıklıkla biriktirirsiniz?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Sizi yetiştiren kimseler (örneğin, anne ve babanız) ile beraber geçmişte yaşamış olduğunuz anılarınızla ilgili ne sıklıkla konuşursunuz?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Hiç

Her zaman

**B. BALANCED INTEGRATION DIFFERENTIATION SCALE / DENGELİ  
BÜTÜNLEŞME AYRIŞMA ÖLÇEĞİ**

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelerin her biri için ne derece katılıp katılmadığınızı en iyi yansıtan sayıyı işaretleyin.

1 2 3 4 5  
Kesinlikle katılmıyorum Kesinlikle katılıyorum

01.	Kendi kendime kaldığımda yapacak ilginç şeyler bulabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
02.	Kendimi aileme hep yakın hissedeceğime inanıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
03.	İnsanlarla ilişki kurmakta güçlük çekiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
04.	Kendi isteklerimi yapabilmek için kendime mutlaka zaman ve imkân tanımaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
05.	Kendimi duygusal olarak toplumun dışında kalmış gibi hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
06.	Kendimi duygusal olarak aileme çok yakın hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
07.	Farklı olmaktansa, toplumla düşünsel olarak kaynaşmış olmayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
08.	Kendimi yakın çevremden duygusal olarak kopmuş hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
09.	Kendimi insanlardan olabildiğince soyutlayıp, kendi isteklerimi gerçekleştirmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Hayatta gerçekleştirmek istediğim şeyler için çalışırken, ailemin sevgi ve desteğini hep yanımda hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Kendimi yalnız hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Ailemle duygusal bağlarımın zayıf olduğunu hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Ailemle aramdaki duygusal bağların hayatta yapmak istediğim şeyler için bana güç verdiğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5



14.	Kendimi diğer insanlardan kopuk hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Toplumsal değerleri sorgulamak yerine benimsemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Kendimi sosyal çevreme duygusal olarak yakın hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Kendimi ilginç buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	İnsanın kendini kendi istediği gibi değil, toplumda geçerli olacak şekilde geliştirmesinin önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	İnsan geliştikçe, ailesinden duygusal olarak uzaklaşır.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	İnsanın en önemli amacı sahip olduğu potansiyeli hakkıyla geliştirmek olmalıdır.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	İnsanın kendi özelliklerini geliştirip ortaya çıkarabilmesi gerekir.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Kişinin kendine değil, topluma uygun hareket etmesi, uzun vadede kendi yararına olur.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	İnsanın yapmak istediklerini yapabilmesi için, ailesiyle olan duygusal bağlarını en aza indirmesi gerekir.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Çevremdekilerin onayladığı bir insan olmak benim için önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Zamanımızda insanlar arasında güçlü duygusal bağların olması, kendileri için destekleyici değil, engelleyici olur.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Sahip olduğum potansiyeli ve özelliklerimi geliştirip kendime özgü bir birey olmak benim için çok önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Çevreme ters gelse bile, kendime özgü bir misyon için yaşayabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Herkesin kendi özelliklerini geliştirmeye uğraşması yerine toplumsal beklentilere uygun davranmaya çalışmasının daha doğru olduğu kanısındayım.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Toplumlar geliştikçe, insanlar arası duygusal bağların zayıflaması doğaldır.	1	2	3	4	5

## C. FAMILY CLIMATE SCALE / AİLE İKLİMİ ÖLÇEĞİ

Aşağıda ailelerin yaşadığı birtakım deneyimler anlatılmaktadır. Sizden kendi ailenizi düşünerek bu ifadelerin sizin için ne derece geçerli olduğunu cevaplandırmanızı istenmektedir. Lütfen, size en çok uyan beş seçenekten birini işaretleyiniz.

Not: Lütfen, bu anketi yanıtlarken aynı aile kavramını göz önünde bulundurunuz. Örneğin; geniş ailenizi düşünerek cevaplıyorsanız lütfen tüm soruları geniş ailenize göre; eğer eşinizi ve çocuğunuzu düşünerek yanıtlıyorsanız tüm soruları eşiniz ve çocuğunuza göre yanıtlayınız.

Bizim ailede.....

1 Kesinlikle katılmıyorum 2 3 4 5 Kesinlikle katılıyorum

01.	Birçoğumuzun en güçlü duygusal bağları ailenin dışındaki kişilerledir.	1	2	3	4	5
02.	Aramızdaki duygusal bağlar çok kuvvetlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
03.	Genelde birlikte olmaktan mutluyuzdur.	1	2	3	4	5
04.	Bir süre ayrı kaldığımızda birbirimizi özleriz.	1	2	3	4	5
05.	Aile üyeleri varlıklarıyla birbirlerine güven verirler.	1	2	3	4	5
06.	Duygusal olarak yakın değilizdir.	1	2	3	4	5
07.	Birbirimizi çok severiz.	1	2	3	4	5
08.	Aile üyeleri birbirlerine karşı samimidirler/sıcaktırlar.	1	2	3	4	5
09.	Yaşça daha büyük olanlar, yaşı küçük olanların ne yapıp ne ettiğiyle yakından ilgilenir.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Yaşça büyük olanlar, yaşı küçük olanların mutluluk ve sağlığıyla yakından ilgilenir.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Yaşça büyük olanlar daha genç olanların hedeflerini fazlasıyla desteklerler.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Yaşça büyük olanlar daha genç olanların ihtiyaçlarına karşı çok duyarlıdır.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Daha yaşlı aile üyeleri, ailenin genç üyelerinin kafasını meşgul eden düşünce ve endişelerle yakından ilgilenirler.	1	2	3	4	5

14.	Yaşça büyük olanların yaşı daha küçük olanlara karşı koruyucu bir tutumu vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Kişiler birbirlerinin düşüncelerini önemsemezler.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Birbirimizi dinlemek için birbirimize vakit ayırırız.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Zor durumlarla etkili bir biçimde başa çıkarız.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	İhtiyacımız olduğunda birbirimize her zaman yardım edebiliriz.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Zorluklarla karşılaştığımızda birlikte ve etkin bir biçimde uğraşırız.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Ciddi sorunları çözmek için gereken güce sahip olduğumuzu biliriz.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Beklenmeyen durumlarla mücadele etmekte kötüyüzdür.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Yaşı daha küçük olanlar, yaşı daha büyük olanların isteklerine uyum göstermeye çalışır.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Yaşça büyük olanların isteklerine uyulur.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Yaşı büyük olanların otoritesi sorgulanmaz.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Kuralları ailenin yaşı büyük olanları koyar.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Kararları, yaşça büyüklüğe bakmaksızın, her bireyin eşit söz sahibi olacağı biçimde alırız.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Yaşça büyük olanların sözü emir sayılır.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Yaşa bakmaksızın bütün aile üyeleri eşit yetkiye sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5

29.	Çoğu konu üzerinde benzer görüşlerimiz/bakış açılarımız vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Çoğu zaman sosyal konularla ilgili çok farklı görüşlere sahibizdir.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	Tutumlarımız ve inançlarımız çok benzerdir.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	Konular üzerinde tamamen farklı bakış açlarına sahibiz.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	Hayata dair değerlerimiz çok benzerdir.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Benzer biçimde düşünürüz.	1	2	3	4	5

**D. APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE /  
ODTÜ İNSAN ARAŞTIRMALARI ETİK KURUMU ONAYI**

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800  
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY  
T: +90 312 210 22 31  
F: +90 312 210 79 59  
ueam@metu.edu.tr  
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

Sayı: 28620816/

01 ARALIK 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

**Sayın Dr.Öğr.Üyesi Başak ŞAHİN ACAR**

Danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz Feyzanur YÖN'ün "Aile iklimi ve Aile Anıları Arasındaki İlişki başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **464-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY  
İAEK Başkanı

## **E. INFORMED CONSENT / ONAY FORMU**

Bu çalışma ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencisi Psk. Feyzanur Yön tarafından Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

### **Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?**

İnsanların geçmişlerini hatırlama tarzları değişkenlik gösterebilir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, bazı kültürel, ailesel ve bireysel farklılıkların bu değişkenler üzerindeki etkisini incelemek ve bu etkileşimlere dair daha fazla bilgi edinebilmektir.

### **Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?**

Araştırmaya üniversite öğrencileri ve genç yetişkinler davet edilecektir. Gönüllü olarak katılım göstermeyi kabul eden katılımcılara, araştırmacıyla yaptıkları yaklaşık 20 dakika süren bir görüşmenin ardından, çevrimiçi olarak bir anket linki iletilecektir. Bu linkte araştırma ile ilgili soruları cevaplamaları istenecektir. Araştırmaya dair bu soruları cevaplamak yaklaşık 20 dakika sürecektir.

### **Katılımınızla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:**

Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayalıdır. Herhangi bir yaptırıma veya cezaya maruz kalmadan çalışmaya katılmayı reddedebilir veya çalışmayı bırakabilirsiniz. Araştırmaya katılanlardan toplanan veriler tamamen gizli tutulacak, veriler ve kimlik bilgileri herhangi bir şekilde eşleştirilmeyecektir. Katılımcıların isimleri bağımsız bir listede toplanacaktır. Ayrıca toplanan verilere sadece araştırmacılar ulaşabilecektir. Bu araştırmanın sonuçları bilimsel ve profesyonel yayınlarda veya eğitim amaçlı kullanılabilir, fakat katılımcıların kimliği gizli tutulacaktır. Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz: Çalışmayla ilgili soru ve yorumlarınızı araştırmacıya iletebilirsiniz. Lütfen uygun bulduğunuz seçeneği işaretleyiniz: Araştırmaya gönüllü katılmayı:

Kabul ediyorum.

Kabul etmiyorum.

## F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Etrafımızdaki insanlarla hayatımıza dair hikayeler hakkında daima konuşur ve karşılıklı paylaşımlarda bulunuruz. Anılarımızdan konuşarak ve deneyimlerimize dair duygularımızı paylaşarak; geçmişimizi şimdiki zamanda da ortaya çıkarırız. Diğer bir deyişle, geçmişte deneyimlediğimiz ve geçip gittiğini düşündüğümüz anılar hakkında düşündükçe ve paylaşım yaptıkça, şimdiki zamandaki benliğimizle onlara yeni anlamlar yükleyebilir, geçmişte yaşadığımızdan daha farklı şekilde değerlendirebilir, deneyimlerimizi gelecekteki davranışlarımızı şekillendirirken kullanabiliriz. Böylelikle, Barnes'ın (1998) dediği gibi, "benim hikayem" geçmişteki bir anımızda olduğumuz kişi ile gelecekte olmak istediğimiz kişi arasında bir olgu haline gelir.

Fivush (2019), otobiyografik benliği, geçmiş ve bugün arasında gelişen, bütünleşmeye dayalı olarak, kim olduğumuz ve kim olmak istediğimiz çerçevesinde bir olgu olarak tanımlar. Otobiyografik bellek, insanlarda büyük bir depolama sistemi olan “uzun erimli bellek” bileşeni olarak yer almaktadır (Fivush ve Nelson, 2004). Tulving (1972), uzun erimli belleği semantik ve epizodik bellekten oluşan bir sistem olarak tanımlar. Semantik bellek, bilgi edinmek, dili kavramak ve nesnelere tanımlamak için genel bilgi ve gerçekleri depolar (Baddaley, 2010). Buna karşılık epizodik bellek, deneyimlerin yerini ve duygu ve düşünceler gibi belirli ayrıntıları depolamada önemli bir rol oynayan bilinçli ve kişisel bir hatırlamadır (Fivush ve Graci, 2017; Schacter ve Tulving, 1994). Uzun erimli belleğin bir parçası olan otobiyografik bellek, kişisel deneyimlerin, geçmişten günümüze yaşam olaylarının ve benliğe ilişkin bilgilerin anımsanmasını ifade eder (Gülgöz, 2018). Otobiyografik bellek, kültürel bağlamlar ve bireysel farklılıklar gibi çeşitli faktörlerden etkilenir (Wang, 2021). Halen hızla gelişmeye devam eden kültürler arası araştırmalar, farklı kültürel geçmişlere sahip insanların geçmişlerini farklı şekilde hatırladıklarını, ancak bunun bireylerin kültürel özelliklerine bağlı olduğunu göstermektedir (Ross & Wang,

2010). Leichtman ve ark. (2000), bireyci bir kültür olarak görülen Kuzey Amerika doğumlu annelerin, çocuklarını sohbetin aktif bir parçası olarak gördüklerini ve açık uçlu sorular sorarak ve çocuğun sohbeti yönlendirmesine izin vererek onları diyaloga dahil ettiklerini belirtmiştir. Ancak kolektivist bir kültür olarak değerlendirilen Çin'de anneler, çocuktan bekledikleri cevabı alana kadar, onlara tekrarlayan sorular sormaya devam ettiğini, çocuğun diyalogda yer alıp yönetmesinden çok, kendi zihinlerindeki planı takip ettiklerini belirtmiştir (Wang, 2016). Bu çalışmalara ek olarak, bağlanma stilleri (Chae ve ark., 2011), ebeveynlik davranışları (Reese, 2002) ve geçmiş anılar hakkında konuşma (reminiscing) (Şahin-Acar ve ark., 2019) bağlamında da bireysel faktörlerin rolü derinlemesine araştırılmıştır. Buna göre, açık uçlu sorular soran, daha fazla ayrıntı veren ve açıklayıcı yorumlar yapan, daha detaycı annelerin çocukları; bağlam, duygu, eylem ve değerlendirme açısından zengin, daha ayrıntılı ve kapsamlı anılar anlatmışlardır (Jobson ve ark., 2018; McDonnel ve ark., 2016). Öte yandan, düşük ayrıntılı stile sahip, tekrarlayan sorular soran ve daha az yorum yapan annelerin çocukları ise daha az kelime kullanmış, daha az ayrıntı vermiş ve daha sınırlı bilgi içeren anı konuşmaları yapmışlardır (Wang, 2007). Öte yandan, aynı kültürel bağlamdaki bireysel farklılıklar da bellek özelliklerini etkileyebilir. Otobiyografik bellek araştırmalarında kullanılan kültürün etkileyebileceği bireysel farklar arasında *benlik kurguları* gösterilebilir (Şahin ve Mebert, 2013). Benlik kurgusu, benliği ayırıştırmanın ve inşa etmenin bir yolu olarak tanımlanır (Markus ve Kitayama, 1991). Benlik kurgusunun ana bileşeni, çevre bağlamındaki sosyal etkileşimlerdir (Markus ve Kitayama, 2010); dolayısıyla farklı arka planlara sahip insanlar farklı benlik kurguları edinirler (Şahin-Acar ve Leichtman, 2020; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010). İmamoğlu (1998; 2003), benlik kurgularını *bütünleşme* ve *ayrışma* olarak ifade ettiği Dengeli Bütünleşme Ayrışma Modeli'ne (BID) dikkat çekmiş ve bireylerin kalıtsal olarak, bireyselcilik-kollektivistlik kültürel ayrışmasının yanı sıra, bireylerin aynı zamanda belirli derecelerde bütünleşme ve ayrışmaya sahip olabileceklerini belirtmiştir. Dolayısıyla, bir birey aynı anda hem ilişkili hem de bireysel benlik kurgularına sahip olabilir. Otobiyografik bellek bağlamında benlik kurgusunu araştıran ilk çalışmalardan biri olan Şahin ve Mebert (2013), Türkiye ve ABD'den üniversite öğrencilerinin hayattaki ilk anılarının benlik kurguları ile bellek özellikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemiştir. Araştırmacılar,



kültürden bağımsız olarak, bireyselleşme ve ilişkisellik benlik kurgularında puanları yüksek olan öğrencilerin, daha erken yaştan ilk anılarını hatırladıkları ve iki yönelimde de düşük puanlara sahip olanlara göre anılarını daha kolay aktardıkları bulmuşlardır. Aynı kültürdeki bireylerin kültürel yönelimleri ve benlik kurguları, yaşamları boyunca bireylerin anlatı kimliklerinin önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmaya devam etse de (Wang, 2016), yetişkinlikte anlatı endeksleri üzerindeki bireylerin kültürel yönelimlerine ilişkin araştırma azdır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, bireylerin benlik kurgularını ve bellek özelliklerini aile anlatıları bağlamında inceleyerek ilgili literatürdeki boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bireylerin sosyal uyumunu yordamadaki önemli değişkenlerden bir diğeri, bireylerin içinde büyüdüğü aile olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Kurock ve ark., 2022; Park ve Schepp, 2015). Otobiyografik bellek literatüründe aile bağlamları incelenmiş ve aile ilişkilerinin duygu düzenleme (Fivush ve Merrill, 2016), algılanan aile işlevi (Trees ve Kellas, 2009) ve aile içi özelliklere (Bakir-Demir ve ark., 2020) etkisi araştırılmıştır. Türkiye'de yürütülmüş olan önemli çalışmalardan, Bakir-Demir ve ark. (2021)'in bulguları, olumlu bir aile iklimine sahip kişilerin aile üyeleriyle daha fazla kimlik bağı kurduklarını ve daha yüksek düzeyde refah yaşadıklarını göstermişlerdir. Ayrıca, Trees ve Kellas (2009) aile ortamını ve aile ile ilgili olan belleğin anı anlatımını ile ilişkisini ele almıştır. Ailelerin olumsuz deneyimleri hakkında tematik olarak daha tutarlı bir şekilde ortaklaşa konuştuklarında, aile üyeleri tarafından, aile desteğini daha fazla hissedildiğini ve aile üyelerinin daha yüksek aile işlevselliği bildirdiklerini bulmuşlardır. Bununla birlikte, Fivush ve Merrill (2016) Uyarlanmış Ekolojik Aile Modeli'nde, aile anlatısında daha geniş sosyal çevreyi içeren ekzosistemi de oldukça etkili olarak tanımlamışlardır ancak, daha geniş aile bağlamlarındaki düzeyler ve varyasyonların otobiyografik anılarla ilişkisi hakkında araştırma oldukça azdır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, hem bireylerin kültürel eğilimlerine ilişkin bireysel farklılıkları hem de bireylerin aile bağlamına ilişkin görüşlerini test etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anlatı kimliği, kişisel anlatıları içeren bir yaşam öyküsü bağlamında tanımlanmaktadır (McAdams, 2001; Wang ve ark., 2017). Kişisel anlatılar, bir kişiye

geçmiş, şimdi ve beklenen benliğe ilişkin tutarlı bir bakış açısı sağlar (Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Pasupathi & Wainryb, 2010). Genç yetişkinler daha gelişmiş olan otobiyografik muhakeme ile, geçmiş ve şimdiki benlik algılarını mantıksal olarak bağlantı kurma becerisiyle, kendini tanımlayan anılarını oluştururken hem ailevi hem de kültürel bağlamlarda tematik olarak daha tutarlı ve nedensel olarak daha bağlantılı ve daha karmaşık anılar anlatabilirler (Bluck & Habermas, 2001; Grysman & Hudson, 2010). Fivush'un (2019)'un belirttiği gibi, kişisel anlatılar aile ilişkileri içinde geliştiği için insanların anlatılarındaki tutarlılığını da etkileyebilir. Bu nedenle, çok sayıda araştırma, ebeveynlerin ve çocukların otobiyografik bellek özellikleri arasındaki benzerliği araştırmıştır. Şahin-Acar ve ark. (2017), aynı aile içinde ve nesiller arası anıların ne kadar benzer veya farklı olduğunu anlamak için aynı aileden büyükanne, anne ve genç kız torunu incelemiştir. Aynı ailenin bu üyeleri tarafından sarf edilen anılar, toplam sözcük sayısı ve anıdaki ayrıntı açısından incelendiğinde, aile üyelerin hayattaki ilk anılarına ilişkin bir benzerlik olduğu ortaya çıktı. Dahası, Aytuğlu ve ark. (2023) ve Ayçiçeği-Dinn ve Sunar (2017) da aynı aileden gelen bireylerin benlik kurgularının kişisel anlatılarıyla ilişkili olduğunu bulmuşlardır. Kültürel ve ailevi düzeylere odaklanan otobiyografik çalışmaların iki dalından da elde edilen önemli bir bulgu olarak, bireyselleşme yöneliminde daha yüksek puan alan bireylerin, anı konuşmalarında daha çok sayıda sözcük kullandığı ve kişisel anlatılarında daha detaylı konuştukları bulunmuştur (Aytuglu ve ark., 2023; Fivush, 2019; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015). Buradan hareketle, ailenin psikolojik atmosferi içerisindeki değişkenlerin bireylerin anlatı kimliklerinde nasıl rol oynadığının da bu çalışma kapsamında incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Ayrıca cinsiyet farklılıklarının bireylerin otobiyografik anılarında ve kişisel anlatılarında gömülü olduğu ilgili literatürde fazlasıyla tartışılmıştır (Fivush ve Marin, 2018; Grysman vd., 2016; Reese vd., 2002). Bir dizi çalışma, cinsiyetin kişisel anlatılarda belirleyici bir unsur olduğu fikrini desteklemektedir ve kadınların kişisel anlatılarının, erkeklerin kişisel anlatılarına kıyasla ayrıntı verme ve duygusal tonu ifade etme açısından daha iyi olduğu bulunmuştur. (Camia ve ark., 2021; Chen ve ark., 2021). Ayrıca, Bakir-Demir ve ark. (2020), kişisel anıların bellek özelliklerini anlatıcının yaşıyla da ilişkilendirmişlerdir. Buna göre, genç yetişkinlerin

anlatılarının, daha yaşlı yetişkinlerin anlatılarına göre daha çok sayıda öznel perspektif terimleri içerdiği ve daha tutarlı anlatılar olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu bakış açılarından hareketle, son olarak, bu çalışma cinsiyet ve yaş gibi değişkenleri de kontrol etmeyi amaçlamıştır.

Yukarıda bahsedilen araştırma bulguları ve mevcut çalışmanın hedefleri doğrultusunda, çalışmanın hipotezleri aşağıda belirtildiği gibidir:

İlk olarak, benlik kurgularının hem bireyselleşme hem de ilişkisellik alt ölçeklerinin aile ile ilgili anıların bellek özelliklerini yordaması beklenmiştir. Spesifik olarak hem bireyselleşme hem de ilişkisellik konusunda daha yüksek puan alan bireylerin, aile ile ilgili anılarının anlatılarında daha yüksek düzeyde tematik tutarlılık ve daha çok sayıda öznel perspektif terimleri kullanmaları beklenmiştir.

İkinci olarak, aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinin aile ile ilgili anılardaki bellek özelliklerini yordayıcı rolü, keşifsel olarak incelenmiştir.

Mevcut çalışmaya 112 kadın ( $M = 21.91$ ,  $SS = 1.37$ ) ve 34 erkek ( $M = 21.63$ ,  $SS = 1.34$ ) olmak üzere, 18-25 yaş arasındaki toplam 146 katılımcıdan genç yetişkin katılmıştır. Katılımcıların ebeveynlerine ilişkin eğitim düzeyleri ise okuryazar olmaktan lisansüstü dereceye sahip olmaya kadar değişmiştir. Algılanan sosyoekonomik statü (perceived SES) ile ilgili olarak katılımcıların %21,2'si yüksek veya çok yüksek, %59,6'sı orta, %19,2'si ise düşük veya çok düşük olarak belirtmiştir.

Ölçüm araçları olarak, demografik bilgi formu, Dengeli Bütünleşme Ayrışma Ölçeği (Imamoglu, 1998) ve Bjönberg ve Nicholson (2007) tarafından geliştirilen Aile iklimi Ölçeği'nin Gönül ve ark. (2018) tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanan versiyonu kullanılmıştır. Katılımcıların aile ile ilgili anıları, benlik kurguları ve aile iklimi arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmak için anılar, Tematik Tutarlılık (Reese ve ark., 2011; Reese ve ark., 2017) ve Öznel Perspektif Terimleri kodlama şemalarına göre kodlanmıştır (Reese ve ark., 2017). Bu bağlamda, ailesel anıların transkripsiyonları

arařtırmacı tarafından kodlanmıřtır. Anlatıların %25'i iki kodlayıcı tarafından bağımsız olarak kodlanmıřtır. Intraklas korelasyon katsayısı indekslerine dayalı olarak tematik tutarlılık ve öznel perspektif terimleri için ayrı ayrı güvenilirlik analizleri yapılmıřtır. Tematik tutarlılık puanı, tematik tutarlılık puanının bellekteki toplam kelime sayısına (volume) oranı olarak hesaplanmıřtır. Intraklas korelasyonlar aısından, bu alıřmada iki bağımsız kodlayıcı arasında yüksek düzeyde bir uyum olduėunu ortaya ıkmıřtır (ICC =.72, %95 CI [.548, .886]). Öznel perspektif terimleri puanı, öznel perspektif terimlerinin sayısının, bellekteki toplam kelime sayısına (volume) oranı ile elde edilmiř, intraklas korelasyon aısından kodlayıcılar arası yüksek bir uyum olduėunu görölmüřtür (ICC = .96, %95 CI [.941, .984]).

Etik onam ve gerekli tüm izinler ODTÜ İnsan Arařtırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan alınmıřtır. Arařtırmacı, veri toplamaya bařlamadan önce, alıřmanın akademik danıřmanı tarafından veri toplama, görüřme yapma ve tüm süreci yönetme konusunda hazırlıklı olması için eėitilmiřtir. Ayrıca staj programı çerevesinde ODTÜ Çocuk ve Ergen Geliřim Laboratuvarı'nda bulunan psikoloji lisans öėrencileri ile iletiřime geilerek alıřmanın veri toplama ařamasına katılım saėlanmıřtır. Arařtırma kapsamında veri toplamak isteyen öėrenciler kapsamlı eėitilmeye davet edilmiřtir. Eėitimler önce Zoom üzerinden ve ardından laboratuvar ortamında gerekleřtirilmiřtir. Zoom üzerinden düzenlenen eėitimde, ana arařtırmacı, amacını aıka ortaya koymadan, görüřme teknikleri, etik kurallar ve alıřmanın odak noktası hakkında stajyer arařtırmacılara bilgi vermiřtir. Daha sonra öėrenciler, laboratuvar da farklı görüřme senaryolarının ve uygun uygulamaların icra edildiėi canlandırma oturumlarına katılmıřlardır. Ana arařtırmacı, stajyer arařtırmacıların uygulamalarını eėitim esnasında ve sonrasında takip etmiř, gerektiėinde düzeltme yaparak geri bildirimde bulunmuřtur.

Bu alıřma, tamamlanması gereken iki görevi içermiřtir. İlkinde arařtırmacı tarafından yarı-yapılandırılmıř bir görüřme yürütölmüř ve ses kaydı alınmıřtır. Katılımcılardan, anne-babaları ve kendilerinin beraber deneyimlemiř olduėu bir anıyı yaklařık beř dakika anlatmaları istenmiřtir. İkinci görevde, katılımcılardan

*Qualtrics* platformuna konulan ölçüm araçlarına dair anket sorularını doldurmaları istenmiştir.

Mevcut çalışmanın hedefleri doğrultusunda, istatistiksel analizler IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 28.0) programında yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, cinsiyet ve yaş da kontrol edilmiştir, ancak yaş değişkeni sonuçlarda anlamlı bir değişikliğe sebep olmadığından istatistiksel güç kaybını önlemek amacıyla, yaş değişkeni ana analizlerde kontrol değişkeni olarak kullanılmamıştır. Buna ek olarak, benlik kurgusu alt ölçeği ilişkisellik ile aile iklimi alt ölçeği aile içi ilişkisellik arasındaki yüksek korelasyonun ( $r = .747, p < .01$ ), çoklu eş doğrusallık varsayımı açısından riskli olabileceğinden ötürü aile içi ilişkisellik değişkeni ana analizlerde kullanılmamıştır. Bu çalışmada, benlik kurguları ve aile iklimi alt ölçekleri (bilişsel bütünlük ve nesiller arası otorite) olan çalışma değişkenlerinin, cinsiyet ve yaş kontrol edildikten sonra ailesel anılardaki istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir varyans değişimini açıklayıp açıklamadığını incelemek için ana analiz olarak hiyerarşik regresyon analizi seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, aile ile ilgili anılar incelenmiş ve tematik tutarlılık ve öznel perspektif terimleri olmak üzere iki farklı kodlama şeması ile kodlanmıştır. Bu nedenle, ilk adımda, Dengeli Bütünleşme Ayrışma Ölçeği (BID)'nin benlik kurguları, yani bireyselleşme ve ilişkisellik analize dahil edilmiştir. İkinci adım olarak, Aile İklimi Ölçeği'nin (AİÖ) bilişsel bütünlük ve nesiller arası otorite olmak üzere iki alt boyutu analize eklenmiştir. Son adımda cinsiyet kukla değişken olarak kodlanmış ve analize kontrol değişkeni olarak girilmiştir. Ayrıca ailesel anılar tematik tutarlılık ve öznel bakış açısı olmak üzere iki farklı kodlama şeması ile kodlandığından her bir kodlama şeması için ayrı ayrı hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yürütülmüştür.

Mevcut çalışmanın ilk hipotezine ilişkin, tematik tutarlılığın aile ile ilgili anıları yordayıcılığına yönelik yürütülen ilk hiyerarşik regresyon analizinde, çalışma değişkenlerinin hiçbirinin, aile ile ilgili anıların tematik tutarlılığı ile anlamlı bir şekilde ilişkili olmadığı; dolayısıyla herhangi bir varyansı açıklamadığı elde edilmiştir. Öznel perspektif terimlerin yordayıcı rolünün incelendiği diğer hiyerarşik regresyon analizinde, bireyselleşme benlik kurgusu puanları daha yüksek olan bireylerin, aileleriyle ilgili anı anlatılarında daha çok sayıda öznel perspektif

terimlerini kullandıkları bulunmuştur. İlgili analizde kontrol değişkeni olarak kullanılan cinsiyetin de bellek özelliklerini öznel perspektif terimleri açısından yordamasında anlamlı bir katkısının olduğu da anlaşılmıştır. Buna göre, cinsiyet, hipotez edilen modelin açıkladığı varyansta artış olmasını sağlamıştır. Sonuç olarak, varyansın %8,6'sı, modeldeki tüm çalışma değişkenleri tarafından ailesel anılardaki öznel perspektif terimleri açısından açıklanabilmektedir.

Çalışmanın sonuçları incelendiğinde, çalışmanın ilk hipotezinin kısmen desteklendiğini söylemek mümkündür. Aile ile ilgili anıların bellek özelliklerinin tematik tutarlılık kodlama şemasının yordayıcı rolünün olmadığını, ancak öznel perspektif terimleri kodlama şemasının bellek özelliklerini yordayabildiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu bağlamda, bireyselleşme benlik kurgusunun yordayıcı rolünün istatistiksel açıdan anlamlı olduğu ve bireyselleşme puanı daha yüksek olan katılımcıların anılarında daha çok sayıda öznel perspektif terimi kullandığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Kontrol edilen cinsiyet değişkeni, öznel perspektif terimlerinin bellek özelliklerini yordamasında önemli bir rol oynamış ve açıklanan varyansa anlamlı şekilde katkıda bulunmuştur. Keşifsel analiz sonuçlarına göre ise, aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinden hiçbirinin ailevi anlatılardaki bellek özelliklerini yordayamadığı anlaşılmıştır. Genel olarak, çalışmanın sonuçları çerçevesinde, önceki literatürde de belirtildiği gibi bireyselleşme benlik kurgusunun ve cinsiyet değişkenlerinin otobiyografik anıların bellek özelliklerini yordamasında ne derece önemli ve güçlü değişkenler olduğu mevcut çalışma ile tekrar ortaya konulmuştur. Buna göre, kültürel yönelimler ve bellek özelliklerine odaklanan daha önceki çalışmalardan birinde Wang (2004), anılarında daha fazla öz-yönelim içeren Amerikalı çocukların, kendilerini sosyal roller ve kültürel etkileşimlerle çerçeveleyen Çinli akranlarına kıyasla daha zengin ve daha ayrıntılı anlatılar anlattıklarını bulmuştur. Güncel çalışmalardan olan Aytuğlu ve ark. (2023) çalışması da genç yetişkinlerin kişisel anlatılarını tutarlılık ve benlik kurguları açısından incelemiştir ve bireysel özerklikte daha yüksek, ancak ilişkisellik yönelimlerinde daha düşük puan alan bireylerin tematik olarak daha tutarlı anılar anlattığını ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu çerçevede, bu çalışmanın ortaya koyduğu sonuçları, mevcut literatürdeki bulgularla paralel yöndedir. Benzer bir şekilde, çeşitli yöntemler, yaş grupları ve kültürel

bağlamlarla yapılan birçok araştırma, kadınların otobiyografik anılarının erkeklere kıyasla duygusal olarak daha karmaşık olduğunu ortaya koymuştur (Boals, 2010; Bohanek & Fivush, 2010; McLean, 2005; Pillemer ve ark., 2003; Rice & Pasupathi, 2010). Spesifik olarak, Bauer ve ark. (2003), kadın üniversite öğrencilerinin anlatılarında daha fazla biliş, duygu ve algı terimlerini kullandıklarını bulmuştur. Ayrıca, mevcut çalışmada da cinsiyetin, bellek özelliklerini öznel perspektif terimleri açısından yordadığı anlaşılmıştır. Bunun nedeninin, kadınların duygu sözcüklerini erkeklerden daha fazla kullanması olabilir. Bu nedenle, varyansın çoğunun kadınların sarf ettiği duygu sözcüklerinin sayısından kaynaklandığı söylenebilir.

Öznel perspektif terimlerinin bellek özelliklerini yordarken, tematik tutarlılığın yordamamasının sebeplerinin, tematik tutarlılığın teknik açıdan (zoom-out) farklı olması ya da daha çok anının gramer yapısına odaklanmasıyla anıdaki linguistik bağlamı değerlendirebiliyor olması düşünülmüştür. Diğer bir deyişle, tematik tutarlılık kodlama şemasının bu çalışma kapsamında toplanan aile ile ilgili anı anlatılarındaki dil bilgisine, dili kullanış biçimine ve dildeki ustalığa (*mastery in language*) göre değişkenlik gösterebileceği düşünülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinin (bilişsel uyum ve kuşaklar arası otorite) hiçbirinin mevcut çalışma kapsamında toplanan aile ile ilgili anıların bellek özelliklerini yordamamasının sebepleri arasında ölçme değerlendirme seçiminin olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Aile iklimi Ölçeğinin, psikolojinin diğer alt alanlarından birisi olan Endüstri ve Örgüt Psikolojisi alanında geliştirilmiş olan, aile şirketlerindeki ilişkisel dinamikleri hedefleyen ve farklı bir kültür (İngiltere) kapsamında geliştirilmiş olan bir ölçme değerlendirme aracı olmasının aile anıları ve bunlarla ilgili anlatılar kısmında uygun olmayabileceği tartışılmıştır. Dolayısıyla, aile iklimi ile ilgili değişkenlerin mevcut çalışmadaki beklentilerden farklı sonuçlanmasının önemli sebeplerinden olabileceği düşünülmüştür.

Mevcut çalışma alanyazına pek çok açıdan katkı sağlamıştır. Bireyselleşme benlik kurgusu daha yüksek olan bireylerin kişisel anlatıları oluşturmada duygulanım, biliş ve kendini gerçekleştirme konusunda daha özerk olduklarını, aynı zamanda cinsiyet farklılıklarının da bellek özelliklerini etkilemede kritik bir rol oynadığını

vurgulamıştır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, otobiyografik anlatıların dramatik bir şekilde bireysel düzeydeki kültürel yönelimlere, özellikle de bireyselleşme benlik kurgusuna dayanabileceği fikrine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Aynı zamanda aile içi konuşmalar gibi diğer aile ölçme-değerlendirme araçlarının aile içindeki psikolojik atmosferi incelemek için daha uygun olabileceği konusunda gelecekte yapılacak çalışmalara da katkıda bulunmuştur. Genel olarak, bildiğimiz kadarıyla, bu çalışma ailesel anılar hakkında veri toplayan ilk çalışmadır. Öz bildirim değerlendirme yöntemini kullanarak hem bireysel hem de aile düzeyinde yönelimleri incelemiştir. Çalışma bu yönleriyle mevcut literatüre katkıda bulunarak gelecek çalışmalara da fikir vermiştir. Çalışmanın mevcut literatürüne katkılarının yanı sıra birtakım sınırlılıkları da vardır. Çalışmanın örneklem büyüklüğü her ne kadar yeterli istatistiksel güce sahip olsa da daha büyük ve daha güçlü bir örneklemle sonuçların farklı olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Ayrıca, çalışmanın verilerinin bir kısmı stajyer lisans öğrencileri tarafından toplanmıştır ve öğrencilerin görüşmeyi yürütmedeki ve bireysel farklılıklarının katılımcıların anlatı stillerini etkileyebileceği düşünülmüştür. Bir diğer sınırlılık da katılımcıların yaş aralığıdır. 18-25 yaş arasındaki genç yetişkinler tam da aileden ayrılma ve kendi bireysel düzenlerini kurma aşamasındaki bireylerdir. Bu çalışma, genç yetişkinleri hedefleyerek ve onlara ailesi ile ilgili anılarını sorarak hayatlarında ayrılma aşamasındaki bireylerle daha sınırlı sonuçlara ulaşmış olabilir. Benzer bir çalışma, sosyal oryantasyonu daha yüksek olarak bulunan, ilişkisellik noktasında daha yüksek değerlendirilen yetişkinler, örneğin anneler, kapsamında yürütülmesinin elverişli olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Ayrıca katılımcılar, anlatılarının ne kadar spesifik olduğu konusunda farklılık gösterebilir; bu nedenle gelecekteki çalışmalar, otobiyografik anlatıları özgüllük (specificity) ve ayrıntı açısından araştırmalı ve kodlamalıdır. Son olarak, çalışmanın verisinin büyük bir kısmı sosyal bilimler öğrencilerinden gelmektedir ve cinsiyet olarak daha kadın ağırlıklı bir veri seti olmuştur. Çalışma bu yönüyle de daha kısıtlı sonuçlar üretmiş olabilir. Gelecek çalışmaların bu sınırlılıklara dikkat ederek ve daha farklı ölçme değerlendirme yöntemleri ile verimli sonuçlar elde edebilecekleri düşünülmektedir.

Özetle, mevcut çalışma, bireylerin benlik kurgularının, bireyselleşme ve ilişkisellik ile aile iklimi alt ölçeklerinin (bilişsel uyum ve kuşaklararası otorite), bireyleri



aileleri ile ilgili kişisel anlatılarını oluşturmada nasıl bir rol oynadığını incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bulgular, Türk genç yetişkinlerin aile anlatılarını yordamada bireyselleşme benlik kurgusunun önemini göstermiştir. Ek olarak, keşfedici bir bulgu olarak, toplumsal cinsiyetin yalnızca bireyleri aileleri ile ilgili kişisel anlatılarını şekillendirmede değil, aynı zamanda anlatılarındaki bellek özelliklerini de etkilemede kritik bir rol oynadığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu yönleriyle mevcut çalışma, otobiyografik bellek literatüründeki bireyselleşme ve toplumsal cinsiyetin belirleyici rolleri ile ilgili literatürdeki çalışmaların bulgularını yinelemiştir. Bu çalışma, bireylerin beraber deneyimledikleri aile ile ilgili anılarını toplayarak ve bu kişisel anlatıları benlik kurguları ve aile iklimi çerçevesinde inceleyerek literatüre önemli bir katkıda bulunmuştur. Daha ileri çalışmalar, gözlemsel yöntemler ve farklı ölçme değerlendirme araçlarını kullanarak aile bağlamını ve bu bağlamda ortaya konulan kişisel anlatıları incelemelidir.

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### YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : Yön  
Adı / Name : Feyzanur  
Bölümü / Department : Psikoloji / Psychology

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