

SOMETHING GOOD, SOMETHING BAD, SOMETHING DRASTIC:
PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS HIGH POINT, LOW POINT AND TURNING
POINT MEMORIES OF YOUNG COUPLES

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POINT MEMORIES OF YOUNG COUPLES**

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ABSTRACT

SOMETHING GOOD, SOMETHING BAD, SOMETHING DRASTIC: PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS HIGH POINT, LOW POINT AND TURNING POINT MEMORIES OF YOUNG COUPLES

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The current dissertation aimed to investigate similarities and differences between personal and vicarious high point, low point, and turning point memories of romantic couples. In Study 1 ($N = 64$, $M_{age} = 28.15$, $SD = 5.76$), thematic similarities across personal and vicarious life story narratives were examined. Findings revealed that themes in personal life story narratives were parallel to vicarious life story narratives. Study 2 ($N = 314$, $M_{age} = 25.61$, $SD = 4.33$) and Study 3 ($N = 238$, $M_{age} = 21.11$, $SD = 1.06$) investigated the similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples in terms of narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory. The role of gender in these memory characteristics and the reasons for sharing vicarious memories were also examined. Findings of these studies revealed that narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory in personal narratives were positively associated with their vicarious counterparts. However, personal narratives were more coherent and rated higher on phenomenology and functions of autobiographical memory. In addition, gender differences in narrative

coherence in personal and vicarious life stories were found. Women participants provided more coherent narratives compared to men. Overall, the findings indicated that how we remember our personal past is closely linked to how we remember vicarious memories of significant others, particularly for romantic partners.

Keywords: Life story, narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, functions of autobiographical memory, gender differences.

ÖZ

İYİ, KÖTÜ VE ZORLAYICI: GENÇ ÇİFTLERİN DUYGUSAL OLARAK YÜKSEK, DUYGUSAL OLARAK DÜŞÜK VE DÖNÜM NOKTASI OLAN KİŞİSEL VE DOLAYLI ANILARI

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Mevcut tez çalışması, romantik çiftlerin kişisel ve dolaylı duygusal olarak düşük, duygusal olarak yüksek ve dönüm noktası anlarındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Çalışma 1'de ($N = 64$, $Ort_{yaş} = 28.15$, $SS = 5.76$), kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküsü anlatılarındaki tematik benzerlikler incelenmiştir. Bulgular, kişisel yaşam öyküsü anlatılarındaki temaların dolaylı yaşam öyküsü anlatılarına paralel olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Çalışma 2 ($N = 314$, $Ort_{yaş} = 25.61$, $SS = 4.33$) ve Çalışma 3 ($N = 238$, $Ort_{yaş} = 21.11$, $SS = 1.06$), anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri açısından romantik çiftlerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıklara odaklanmıştır. Ek olarak, bellek özelliklerindeki ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenlerindeki cinsiyet farklılıkları incelenmiştir. Her iki çalışmanın bulguları, kişisel anlatılardaki anlatı bütünlüğünün, fenomenolojik özelliklerin ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevlerinin dolaylı anılardaki karşılıklarıyla pozitif yönde ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bununla birlikte, kişisel anıların anlatı bütünlüğünün, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri açısından daha yüksek puan aldığı bulunmuştur.

Ayrıca, kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinde anlatı bütünlüğünde cinsiyet farklılıkları gözlenmiştir. Kadın katılımcılar erkeklere kıyasla anlatı bütünlüğü daha yüksek anılar aktarmıştır. Genel olarak, bulgular kişisel geçmişimizi nasıl hatırladığımızın, hayatımızdaki önemli kişilerin, özellikle de romantik partnerlerin, dolaylı anılarını nasıl hatırladığımızla yakından ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yaşam öyküsü, anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler, otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri, cinsiyet farklılıkları.

To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“We are the stories we tell about ourselves (Fivush, 2010).”

1.1. Overview

How often do you think about the happiest day of your life? Have you ever wondered about the darkest time in your romantic partner's life? Do you talk about life-changing events with your significant others? Our lives are marked by such memories that define who we are (Fivush, 2010; McAdams, 2001). Throughout our lives, we frequently share stories related to these memories with significant others. While remembering and talking about past experiences, we rely on autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memory consists of memories from one's life, as well as anticipated events that might happen in the future (Conway, 2005; Rubin & Umanath, 2015). Additionally, it plays a crucial role in our lives, with one of its main functions being the creation of a sense of self-continuity through the formation of life stories.

A life story is a mental representation of narratives from one's life, organized to connect the past, present, and future, creating a coherent account of self (Adler et al., 2016; McAdams, 2001). The formation of a life story is an important developmental achievement that gradually occurs from adolescence into emerging and young adulthood. In addition to personal life stories, recent studies suggest that we can construct vicarious life stories for significant others (Thomsen et al., 2016; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). Knowing others' life stories might have certain adaptive functionalities for our lives, such as meaning-making, self-regulation, and bonding (Pillemer et al., 2024). Given the functionality of vicarious life stories, a relatively new line of research focused on whether how we remember personal life stories is related

to how we remember vicarious life stories. In general, these studies suggested that there are both similarities and differences between personal and vicarious memories. However, personal memories tend to be more vivid, more emotionally charged, and have greater functionality and significance than vicarious memories (Pond & Peterson, 2020; Thomsen et al., 2020; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2020).

Building on this line of research, the current studies investigated similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories of adults who have been in a committed, monogamous, and heterosexual relationship for at least six months. Since vicarious life story research is still in its infancy and has never been studied within the romantic relationship context with a non-WEIRD sample, Study 1 adopted an exploratory approach and qualitatively investigated thematic similarities between personal and vicarious life story narratives for romantic partners.

Given that Study 1 validated the presence of vicarious life stories for romantic partners within the Turkish cultural context, in Study 2, we focused on similarities and differences in personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics and functions of autobiographical memory. Considering that emerging adulthood and young adulthood are highly critical for the formation of life stories (McAdams, 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013), in Study 2, we targeted emerging adults and young adults to investigate these characteristics. Also, in Study 2, we investigated the related research question for the first time with a sample of romantic couples within the Turkish cultural context. Additionally, in Study 2, we tested the role of gender on these memory characteristics as well as the reasons for sharing vicarious memories. In this study, we also exploratorily tested the role of age group (emerging adulthood: 18-23, and young adulthood: 28-33) in the narrative coherence of personal and vicarious life stories.

Since Study 2 had a correlational nature and provided the first evidence regarding the tested research question for the first time within the Turkish cultural context and in the context of romantic relationships, we designed Study 3 as a replication of Study 2. Through conducting a replication study, we provided a more robust framework to the findings of Study 2. In this regard, in Study 3, we replicated the findings of Study 2 in

terms of similarities and differences between the above-mentioned memory characteristics across personal and vicarious life stories and the role of gender on these variables. Moving beyond the replication, in Study 3, we exploratorily tested the associations between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories and life satisfaction, and narrative coherence in vicarious life stories for romantic partners, relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of others in the self variables. We aimed to provide a basis for understanding complex relations between narrative coherence and psychosocial outcomes by exploratorily testing associations between the above-mentioned variables.

1.2. Autobiographical Memory and Personal Life Stories

Autobiographical memory refers to memories from one's life or imagined prospective events that might happen to one in the future (Conway, 2005; Rubin & Umanath, 2015). Although autobiographical memory has similar features to episodic and semantic memory, it differs from these memory types with two main characteristics: Autobiographical memories offer information about the where, when, and what of a past event (Bauer, 2015), and one's sense of self is present at the original event and during the recall of the event (Fivush, 2019).

Life stories are mental representations of narratives from one's life that bind past, present, and future together to form a coherent account of the self (Adler et al., 2016; McAdams, 2001). Autobiographical memory is necessary to develop life stories (Conway, 2005; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; McAdams, 2001). By drawing on their past, individuals can form a dynamic and coherent life story, also known as the narrative identity (McAdams, 2013; Singer, 2004).

From the narrative identity perspective, one's personality characteristics, social identities, and goals are dynamic and subject to change over time (McAdams, 2001). To ensure a sense of self-continuity throughout life, individuals create life stories that offer explanations for why a person becomes who they are (Habermas & Köber, 2015). In this sense, life stories move beyond merely recalling memories from the personal past; they incorporate the personal past with current and future goals to offer meaning,

unity, and purpose to life (McAdams et al., 2013). In addition, life stories enable individuals to answer fundamental questions concerning identity, such as “who am I?” and “how did I become the person I am today?” (McAdams, 2001).

Autobiographical reasoning- the cognitive process of attributing personal meaning to autobiographical memories, forming connections between different events and personality, and extracting lessons from past experiences- plays an essential role in the formation of life stories (Habermas, 2011). Through autobiographical reasoning, individuals choose, organize, and infer meaning from autobiographical memories, and consequently, they formulate a coherent account of self (McAdams, 2001).

Life stories are consisted of outstanding specific autobiographical memories and extended periods (Thomsen, 2009; Thomsen et al., 2016). Among the personal memories that from life stories, previous research highlighted the importance of specific memories, which stand out as one-time events that typically last no more than a day (Thomsen, 2009). These memories are characterized by their self-defining and/or transforming nature, along with the experienced phenomenological qualities, such as emotional intensity and vividness in time of recall (McAdams, 2001; Pillemer, 1998; Singer et al., 2014; Thomsen & Berntsen, 2008).

In this regard, highly emotional personal memories, such as low point and high point narratives, and transitional memories, like turning point narratives, are some of the most investigated examples of specific memories that fuel life stories (McAdams, 2008; McLean et al., 2020). As argued by Bluck (2001), such memories are considered “building blocks of life narratives.” In addition to specific memories, recent research highlighted that extended autobiographical periods, known as chapters, are also part of life stories (Thomsen, 2009; Thomsen et al., 2016).

Altogether, autobiographical memory plays an essential role in the formation life stories. By relying autobiographical reasoning, individuals can form life story consisting of specific outstanding memories, and extended autobiographical periods, ensuring them to have a sense of self-continuity over time and to formulate a coherent account of personal past (McAdams, 2001).

1.3. Development of Autobiographical Memory and Personal Life Stories

The development of life stories is argued to be influenced by the social-cognitive improvements occurring throughout childhood and societal expectations about "getting a life" (McAdams & McLean, 2013; Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Although children begin to narrate their personal pasts at a very young age (Nelson, 1993), adolescence and emerging adulthood periods are particularly important for the formation of a fully-fledged life story (McAdams, 1985; 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013).

Grounded in Erikson's (1963) theory of psychosocial development, McAdams (1985; 2001) argued that starting from adolescence into emerging and young adulthood, individuals find themselves in rapidly changing social contexts where they are required to adapt to new social roles, make important decisions about their future, and position themselves in an adult world. Because of the social nature of this developmental period, they engage in identity configuration through the formation of a life story, which eventually helps them create a coherent account of self (McAdams, 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013).

While societal expectations urge adolescents and emerging adults to form a life story, social and cognitive developments occurring throughout childhood prepare them for this process. Children begin to refer to their personal past and show early signs of autobiographical memory with simplistic narratives in toddlerhood (Nelson, 1993). Relevant research indicates that during this developmental period, children's narratives are highly episodic and lack markers of coherence (Dunlop & Walker, 2013). Since autobiographical memory and the ability to narrate personal pasts develop in a social context, parent-child memory conversations are found to be very influential in improving children's narrative skills and self-concept (Miller et al., 1990; Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Haden et al., 1997). As indicated by a long line of research, parents', especially mothers', elaborative conversational style is closely related to children's immediate and long-term narrative skills when talking with familiar and unfamiliar adults (Alkis et al., 2024; Fivush et al., 2006; Leichtman et al., 2019; Waters et al., 2019; Wu & Jabson, 2019). Through parental elaborative conversational styles,

children learn ways of referring to their personal past in terms of narrative structure, content, and style, and positing self in past and present (Nelson & Fivush, 2020; Reese, 2002). Relevant research also showed that parental elaborative conversational styles in childhood longitudinally predicts adolescents' complexity in life story chapters (Reese et al., 2010).

In addition to parent-child memory conversations, several cognitive improvements occurring from middle childhood into late adolescence enhance the quality of life story narratives of children and adolescents (Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Habermas & Silveira, 2008). As children transition into middle childhood, they begin to narrate their personal stories with an understanding of how a good story should be organized and what aspects it should involve, marking the development of temporal coherence (McAdams, 2001). Around this time, biographical coherence also starts to develop, and children come to understand cultural norms concerning a life story and traditional stages of a life course. As children grasp these cultural norms, they begin to organize single events from their own lives in a culturally appropriate way (Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Habermas & Paha, 2001).

During adolescence, individuals begin to produce narratives with causal coherence by explaining how one event led to another. They also incorporate reasons behind beliefs, traits, and preferences. Finally, with the emergence of thematic coherence, they can produce life story narratives with overarching themes that refer to values and principles and connect past and present identities.

Taken together, qualitative aspects of life story narratives gradually develop from the teenage years to emerging and young adulthood. During emerging adulthood, individuals are usually motivated and have the capacity to produce life story narratives with temporal, biographical, causal, and thematic coherence (McAdams & Olson, 2010; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Habermas & Paha, 2001; Habermas & Silveira, 2008). Considering the gradual development of life stories and social nature of emerging adulthood and young adulthood, investigating life stories of adults in these developmental periods might offer critical information to the relevant literature.

1.4. Autobiographical Memory Characteristics and Individual Differences in Personal Narratives

1.4.1. Narrative Coherence

One of the key indicators of finding meaning in life story is the coherence of life story narratives (Linde, 1993; Reese et al., 2011). Narrative coherence refers to what extent a narrative is understandable to some naïve audience who do not have prior knowledge about the event described in the narrative. In this sense, it is expected that a coherent narrative should inform the audience not only about what, when, and where of an event but also its personal meaning and significance to the narrator (Reese et al., 2011).

Within the scope of the current studies, narrative coherence is evaluated from the multidimensional model of narrative coherence (Reese et al., 2011). According to this model, overall narrative coherence is consisted of three main aspects, namely context, chronology, and theme. Context aspect entails the contextual details in a narrative, such as where and when did the event described in the narrative takes place. Chronology involves temporal order of a narrative. It informs audience about the sequence of actions in the narrative. Finally, theme refers to the meaning of the narrative. A thematically coherent narrative should involve affective and evaluative information, causal connections, and resolution (Reese et al., 2011). Multidimensional model of narrative coherence indicates that each aspect might be presented in life story narratives with varying degrees. The articulated presence of all three aspects marks greater overall narrative coherence.

Narrative coherence is an important characteristic to consider in life story narratives because it is argued to be related to the psychological functioning of individuals (Adler et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2021; Waters & Fivush, 2015). In their pioneering study, Baerger and McAdams (1999) investigated narrative coherence and psychological well-being in a sample of adults aged between 35 and 65 years. They found that higher narrative coherence in personal life story narratives was related to higher levels of life satisfaction and lower levels of depression. In a different study, Waters and Fivush (2015) asked emerging adults to narrate four different personal highly significant

events. Similarly, they found that higher narrative coherence was associated with higher psychological well-being, a higher sense of purpose and meaning in life, and positive social relationships. Additionally, according to the systematic review by Adler et al. (2016), higher coherence in turning point narratives and resolution in negative event narratives is related to greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem, and lower depression.

In sum, narrative coherence has certain functionality in one's life and integral part of life story narratives.

1.4.2. Phenomenological Characteristics

Autobiographical memories, especially the personally significant ones that form the basis of life stories, are often characterized by intense phenomenological experiences. Phenomenology refers to subjective experiences of reliving a remembered event (Rubin, 2005), and it enables mental time travel (Tulving, 2002). Several models were proposed to identify the different aspects of phenomenology (Bernsten et al., 2019; Boyacioglu & Akfirat, 2015; Moulin et al., 2022; Sutin & Robins, 2007; Rubin, 2006). Although there is no consensus regarding the exact number of phenomenological characteristics, majority of the models suggest that vividness and emotional valence are the primary examples of phenomenology (Boyacioglu & Akfirat, 2015; Sutin et al., 2021; Sutin & Robins, 2007).

When recalling an event, one can mentally visualize the past event as if it happens again (D'Argembeau & Van der Linden, 2008; Rubin et al., 2003). In this regard, vividness- visual clarity and intensity of a remembered memory- (Sutin & Robins, 2007) is regarded as one of the primary characteristics of autobiographical memory (Brewer, 1996).

Vividness is typically measured with single-item statements that are presented after asking participants to recall or narrate a memory (Boyacioglu & Akfirat, 2015). Previous research showed that personally significant memories are associated with higher vividness (Montebarocci et al., 2014). In addition, vivid memories have several

functionalities in one's life, such as vivid memories help individuals take lessons from their personal past (Pillemer, 1998) and enable them to pursue goal engagement (Singer & Salovey, 1993). Additionally, vividness is associated with one's perception of self-change (Libby & Eibach, 2002; Libby et al., 2005). In this sense, vividness is an integral memory characteristic of life story narratives.

In addition to mental visualization of past experiences, when individuals remember their personal memories, they frequently experience emotions and reexperience the feelings they had at the time the events happened (Wood & Conway, 2006). In this context, another factor that should be considered in relation to phenomenological characteristics is the valence of a memory (Holland & Kessinger, 2010).

Valence refers to the emotional tone of a memory, or to what extent an event described in the memory is perceived positive or negative (Boyacıoğlu et al., 2022). Valence could be measured in various ways, such as by asking valence of the event itself, the valence of the emotional experience during the event, and the valence of the emotional experience during recall (Sutin & Robins, 2007). As in vividness, it is usually measured with single-item statements that are presented after asking participants to recall or narrate a memory (Boyacıoğlu & Akfirat, 2015).

According to previous studies, life story memories, such as high point and low point narratives, are characterized by high levels of emotionality (McAdams, 2008; Moffit & Singer, 1994; Singer et al., 2013). Previous research also demonstrated a link between valence and vividness, such that highly emotional memories are reported with higher vividness (Buchanan, 2007; Reisberg & Hertel, 2004).

Considering the functionality of memories with high phenomenology in one's life (Pillemer, 1998; Singer & Salovey, 1993) and their role in encoding and retrieval of autobiographical memories (Boyacıoğlu & Akfirat, 2015; Schaefer & Philippot, 2005) life story narratives offer particularly important medium to investigate phenomenological characteristics. Thus, it is critical to consider phenomenological characteristics while conducting autobiographical memory research on life stories.

1.4.3. Autobiographical Memory Functions

Autobiographical memory has three main functions: social, directive, and self (Alea & Bluck, 2007; Bluck & Alea, 2008; Pillemer, 2003; Harris et al., 2014). Sharing personal memories and listening to past experiences of others facilitates intimacy (Alea & Bluck, 2007; Alea & Vick, 2010). In this sense, the social function of autobiographical memory helps individuals to initiate and maintain social relationships through talking about past experiences (Alea & Bluck, 2003; Pasupathi, 2001; Harris et al., 2014). For instance, Alea & Bluck (2007) asked one group of participants to recall positive experiences related to their romantic partner, while another group read vignettes about fictional positive experiences of romantic couples. They found that only the first group who recalled positive experiences with their romantic partner reported increased feelings of intimacy, supporting the social function of autobiographical memory (Majzoobi & Forstmeier, 2022).

In addition, past experiences facilitate the decision-making process and solve present and future problems (Bluck, 2003). In this regard, the directive function of autobiographical memory entails using past experiences to solve problems, take lessons, and prepare for the future (Pillemer, 2003). For example, Kuwabara and Pillemer (2010) investigated the directive function by asking students to recall their college memories. They found that students who recalled positive memories about college were more likely to donate money to their college. Finally, thanks to autobiographical memory, one can maintain a sense of self-continuity over time by using personal memories to form a life story (Conway, 2005; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Waters et al., 2014). In this sense, the self function of autobiographical memory enables individuals to develop a self-concept and life story (Conway, 2005).

As previously mentioned, building blocks of life stories are specific memories characterized by self-defining features with high phenomenological characteristics (Bluck, 2001). In this regard, life stories are particularly important for the functions of autobiographical memory, as high point and low point memories might have different functionality in one's life (McLean et al., 2007). According to existing research, while sharing positive memories individuals share important aspects of their selves, and the

way self is communicated in positive stories is usually used for social purposes, such as entertaining, intimacy and bonding (McLean, 2005; McLean & Thorne, 2006; Pals, 2006; Pasupathi, 2006). However, negatively valenced stories are likely to be used for self-understanding, meaning-making, and forming a connection between past and present selves (McLean, 2005; Pasupathi, 2006). Considering these, examining functions of autobiographical memory is particularly important to in the context of life story narratives.

1.4.4. Gender

According to relevant literature, individual differences are evident in the autobiographical memory narratives, and gender could be a critical factor leading to such differences. In general, gender is associated with various aspects of autobiographical memories, such as length, coherence, level of detail, emotional tone, expression of emotions, and level of elaboration (Buckner & Fivush, 1998; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013). Although there are mixed findings regarding the role of gender, previous studies demonstrated gender differences in the overall coherence, phenomenological qualities, and functions of autobiographical memory.

According to previous research, women's and young girls' memory narratives are more specific and provide more information on the context of a memory (Pillemer et al., 2003; Hayne & MacDonald, 2003; Wang et al., 2011). Concerning narrative coherence, previous studies have shown that overall narrative coherence and its different aspects are higher in women's narratives (Fivush et al., 2012; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019).

For instance, in the study by Vanden Poel and Hermans (2019), young adults aged between 18 and 30 years were asked to narrate two memories, one highly related to identity and one unrelated to identity. According to the results, women's overall narrative coherence was significantly higher for both memory types. In a different study (Fivush et al., 2012), adolescents aged between 13 and 16 years narrated two positive and two negative memories about themselves. The researchers found that mean scores for the context, chronology, and theme dimensions of narrative coherence

were higher for females than males for both positive and negative events. However, when the volumes of narratives were controlled, the difference did not reach significance. In another study, self-defining memories of emerging and older adults were investigated. The results showed that women produced more thematically coherent narratives (McLean, 2008). Although these studies indicate the potential role of gender in narrative coherence, it is important to note that there is also research indicating no gender differences in overall narrative coherence or its different aspects (Grysmann & Hudson, 2010; Lind et al., 2020; Yenen, 2023).

In addition, a limited number of studies investigated the role of gender in phenomenological characteristics (Alea & Vick, 2010; Boyacioglu & Akfirat, 2014; Grysmann & Fivush, 2016; Pohl et al., 2005; Pillemer, 1998; Ross & Holmberg, 1990; Sutin & Robins, 2007). According to a study that was conducted with college students, women participants reported more sensory details and emotional intensity while recalling autobiographical memories (Sutin & Robins, 2007). The findings of Boyacioglu and Akfirat (2014) supported women's advantageous in phenomenology by showing that women participants reported higher phenomenology in various aspects such as vividness, emotional intensity, accessibility, sharing, and recollection. In a different study, Grysmann and Fivush (2016) found that endorsing female gender roles was also associated with greater valence and memory quality.

Concerning the functions of autobiographical memory, only a handful of studies have examined potential gender differences in memory functions (Bluck & Alea, 2009; Harris et al., 2014; Liao et al., 2015; Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Maki et al., 2015; Pillemer et al., 2003; Vranic et al., 2018). The majority of these studies reported no gender differences in autobiographical memory functions (Bluck & Alea, 2009; Harris et al., 2014; Liao et al., 2015; Lind & Thomsen, 2018). Nevertheless, the remaining studies highlighted gender differences.

According to a study conducted with older adults aged between 68 and 79 years, women participants were found to use identity and intimacy functions more frequently compared to men (Pillemer et al., 2013). In a different study conducted with college students, women were found to use self-continuity and social bonding functions more

frequently than men (Maki et al., 2015). In more recent research conducted with young adults aged between 18 and 45 years, and older adults aged between 45 and 90 years, women participants reported higher directive functions compared to men, regardless of age group (Vranic et al., 2018).

Taken together, even though there are mixed findings, gender differences are reported in narrative coherence, phenomenology, and autobiographical memory functions. Women are likely to produce more coherent narratives, experience greater phenomenology, and use autobiographical memory functions more frequently. Given this, it is important to consider the potential role of gender while examining these characteristics in life story narratives.

1.5. Vicarious Memory and Vicarious Life Stories

Autobiographical memory research traditionally focused on memories that individuals experienced firsthand, but recent theoretical accounts suggest that individuals have similar memory representations for themselves and others (Rubin & Umanath, 2015; Thomsen, 2015; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). This new perspective expanded the limits of the traditional episodic-semantic memory distinction, where autobiographical memory is restricted to episodic events that individuals experienced personally (Tulving, 2002). Rather, autobiographical memory can be extended to mental representations of events and general knowledge from others' lives, which is referred to as vicarious memory (Pillemer et al., 2015; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). For a memory to be considered vicarious, one should not experience the event firsthand but should learn about it later. A crucial point concerning vicarious memories is that when individuals recall them, they are consciously aware that the event happened to someone else; thus, they do not mistakenly confuse the memory with their own experiences (Pillemer et al., 2015; Rubin & Umanath, 2015).

According to relevant literature, individuals can have vicarious memories for friends, parents, and current and ex romantic partners (Bakir-Demir et al., 2020; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pond & Paterson, 2020; Pillemer et al., 2015; Reese et al., 2017). In addition to single event vicarious memories, individuals might have mental

representations of others' lives. Recent research supported the idea that individuals have mental representations of experiences from the life stories of close others (Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). For instance, one of the preliminary studies on vicarious life story showed that young adults can categorize important events for their parents' lives (Svob & Brown, 2012). In addition, individuals can produce narratives about vicarious life stories of significant others that convey information about the what, where, and when of the original event (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021, 2022; Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pond & Peterson, 2020; Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017; Thomsen & Vedel, 2019).

Vicarious life stories might have certain adaptive functions for one's life. In this regard, having knowledge of others' lives might facilitate meaning making and self-regulation for one's own life (Pillemer et al., 2024). For instance, knowing how a best friend handled getting fired from their job might provide insights when one finds themselves in a similar position. Furthermore, vicarious life stories might help individuals to build and maintain interpersonal relationships (Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). For instance, recounting outstanding experiences from a romantic partner's life might facilitate bonding.

In addition to knowing others' life stories, the reason why individuals share personal experiences with others might offer important answers in terms of functionality of vicarious life stories. According to a previous study investigating vicarious memories in the familial context, parents share their past experiences with their children to maintain bond with them, to teach and guide them, and for self-continuity purposes (McLean, 2015).

In a cross-cultural study, Reese et al. (2017) asked adolescents why they thought their parents shared family narratives with them. The results indicated that Maori and New Zealand Chinese adolescents highlighted didactic purposes, while New Zealand European adolescents reported sharing family history purposes. In a different cross-cultural study, Bakir-Demir et al. (2022) found that while didactic and sharing emotions purposes were reported by Turkish participants, sharing family history and entertainment purposes were reported by New Zealand participants.

Overall, previous studies that were predominantly conducted in the familial context highlighted the importance of vicarious life stories for significant others. Considering that emerging adulthood and young adulthood is highly critical for the formation of life stories (McAdams, 2001; McAdams & McLean, 2013), investigating vicarious life stories of adults from these developmental periods might contribute to the relevant literature.

Given that forming and maintaining romantic relationships is one of the major developmental tasks of emerging adulthood and young adulthood (Gomez-Lopez et al., 2019; Shulman & Connolly, 2013; Xia et al., 2019) focusing on personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples would be critical for this age group.

1.6. Similarities and Differences Between Personal and Vicarious Life Stories

A relatively new and limited line of research indicated that there are several similarities and differences between personas and vicarious life stories. In one of the early studies on personal and vicarious life stories, Thomsen and Pillemer (2017) compared specific memories and chapters from personal life stories of college students' and their close others. They found that personal and vicarious life stories showed both similarities and differences. Participants who identified more chapters and specific memories in their personal life stories tended to identify more of these in the life stories of their close others. Despite the similarities, participants rated personal specific memories and life story chapters more positive, higher on phenomenological characteristics and more important for self-understanding.

In a different study, Lind and Thomsen (2018) investigated personal and vicarious life story chapters of adolescents in terms of functionality, causal connections and valence. The findings revealed a positive association between personal and vicarious life story chapters. Participants who described personal chapters more positively and engaged in more positive causal connections also did so while narrating the vicarious life story chapters. In addition, they found that both personal and vicarious life stories were associated with lower identity disturbance, and only personal life stories were related to greater empathy function.

In another study, Thomsen and Vedel (2019) examined emerging adults' personal life story chapters and vicarious life story chapters of their mothers and fathers. They found that volumes of personal and vicarious life stories were positively related to each other. In addition, negative tone and positive change in personal life stories were significantly related to those characteristics in vicarious life stories for mothers and fathers. Likewise, both self-rated and content-coded positive tone and negative change in personal life stories were associated with their respective counterparts in vicarious life stories of fathers. In terms of differences, personal life stories were significantly higher on positive change compared to vicarious life stories for mothers and fathers.

In addition, Pond and Peterson (2020), asked college students to narrate personal and vicarious high point and low point memories. The findings indicated that the ratings of phenomenological qualities for personal and vicarious memories were positively correlated. However, personal memories were rated as more vivid, more personally important, more positive than vicarious memories, and more functional for directive functions (Pond & Peterson, 2020). Most recently, Yenen (2023) investigated adolescents' personal life stories and vicarious life stories for their close friends in terms of thematic coherence, elaboration of interpretations and change/identity connections. According to the results, thematic coherence and elaboration of interpretations in personal life story narratives were significantly related to those characteristics in vicarious life stories of close friends.

The above-mentioned studies paved the way for investigating personal and vicarious life stories for significant others. However, the scientific literature on personal and vicarious life stories in a romantic relationship context is highly limited. To the best of our knowledge, only two studies compared memory characteristics of personal and vicarious life stories in such a context. In their study, Panattoni and Thomsen (2018) investigated personal and vicarious life stories of current couples. They found that compared to the vicarious stories, personal life stories are characterized by higher agency and redemption themes but did not differ on communion. Additionally, this study revealed that how individuals tell their personal stories is related to how they narrate their partners' stories; agency, communion, and redemption themes in personal

life stories were significantly associated with using these themes in vicarious life stories.

In a different study, Thomsen et al. (2020) investigated similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life story chapters of ex-partners and ex-close friends. They found that participants narrated vicarious chapters for their exes as less positive, more negative, with less positive and more negative meaning, and lower on agency, communion, and redemption compared to personal chapters.

Taken together, previous studies shown that although personal and vicarious life stories are similar in nature, personal life stories tend to be evaluated higher in respective memory characteristics such as phenomenology and autobiographical memory functions. To the best of our knowledge, no studies have compared personal and vicarious life stories in terms of overall narrative coherence. In addition, no study has investigated the phenomenological characteristics and autobiographical memory functions of personal and vicarious life stories within the romantic relationship context. In this regard, focusing on these aspects of life story narratives and bringing personal and vicarious life stories into the romantic relationship context would uniquely contribute to the relevant literature.

1.7. Personal and Vicarious Life Stories and Psychological Functioning

Previous research demonstrated the impact of personal life story narratives on social and psychological functioning both in the short and long term (Adler et al., 2016). Specifically, individuals who exhibit higher narrative coherence in their narratives (Baerger & McAdams, 1999; Booker et al., 2020; Waters & Fivush, 2015; Vanaken et al., 2022) tend to experience greater well-being.

Nevertheless, there are other studies indicating that narrative coherence is not related to well-being (Fivush et al., 2003; Vanderveren et al., 2019), or the positive association between narrative coherence and well-being is moderated by individual characteristics such as gender and age (Chen et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2020; Reese et al., 2017; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019). The mixed nature of these findings suggests that there

is still need for research investigating the association between narrative coherence and well-being. In addition to narrative coherence in personal narratives, a limited yet growing body of research focused on the link between different features of vicarious life stories, and well-being. In their study, Merrill and colleagues (2017) investigated personal and intergenerational narratives of transgression and pride and found that for men, cognitive words in personal and paternal intergenerational pride narratives were associated with higher well-being, while the same trend was observed for women's personal and maternal intergenerational pride narratives.

In a different study, Thomsen and Vedel (2019) found that a positive emotional tone in vicarious life story narratives of parents was positively related to emerging adults' well-being. Additionally, in a cross-cultural study on vicarious family narratives, Bakir-Demir and colleagues (2021) revealed that positive emotional tone, and identity connections positively predicted well-being.

However, there are also other studies that indicated mixed findings for the relation between vicarious memories, life stories, and well-being. For instance, in their comprehensive study, Thomsen and colleagues (2020) tested the association between different features of vicarious life stories (emotional tone, meaning, redemption, agency and communion) and well-being with multiple studies. While in some of the studies, well-being was not related to features of vicarious life stories at all, in other studies, the association between features of life stories and well-being was lost after controlling for personal life stories. Finally, in a different study, contrary to existing research, higher thematic coherence and positive identity connections in vicarious parental narratives predicted higher levels of depression in adolescents (Chen et al., 2021).

Overall, previous research on the association between different features of vicarious memories and life stories and well-being produced mixed findings. Some studies shown that the use of motivational themes and autobiographical reasoning in vicarious narratives are related to well-being, while others found no significant association, suggesting that there is still need for research investigating the complex interplay between narrative coherence and well-being.

To the best of our knowledge, no study investigated the association between overall narrative coherence in vicarious life stories and well-being. Considering the lack of research in the vicarious memory context and within the romantic relationships domain, understanding the role of personal and vicarious life stories on personal well-being could offer critical implications for the functionality of these memories in individuals psychosocial functioning.

1.8. Autobiographical Memory in the Context of Romantic Relationships

When conducting research in the context of romantic relationships, an essential factor that should be considered is relationship satisfaction. Romantic relationship satisfaction refers to the degree of contentment and happiness an individual feels in their romantic relationship (Collins & Read, 1990). Relationship satisfaction is a personal evaluation; therefore, within a couple, each individual may have their own level of satisfaction with the relationship, which may differ from their partner's (Djundeva & Keizer, 2021).

A limited number of studies investigated relationship satisfaction from an autobiographical memory perspective. These studies suggested that remembering relationship-specific memories could serve the function of boosting relationship satisfaction (Alea & Bluck, 2007; Alea & Vick, 2010; Aydin & Buyukcan-Tetik, 2021). For example, Alea & Vick (2010) asked participants to recall relationship-defining memories, which are memories of significant events that occur during a relationship and hold great importance. They found that the qualities of relationship-defining memories predicted marital satisfaction in a way that memories that were vivid, positive, and characterized by emotional intensity were associated with higher marital satisfaction. In a different study, Dunlop and colleagues (2019) applied the life story concept to romantic relationships and asked participants to narrate a high-point event from their "love life." They found that positive affect and communion predicted higher relationship-contingent self-esteem.

Overall, relevant research indicates that the features of relationship-specific memories predict one's relationship satisfaction. To the best of our knowledge, no study has

investigated whether features of vicarious life stories for romantic partners are related to romantic relationship-related variables, such as perceived partner responsiveness, inclusion of other in the self, or relationship happiness. In romantic relationships, the concept of the vicarious life story could offer a deeper understanding of how people perceive their partners' pasts. Having knowledge of the life stories of romantic partners could guide how one interacts with their partner, fostering mutual understanding and improving relationship quality. Thus, investigating how features of vicarious life stories for partners might offer critical implications for relationship functioning.

1.9. Current Studies

In line with the relevant literature, the main purpose of the current studies is to investigate similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories of Turkish adults who have been in a committed, monogamous and heterosexual romantic relationship for at least six months. To achieve this aim, one qualitative study and two mixed-methods studies were conducted.

Due to the lack of relevant research within the romantic relationships and in Turkish cultural context, Study 1 (qualitative) aimed to validate the presence of personal and vicarious life stories with a sample of Turkish participants who had been in a committed, monogamous, and heterosexual romantic relationship for at least six months. We qualitatively investigated the thematic similarities between dating and married individuals' personal life stories and the vicarious life stories of their romantic partners. The findings of this study were intended to serve as a basis for determining the sample characteristics of Study 2. Additionally, in this study, we sought to adapt a coding scheme (Reese et al., 2017) for reasons for sharing vicarious memories to be used further in Study 2 and Study 3.

Building on the findings of Study 1, In Study 2 (mixed methods), we aimed to investigate similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory ratings for personal and vicarious life stories, for the first time with a sample of romantic couples within a non-WEIRD context. In addition, we sought to test the role of gender

on romantic couples' personal and vicarious life story characteristics, as well as the reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Additionally, we exploratorily tested the role of age group (emerging adulthood: 18-23 vs. young adulthood: 28-33) in the narrative coherence of personal and vicarious life stories.

Since Study 2 had a correlational nature and provided the first evidence regarding the tested associations for the first time within the Turkish cultural context and in the context of romantic relationships, we designed Study 3 as a replication of Study 2. Thus, the primary purpose of Study 3 was to replicate the findings of Study 2 regarding similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and autobiographical memory functions of romantic couples' personal and vicarious life stories. Additionally, we aimed to replicate the role of gender on these memory characteristics and reasons for sharing vicarious memories.

Finally, in this study, we aimed to exploratorily test the association between narrative coherence in personal life stories and life satisfaction, as well as the link between narrative coherence in vicarious life stories for romantic partners and relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of others in the self. By exploratorily testing these associations, we aimed to provide a basis for understanding complex relations between narrative coherence and psychosocial outcomes by exploratorily testing associations between the above-mentioned variables. All specific hypotheses were presented at the end of each introduction section of the respective studies.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1: THEMATIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS LIFE STORIES

2.1. Aim

The current study had an exploratory nature, and our initial aim was to validate the presence of personal and vicarious life stories with a sample of Turkish participants who had been in a committed, monogamous, and heterosexual romantic relationship for at least six months. In this regard, we qualitatively investigated thematic similarities between dating and married individual's personal life stories and vicarious life stories of their romantic partners. We sought to utilize findings of this study as a basis for determining sample characteristics of Study 2, thus, we explored whether main themes in personal and vicarious life stories differ as a function of relationship status. Finally, we aimed to adapt a coding scheme (Reese et al. 2017) for reasons for sharing vicarious memories to be further used in Study 2 and Study 3. Given this study's exploratory nature, we did not propose any hypotheses, but explored the following research questions:

Research question 1: Are different types of personal and vicarious life stories available (high point, low point, and turning point) for dating and married individuals?

Research question 2: What are the emerging themes and sub-themes for personal and vicarious life stories, and whether main themes are related to relationship status?

Research question 3: What are the reasons for participants' partners sharing personal past experiences with them, and whether these reasons are related to relationship status?

2.2. Method

2.2.1. Participants

Participants of this study were 64 adults ($M_{age} = 28.15$, $SD = 5.76$, aged between 20 to 52 years) who had been in committed heterosexual relationships for at least six months. While 37 of the participants women, 27 were men. The inclusion criteria of the current study were being in a committed, monogamous and heterosexual relationship for at least six months and being in the age range of 18 to 65. Since this study had an exploratory nature, we did not restrict inclusion criteria in terms of relationship status (dating vs. married), and educational background. The average relationship duration was 60.71 months ($SD = 68.13$, ranged between six months to 34 years). Among the participants, 43 were dating, while 22 were married. Majority of the participants held a bachelor's degree (64.1%, $n = 41$), followed by master's degree (21.9%, $n = 14$), high school degree (9.4%, $n = 6$), and PhD degree (4.9%, $n = 3$), respectively. Additional information regarding participant characteristics across relationship status is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants

	Dating ($n = 43$)		Married ($n = 21$)	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	26.04	3.73	32.47	7.18
Relationship duration in months	30.90	30.26	121.76	82.97
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender				
Female	24	55.8%	13	61.9%
Male	19	44.2%	8	38.1%
Education				
High school	3	7.0%	3	14.3%
Bachelor's	30	69.8%	11	52.4%
Master's	8	18.6%	6	28.6%
PhD	2	4.7%	1	4.8%

2.2.2. Procedure

Ethical approval of the current study was obtained from the Middle East Technical University (METU) Human Subjects Ethics Committee with the protocol number 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 (See Appendix A).

Participants were recruited through a convenience sampling technique. We created a flyer to inform potential participants via social media platforms such as X, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. Interested and eligible individuals contacted the researcher to participate in the study. The researcher then shared a standard message about the study via SMS or email, which contained further information about the study. Individuals who agreed to participate were requested to complete the study in one sitting, and in the absence of their partners.

The study was conducted on Qualtrics (www.qualtrics.com), where participants first filled out the consent form, followed by the demographic information form. Next, participants answered the Key Scenes part of Life-Story Interview – II for themselves and for their partners, with the order of the personal and vicarious life stories was counterbalanced. Personal and vicarious life story questions were presented as blocks; participants either completed personal or vicarious life story questions first and then moved to the next. At the end of the study, participants were presented with a debriefing message about the study.

2.2.3. Measures

In this study, we utilized a demographic information form and the written version of The Life-Story Interview - II (McAdams, 2008).

2.2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

Demographic information form included questions on participants' age, gender, education level, relationship status, and relationship duration.

2.2.3.2. The Life-Story Interview

Personal and vicarious life stories were elicited through a short version of the Key Scenes part of The Life-Story Interview - II (McAdams, 2008). Participants were asked to describe a low point event, a high point event and a turning point event from their own and their partners' lives. An event-specific and Turkish version of the

following prompt was given for each memory: *“Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life/in your partner’s life that stands out as an especially negative/positive/life-changing experience. This might be the low point/high point/turning point scene of your entire life/your partner’s life. Please describe this scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so good/bad/important and what the scene may say about who you are as a person.”* After vicarious life story narratives, participants answered an open-ended question about why they thought their partners chose to share that memory with them.

2.2.4. Coding Scheme

2.2.4.1. Reasons

We adapted the coding scheme of Reese et al. (2017) to code for reasons that participants’ romantic partners shared them their personal past. We utilized for no reason, since the story was emotionally charged, and because the narrator asked categories from Reese and colleagues’ (2017) study. Given the different nature of the current data, we added to share personal history, to seek/provide support and to sustain/enhance intimacy categories. For reliability purposes, all answers (188 answers in total) were also coded by a second coder who was unaware of the goals of the study. The second coder was trained by the master coder and identified main reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Cohen’s kappa coefficient was used to assess reliability. As outlined in McHugh (2012), strong agreement was obtained for each narrative type. The Cohen’s kappa coefficient was .81 ($p < .001$) for vicarious low point, .81 ($p < .001$) for vicarious high point, and .82 ($p < .001$) for vicarious turning point narratives.

2.2.5. Data Analysis

2.2.5.1. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted by following the procedure suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). Once the data collection was completed, narratives from the personal and vicarious life stories of the participants were transferred from Qualtrics to an Excel

document. In this document, individual narratives were grouped under six narrative types: personal low point, personal high point, personal turning point, vicarious low point, vicarious high point, and vicarious turning point.

As a first step of the coding, the researcher read each narrative and took initial notes about the event described in the narrative. The researcher repeated this process a couple of times for each narrative type to familiarize with the data. In the second step, the researcher evaluated the narratives to create initial codes consisting of common patterns. As a third step, the researcher constructed emerging themes from the common patterns. In the fourth step, potential themes were reevaluated to ensure consistency across the dataset. As a fifth step, researcher defined names for each theme. In the final and sixth step, analysis was reported. The whole process is repeated for each narrative type.

For reliability purposes, all narratives were also coded by a second coder who were unaware of the goals of the study. The second coder was trained by master coder and applied the procedure outlined above. Cohen's kappa coefficient was used to assess reliability; reliability scores for each narrative type were presented under respective sections. The master coders' codings were used for analyses.

2.2.6. Results

2.2.6.1. Preliminary Findings

The first research question of the current study addressed the availability of personal and vicarious life stories of dating and married participants. Results revealed that, regardless of relationship status, all participants were able to produce personal life story narratives for low point, high point, and turning point events. Similarly, all participants produced vicarious low point narratives for their partners. Nevertheless, one married participant and one dating participant could not recount vicarious high point narratives for their partners. Finally, one married participant did not produce vicarious turning point narrative, while the remaining participants successfully narrated one. These results suggested that other than individual incidents, dating and

married individuals overall did not have difficulty in producing personal and vicarious life stories.

Table 2. Frequencies for personal and vicarious life story narratives across relationship status

	Dating (<i>n</i> = 43)	Married (<i>n</i> = 21)
Personal		
Low point	43	21
High point	43	21
Turning point	43	21
Vicarious		
Low point	43	21
High point	42	20
Turning point	42	20

2.2.6.2. Main Findings

2.2.6.2.1. Thematic Analysis of Personal Low Point Narratives

Participants generated 64 personal low point narratives, categorized into seven mutually exclusive main themes: interpersonal conflict, social support, health, education, death, career, and other. Table 3 presents frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes within the personal low point narratives. The Cohen’s kappa coefficient was .93 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .92 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating almost perfect inter-rater agreement.

The main theme of interpersonal conflict ($n = 17$, 26.6%) comprised narratives of participants recalling instances where they experienced conflict with individuals within their close social circle. Within this main theme, 10.9% of participants ($n = 7$) produced narratives involving conflict with romantic partners, 9.4% ($n = 6$) described conflicts with family members, 6.2% ($n = 4$) mentioned conflicts with friends. Additionally, the main theme of social support ($n = 11$, 17.2%) involved narratives of past experiences where participants did not receive social support from significant

others during challenging personal experiences. Within this main theme, 17.2% ($n = 11$) of participants shared narratives about lack of social support.

Health main theme ($n = 10$, 15.6%) encompassed narratives detailing participants' personal or close others' health problems. Within this theme, 9.4% of participants ($n = 6$) shared memories related to health problems of family members, and 6.3% ($n = 4$) recounted memories related to personal health problems. In addition, the main theme of education ($n = 10$, 15.6%) involved narratives related to participants' educational failures in various contexts. Within this theme, 7.8% of participants ($n = 5$) described failures in national exams (e.g., university entrance exam, high school entrance exam, public personal selection exam, etc.). Furthermore, 6.3% of the participants ($n = 4$) mentioned experiencing failure in undergraduate education, while 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) shared instances of failure in graduate education.

The death main theme ($n = 6$, 9.4%) covered instances where participants lost important figures in their lives. Under this main theme, 7.8% of the participants ($n = 5$) shared memories involving the death of family members, and 1.6% of them stated the death of a friend ($n = 1$). Furthermore, the career main theme ($n = 5$, 7.8%) involved narratives of past experiences related to participants' careers. Under this main theme, 7.8% of the participants ($n = 5$) shared memories related to personal career-related difficulties. Finally, other category ($n = 5$, 7.8%) encompassed narratives that did not yield main themes. These narratives involved various challenging experiences such as sexual assault, moving, and humiliation.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and main themes. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and main themes of personal low point narratives, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 9.94, p = .12$.

2.2.6.2.2. Thematic Analysis of Personal High Point Narratives

Participants produced 64 personal high-point narratives, which were grouped under eight mutually exclusive main themes: education, romantic relationships, trip, career, social support, health, childbirth, and other. Table 4 presents frequencies and

percentages for main themes and sub-themes within the personal high point narratives. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .94 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .90 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating almost perfect inter-rater agreement.

Education main theme, ($n = 24, 37.5\%$), involved participants' education-related success narratives. Under this main theme, 21.9% of the participants ($n = 14$) stated success in national exams; 9.4% of them ($n = 6$) shared graduate-school related success; 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$) mentioned university graduation, and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) covered high school-related success. In addition, romantic relationship main theme ($n = 9, 14.1\%$) comprised participants' positive experiences in romantic relationship contexts. Under this main theme, 9.4% of the participants ($n = 6$) covered the start of a new romantic relationship, while 4.7% of them ($n = 3$) shared marriage-related developments.

Trip main theme ($n = 8, 12.5\%$) involved participants miscellaneous experiences involving travelling. Under this main theme 6.3% of the participants ($n = 4$) mentioned trips with family members; 4.7% of them ($n = 3$) stated trips with romantic partners; 1.6% of the participants ($n = 1$) shared solo trip experiences. Additionally, career main theme ($n = 7, 10.9\%$) involved narratives of positive career-related experiences. Within this main theme, all participants mentioned starting a new job.

Social support main theme ($n = 4, 6.3\%$) included instances in which participants received social support from individuals within their close circle during challenging times. Under this main theme, all participants ($n = 4, 6.3\%$) mentioned narratives leading to receiving support sub-theme. Furthermore, health main theme ($n = 4, 6.3\%$) comprised positive health-related developments, under this main theme, 7% of the participants ($n = 3$) mentioned family members overcoming health problems as cancer, and severe injuries; and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) mentioned overcoming a personal health problem. Childbirth main theme ($n = 3, 4.7\%$) consisted of events related to birth of participants' children. Under this main theme, all participants ($n = 3, 4.7\%$) mentioned becoming parent. Finally, the other category ($n = 5, 7.8\%$) involved various positive experiences that did not yield to main themes, such as religious practices, adopting pets, and buying a new property.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and main themes for personal high point narratives. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and main themes, $\chi^2(7, 64) = 9.17, p = .24$.

2.2.6.2.3. Thematic Analysis of Personal Turning Point Narratives

Participants produced 64 personal turning point narratives, which was grouped under seven mutually exclusive main themes: romantic relationships, education, interpersonal conflict, moving, social support, career, and other. Table 5 presents frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes within the turning point narratives. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .86 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .83 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating strong agreement.

Similar to the personal high point narratives, romantic relationship main theme ($n = 14, 21.9\%$) comprised positive experiences related to romantic relationships. Under this main theme, 12.5% of the participants ($n = 8$) mentioned start of a new romantic relationship; 9.4% of them ($n = 6$) covered marriage-related developments. In addition, education emerged another main theme ($n = 14, 21.9\%$) covered under personal turning point narratives. This main theme involved positive education-related developments. 9.4% of the participant ($n = 6$) shared major selection decision; 7.8% of them ($n = 5$) mentioned success in national exams; 3.1% of the participants ($n = 2$) discussed graduate school-related successes, and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) covered university graduation.

Interpersonal conflict is another main theme ($n = 11, 17.2\%$) that covered participants' negative interpersonal experiences both those they personally experienced and those to which they were exposed. Under this main theme, 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$) mentioned divorce of their parents; 4.7% of them ($n = 3$) discussed conflict with romantic partners; 4.7% of participants ($n = 3$) stated conflict with family members; and 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) shared conflict with friends. Moving is another main theme ($n = 8, 13.1\%$) emerged within turning point narratives. Within this theme all participants shared their moving-related experiences. Under this main theme, 10.9%

of participants ($n = 7$) shared moving to a different a city; while 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) mentioned moving within the same city. Social support main theme ($n = 5$, 7.8%) covered instances in which participants received social support that leads to important changes in their lives. Under this main theme, all participants stated receiving social support. Furthermore, career main theme ($n = 5$, 7.8%) involved narratives of positive career-related experiences. Under this main theme, 4.7% of participants ($n = 3$) stated starting a new job, while 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) covered changing careers. Finally, other category ($n = 7$, 11%) consisted different experiences related to humiliation, health, childbirth, earthquake, and military service.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and main themes. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and main themes of personal turning point narratives, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 5.71, p = .45$.

2.2.6.2.4. Thematic Analysis of Vicarious Low Point Narratives

Participants produced 64 vicarious low-point narratives for their partners' life stories. These narratives were categorized under seven mutually exclusive main themes: interpersonal conflict, death, social support, health, humiliation, career, and other. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for vicarious low point narratives are presented in Table 6. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .86 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .84 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating strong inter-rater agreement.

Interpersonal conflict main theme ($n = 22$, 34.4%) encompassed narratives of memories in which participants' partners experienced conflict with individuals within their close social circle. Under this main theme, 23.4% of the participants ($n = 15$) produced narratives involving conflict with family members, 6.3% of them ($n = 4$) stated conflict with romantic partners; 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$) mentioned conflict with friends. In addition, death main theme ($n = 12$, 18.8%) covered instances where participants' partners lost important figures in their lives. Under this main theme, 17.2% of the participants ($n = 11$) shared memories involving death of family members, while 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) mentioned death of a friend.

Social support main theme ($n = 10, 15.6\%$) involved narratives of past experiences, where participants' partners did not receive social support from significant others. Under this main theme, all participants shared narratives related to lack of social support. Additionally, health main theme ($n = 8, 12.5\%$) comprised narratives of participants' partners' personal or close others' health problems. Under this main theme, 9.4% of participants ($n = 6$) shared memories related to health problems of family members, and 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) stated narratives related to personal health problem.

Humiliation main theme ($n = 5, 7.8\%$) consisted of instances when participants' partner's felt humiliated. Under this main theme, 3.1% participants ($n = 2$) mentioned humiliation in family context, 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) shared humiliation in school context, 1.6% of the participants stated humiliation in work context. Furthermore, career main theme ($n = 3, 4.7\%$) involved narratives of past experiences related to participants' partners' career. Under this main theme, all participants shared memories related to career-related difficulties. Finally, other ($n = 4, 6.3\%$) category involved narratives related to financial difficulty, education, and earthquake.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and main themes for vicarious low point narratives. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and main themes, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 3.71, p = .71$.

2.2.6.2.5. Thematic Analysis of Vicarious High Point Narratives

Participants narrated 62 vicarious high point memories for their partners' life stories; two participants stated that their partners did not tell them a high point memory. These narratives were categorized under eight mutually exclusive main themes: career, education, social support, trip, romantic relationship, childbirth, social event, and other. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for vicarious high-point narratives are presented in Table 7. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .82 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .82 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating strong agreement. Career main theme ($n = 15, 23.4\%$) involved narratives of participants' partners'

positive career-related experiences. Within this main theme, 14.1% of the participants ($n = 9$) shared career-related successes; 6.3% of them ($n = 4$) stated starting a new job; and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) mentioned changing careers. In addition, education main theme ($n = 14$, 21.9%) involved participants' partners' education-related successes. Under this main theme, 14.1% of participants ($n = 9$) shared success in national exams; 4.7% of them ($n = 3$) mentioned success in graduate education; and 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) stated success in undergraduate education.

Furthermore, the social support main theme ($n = 7$, 10.9%) included instances in which participants' partners received from or provided social support to individuals within their close circle during challenging times. Under this main theme, 7.8% of participants ($n = 5$) stated receiving support; and 3.1% ($n = 2$) of them mentioned providing support. Trip main theme ($n = 6$, 9.4%) involved participants' partners' miscellaneous experiences involving traveling. Under this main theme, 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$) mentioned trips with family members; 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) stated trips with romantic partners; 1.6% of the participants ($n = 1$) shared trip with friends. Romantic relationship main theme ($n = 6$, 9.4%) comprised of participants' partners' positive experiences in romantic relationship contexts. Under this main theme, 6.3% of the participants ($n = 4$) covered the start of a new romantic relationship; and 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) mentioned marriage-related developments.

Additionally, childbirth main theme ($n = 5$, 7.8%) consisted of events related to participants' partners' experiences in terms of either becoming a parent or having nieces and nephews. Under this main theme, while 6.3% of the participants ($n = 4$) produced narratives about their partners' becoming parents, 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) narrated a memory related to their partner's becoming uncle.

Social event main theme ($n = 4$, 6.3%) emerged as a new theme specific to vicarious high point memories. Under this main theme, 3.1% of the participants ($n = 2$) mentioned surprise celebrations organized for their partners; and 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) stated social events in which their partners participated. Finally, other category ($n = 5$, 7.8%) involved narratives related to health, adopting pet, and financial difficulty. A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status

and main themes for vicarious high point narratives. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and main themes, $\chi^2(7, 62) = 14.41, p = .06$.

2.2.6.2.6. Thematic Analysis of Vicarious Turning Point Narratives

Participants produced 62 vicarious turning point narratives for their partners' life stories; one participant could not narrate a vicarious turning point memory. These narratives were categorized under seven mutually exclusive main themes: education, career, moving, interpersonal conflict, romantic relationship, social support, and other. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for vicarious turning point narratives are presented in Table 8. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .75 ($p < .001$) for main themes, and .75 ($p < .001$) for sub-themes, indicating moderate agreement.

Education main theme ($n = 17, 26.6\%$) involved narratives of participants' partners' education-related success and challenges. Under his main theme, 10.9% of participants ($n = 7$) shared success in national exams; 6.3% of them ($n = 4$) mentioned major selection; 4.7% of them ($n = 3$) stated graduate school-related success; 3.1% of them ($n = 2$) covered university graduation, and 1.6% of the participants ($n = 1$) shared failure in graduate education. In addition, career main theme ($n = 14, 21.9\%$) involved narratives of participants' partners' positive career-related experiences. Within this main theme, 10.9% of the participants ($n = 7$) stated changing careers; 9.4% of them ($n = 6$) mentioned starting a new job; and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) narrated career-related success.

Moving is another main theme ($n = 8, 12.5\%$) that emerged within vicarious turning point narratives. Under this main theme, all participants shared their partners' moving-related experiences; 10.9% of participants ($n = 7$) shared moving to a different city; and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) mentioned moving within the same city. Additionally, interpersonal conflict main theme ($n = 8, 12.5\%$) encompassed narratives of memories in which participants' partners experienced conflict with individuals within their close social circle. Under this main theme, 6.3% of the participants ($n = 4$) produced narratives involving conflict with family members; 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$)

mentioned conflict with friends; and 1.6% of them ($n = 1$) stated conflict with romantic partners.

Romantic relationship main theme ($n = 4$, 6.3%) comprised participants' partners' positive experiences in romantic relationship contexts. Under this main theme, all participants covered the start of a new romantic relationship. Furthermore, social support main theme ($n = 3$, 4.7%) included instances in which participants' partners received from or lacked social support from individuals within their close circle during challenging times. Under this main theme, 3.1% of participants ($n = 2$) stated receiving support; while 1.6% ($n = 1$) of them mentioned lack of support. Finally, other category ($n = 9$, 14.1%) involved narratives related to trip, humiliation, accidents, death, financial difficulty, and earthquake. A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and main themes for vicarious turning point narratives. According to the results, there was a significant relation between relationship status and main themes, $\chi^2(6, 62) = .47, p = .01^1$.

2.2.6.2.7. Thematic Similarities Between Personal and Vicarious Life Stories

Both personal and vicarious low point narratives were categorized under nine mutually exclusive themes. While personal low point narratives lead to 17 sub-themes, vicarious low point narratives yielded 16 sub-themes. According to comparison of top-five main themes, four common main themes shared the top-five, across personal and vicarious low point memories. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for low point narratives are presented in Table 3.

While personal high point narratives were categorized under nine main themes with 14 sub-themes, vicarious high point narratives were grouped under 10 main themes with 20 sub-themes. In this regard, although the main themes were similar to each other, for vicarious high point narratives participants produced relatively diverse sub-themes. According to comparison of top-five main themes, four common main themes

¹ Given that at least 57% of expected frequencies were less than five, Yates' correction is reported. Due to violation of this assumption, reported the significant association should be interpreted cautiously.

shared the top-five. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for high point narratives are presented in Table 4.

Personal turning point narratives were grouped under 11 main themes with 18 sub-themes. Similarly, vicarious turning point narratives yielded 12 main themes with 22 sub-themes. As in other types of narratives, four common main themes shared the top-five. Frequencies and percentages for main themes and sub-themes for high point narratives are presented in Table 5.

Table 3. Main themes, sub-themes, frequencies, and percentages for low-point narratives

Main Theme and Sub-theme	Personal Low Point		Vicarious Low Point	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Career	5	7.8	3	4.7
Career-related challenges	5	7.8	3	4.7
Death	6	9.4	12	18.8
Death of family members	5	7.8	11	17.2
Death of a friend	1	1.6	1	1.6
Education	10	15.6	-	-
Failure in graduate education	1	1.6	-	-
Failure in national exams	5	7.8	-	-
Failure in undergraduate education	4	6.3	1	1.6
Health	10	15.6	8	12.5
Health problem of family members	6	9.4	6	9.4
Personal health problem	4	6.3	2	3.1
Humiliation	-	-	5	8.2
Humiliation in the family context	-	-	2	3.1
Humiliation in the school context	-	-	2	3.1
Humiliation in the work context	-	-	1	1.6
Interpersonal conflict	17	26.6	22	34.4
Conflict with family members	6	9.4	13	20.3
Conflict with friends	4	6.2	3	4.7
Conflict with romantic partners	7	10.9	4	6.3
Domestic violence between parents	-	-	2	3.1
Social support	11	17.2	10	15.6
Lack of support	11	17.2	10	15.6
Other	5	7.8	4	6.3

Table 4. Main themes, sub-themes, frequencies, and percentages for high point narratives

Main Theme and Sub-theme	Personal High Point		Vicarious High Point	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Career	7	10.9	15	23.4
Career-related successes	-	-	9	14.1
Changing careers	-	-	1	1.6
Starting a new job	7	10.9	5	7.8
Childbirth	3	4.7	5	7.8
Becoming parent	3	4.7	4	6.3
Becoming uncle	-	-	1	1.6
Education	24	37.5	14	21.9
Success in graduate education	6	9.4	3	4.7
Success in national exams	14	21.9	9	14.1
Success in high school education	1	1.6	-	-
Success in undergraduate education	-	-	2	3.1
University graduation	3	4.7	-	-
Health	4	6.3	-	-
Family members overcoming health problems	3	4.7	-	-
Overcoming personal health problem	1	1.6	-	-
Romantic relationship	9	14.1	6	9.4
Marriage-related developments	3	4.7	2	3.1
Start of a new relationship	6	9.4	4	6.3
Social support	4	6.3	7	10.9
Providing support	-	-	2	3.1
Receiving support	4	6.3	5	7.8
Trip	8	12.5	6	9.4
Solo trip	1	1.6	1	1.6
Trips with family members	4	6.3	3	4.7
Trips with friends	-	-	1	1.6
Trips with a romantic partner	3	4.7	1	1.6
Other	5	7.8	5	7.8

Table 5. Main themes, sub-themes, frequencies, and percentages for turning point narratives

Main Theme and Sub-theme	Personal Turning Point		Vicarious Turning Point	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Career	5	7.8	14	21.9

Table 15 (continued)

Career-related success	-	-	1	1.6
Changing careers	-	-	7	10.9
Starting a new job	5	7.8	6	9.4
Childbirth	1	1.6	-	-
Becoming a parent	1	1.6	-	-
Education	14	21.9	17	26.6
Failure in graduate education	-	-	1	1.6
Major selection	6	9.4	4	6.3
Success in graduate education	2	3.1	3	4.7
Success in national exams	5	7.8	7	19.9
University graduation	1	1.6	2	3.1
Interpersonal conflict	11	17.2	8	12.5
Conflict with a romantic partner	3	4.7	1	1.6
Conflict with family member	3	4.7	4	6.3
Conflict with friends	2	3.1	3	4.7
Divorce of parents	3	3.1	-	-
Moving	8	12.5	8	12.5
Different city	7	10.9	7	10.9
Within the same city	1	1.6	1	1.6
Romantic relationship	14	21.9	4	6.3
Start of a new relationship	8	12.5	4	6.3
Marriage-related developments	6	9.4	-	-
Social support	5	7.8	3	4.7
Lack of support	-	-	1	1.6
Receiving support	5	7.8	2	3.1
Other	7	11	9	14.1

2.2.6.2.8. Reasons for sharing vicarious life stories

The reasons for participants' partners shared vicarious past experiences were coded into six mutually exclusive categories: to share personal history, since the event was emotionally charged, to seek/provide support, to sustain/enhance intimacy, because the narrator asked, and for no reason.

Frequencies of reasons across different narrative points are presented in Table 9.

Regarding reasons for sharing vicarious low point narratives, 39.1% of the participants ($n = 25$) mentioned that their partners told these memories to share personal history about themselves. Additionally, 23.4% of the participants ($n = 15$) thought that their

partner told low point memories since the story was emotionally charged. 18.8% of the participants ($n = 12$) mentioned to sustain/enhance intimacy as another reason, which was followed by to seek/provide support with a 10.9% ($n = 7$). Finally, 4.7% of the participants ($n = 3$) stated that their partners shared their personal past for no reason, while 3.1% ($n = 2$) reported that they shared because the narrator asked. A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and reasons for sharing vicarious low point narratives. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and reasons, $\chi^2(5, 64) = 2.74, p = .73$.

For vicarious high point narratives, the most common reason was since the story was emotionally charged with a 42.2% ($n = 27$). 18.8% of the participants ($n = 12$) mentioned to sustain/enhance intimacy, while 17.2% of them ($n = 11$) stated for no reason. Additionally, 12.5% of the participants ($n = 8$) stated that their partners told these memories to share personal history about themselves, which was followed by to seek/provide support with a 4.7% ($n = 3$). Finally, 3.1% ($n = 2$) of the participants' partners told memories because the narrator asked.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and reasons for sharing vicarious high point narratives. According to the results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and reasons, $\chi^2(5, 62) = 7.01, p = .22$.

In terms of turning point narratives, the most common reason was to share personal history with 34.4% ($n = 22$), which was followed by since the story was emotionally charged with 21.9% ($n = 14$). 15.6% of the participants ($n = 10$) mentioned to sustaining/enhancing intimacy as another reason, while 12.5% ($n = 8$) told for no reason. Finally, 7.8% of them ($n = 5$) stated to seeking/providing support, and 6.3% of them ($n = 4$) shared their personal past because the narrator asked.

A chi-square test was conducted to investigate the association between relationship status and reasons for sharing vicarious turning point narratives. According to the

results, there was no significant relation between relationship status and reasons, $\chi^2(5, 62) = 6.81, p = .23$.

Table 6. Reasons for sharing vicarious life stories

<i>Reasons</i>	Low point		High point		Turning point	
	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>
Because the narrator asked	3.1	2	3.1	2	6.3	4
For no reason	4.7	3	17.2	11	12.5	8
Since the story was emotionally charged	23.4	15	42.2	27	21.9	14
To seek/provide support	10.9	7	4.7	3	7.8	5
To share personal history	39.1	25	12.5	8	34.4	22
To sustain/enhance intimacy	18.8	12	18.8	12	15.6	10

2.2.7. Discussion

In this study, we qualitatively investigated dating and married adults' personal life stories and vicarious life stories of their romantic partners. Our findings revealed that both married and dating individuals were able to produce different types of vicarious life stories for their partners, which has been investigated for the first time in Turkish cultural context. The qualitative examination of narratives revealed that participants' personal and vicarious life stories were similar in main themes and sub-themes. Further analyses on the link between relationship status (dating vs. married) and themes revealed that themes in personal and vicarious life stories were not significantly related to whether participants were dating or married. Finally, we coded why participants thought their partners shared their vicarious memories with them. Their answers were grouped under six categories: because the narrator asked, for no reason, since the story was emotionally charged, to seek/provide support, to share personal history, and to sustain/enhance intimacy. Further analysis showed no significant association between relationship status and reasons.

Different types of narratives revealed similar themes across personal and vicarious life stories, with the emotional tone used in the narrative changing depending on whether the narrative was a low point, high point, or turning point. As expected, personal and

vicarious low point narratives were uniformly composed of memories of negative past experiences, such as interpersonal conflict with significant others, major health problems, death of close ones, being targeted to sexual assault, or challenging moving experiences. On the contrary, personal and vicarious high point narratives consisted of memories of positive past experiences such as success in educational contexts, positive experiences related to romantic relationships, trips, and career-related developments. Turning point narratives emerged as a combination of positive and negative experiences, in which participants discussed past events leading essential transitions in their own lives or partners' lives, such as experiences related to romantic relationships, education-related successes, receiving or providing social support in times of need, childbirth and moving.

A relevant line of research showed that how individuals remember their personal past is closely linked to how they remember vicarious memories for others (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015). Similarly, in the current study, we observed thematic similarities across personal and vicarious life stories. Although the order of personal and vicarious life stories was counterbalanced, the themes most frequently referred to in personal life stories were parallel to the vicarious life stories for partners across low point, high point and turning point narratives. One possible explanation for this similarity could be participants' motivation to enhance the sense of closeness with their partners by portraying similar life stories. In this sense, remembering personal and vicarious life stories with similar content might help them enhance the romantic bond (Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018).

Prior research revealed that individuals share their memories with significant others for various reasons such as to share family stories, to teach lessons, for fun, and to share emotional experiences (Bakir-Demir et al., 2020; Reese et al., 2017). In this study, participants' responses provided similar reasons, such as to share personal history, since the story was emotionally charged, to sustain/enhance intimacy, to seek/provide social support, for no reason and because the narrator asked. These responses highlighted the importance of sharing vicarious memories in the romantic relationship context, as knowing vicarious memories could help couples to know each other better, improve their romantic bond and provide comfort by exchange of

emotions or providing or receiving support in the guidance of relevant past experiences.

Previous studies on romantic couples' self-disclosure indicated that the extent to which couples share personal information might differ as a function of relationship duration and status (Hendrick, 2004; Rubin et al., 1980). However, in this study, we did not observe significant relations between relationship status, main themes and reasons for sharing vicarious memories. This lack of significant association could stem from data collected from individuals with committed romantic relationships. Married participants in this study had been together with their partners on average for ten years, while dating participants had been together on average for two-and-a-half years. Although there is a difference in relationship duration, the committed nature of the relationship might have eliminated the role of relationship status. Another explanation for this finding could be sample imbalance between dating and married groups, as the current study is predominantly composed of dating adults.

Considering the findings, this study supported previous research and uniquely contributed to the literature by providing the first evidence regarding the qualitative similarities between adults' personal life stories and vicarious life stories of their romantic partners. Despite the limited sample size and imbalance between dating and married groups, the current study paved the way for Study 2. Given the lack of a significant association between relationship status and emerging themes; in Study 2, we decided to collect data from dating young adults who had been in a committed romantic relationship for at least six months. In light of the thematic similarities, in Study 2, we chose to investigate similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples in terms of narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 2: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS LIFE STORIES OF ROMANTIC COUPLES

3.1. Introduction

The primary aim of the current study is to investigate similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory ratings for personal and vicarious life stories, for the first time with a sample of romantic couples and within a non-WEIRD context. A relatively new yet limited line of research indicated several similarities and differences between personal and vicarious memories. To our knowledge, no study examined similarities and differences between the overall narrative coherence of personal and vicarious life stories. Only one study investigated similarities between thematic coherence in personal and vicarious life stories and found that thematic coherence in personal life stories was positively related to thematic coherence in vicarious life stories of adolescents (Yenen, 2023).

Regarding phenomenological characteristics, Thomsen and Pillemer (2017) found participants rated personal memories and chapters as more positive, more critical for self-understanding, and higher on phenomenological qualities than vicarious memories and chapters. In a different study, Pond and Peterson (2020) found that ratings of phenomenological qualities for personal and vicarious memories were positively correlated. However, personal memories were rated more vivid, personally important, and emotionally charged than vicarious memories. Concerning functions of autobiographical memory, although there are similarities between the functions of personal and vicarious memories, personal memories are rated higher for functionality (Pillemer et al., 2015; Pond & Peterson, 2020). These earlier studies provided initial

evidence regarding the similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories; however, research is still needed to investigate similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and autobiographical memory functions of personal and vicarious life stories within the context of romantic relationships and with non-WEIRD samples.

The second aim of the current study is to understand the role of gender on romantic couples' personal and vicarious life story characteristics. Although there are mixed findings regarding the role of gender, observed gender differences in autobiographical memory research generally favor women (Gryzman & Hudson, 2013). According to previous research, women's and young girls provide more specific and contextual information in their narratives (Pillemer et al., 2003; Hayne & MacDonald, 2003; Wang et al., 2011). Concerning narrative coherence, previous studies have shown that overall narrative coherence and its different aspects are higher in women's narratives (Fivush et al., 2012; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019). Regarding phenomenological characteristics, women report their memories as more vivid and emotional than men (Alea & Vick, 2010; Pohl et al., 2005; Ross & Holmberg, 1990).

Regarding the functions of autobiographical memory, previous research indicated mixed findings. A limited number of studies investigated the association between gender and memory functions, and majority of these studies reported no gender differences autobiographical memory functions (Bluck & Alea, 2009; Harris et al., 2014; Liao et al., 2015; Lind & Thomsen, 2018). While a few studies indicated that women use identity, intimacy and directive functions more frequently than men (Maki et al., 2015; Pillemer et al., 2003; Vranic et al., 2018). Although these studies highlighted the effect of gender on personal memories, research is still needed to investigate gender differences in vicarious memories. Given that heterosexual romantic relationships provide naturally gendered contexts, examining the potential role of gender on narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and autobiographical memory functions in personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples would contribute to the relevant literature.

In line with the aims mentioned above, it was hypothesized that (1a) narrative coherence in personal life stories would be positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories; (1b) phenomenological ratings of personal life stories would be positively related to phenomenological ratings for of vicarious life stories; (1c) autobiographical memory functions of the personal life stories would be positively related to autobiographical memory functions of vicarious life stories; (2a) personal life stories would be more coherent than vicarious life stories; (2b) phenomenological characteristics of personal life stories would be rated higher than phenomenological characteristics of vicarious life stories; (2c) functions of autobiographical memory for personal life stories would be rated higher than functions of autobiographical memory for vicarious life stories (3a) compared to men, women participants would have higher scores on narrative coherence of personal and vicarious life stories; (3b) compared to men, women participants would rate phenomenological characteristics higher for personal and vicarious life stories. Since the research on gender differences in functions of autobiographical memory is limited and yielded mixed results, we did not propose any hypothesis but tested the role of gender exploratorily. In addition to the hypotheses mentioned above, we exploratorily investigated whether gender is related to reasons for sharing vicarious life stories. Finally, we exploratorily tested the role of age group (emerging adults: 18-23 and young adults: 28-33) on narrative coherence.²

3.2. Method

3.2.1. Participants

Participants of this study were 157 heterosexual couples ($N = 314$) who had been in committed relationships for at least six months. An equal number of females and males (157 for both genders) participated in the study. The inclusion criteria of the current

² There are different conceptualizations of periods of the life span. Generally, emerging adulthood is argued to be between 18 to 25 years, with some studies even extending it to 29, and young adulthood is considered to be from 20 to 40 years (Sigelman & De George, 2019). In Türkiye, 18-23 years is typically the time period when individuals attend university. Considering this, we restricted emerging adulthood to these ages. In addition, 28-33 years are considered the “Age 30 Transition,” a time period during which adults review their past experiences and set new goals for the rest of their lives (Levinson, 1986; 1996). Given this, the nature of these ages might be different from the remaining years of young adulthood. Thus, we restricted the young adulthood ages to 28-33 years.

study were being in a committed monogamous relationship for at least six months and being in the age ranges of 18-23 or 28-33. In order to be eligible for this study, participants from the 18-23 age group were required to be undergraduate students, while participants from the 28-33 age group were required to have a minimum of bachelor's degree. Participants were dating couples, with an average relationship duration of 34.92 months ($SD = 25.61$, ranging between six months to 11 years). Additional details regarding the demographic characteristics of participants across age groups are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Demographic characteristics of the participants across age groups

	18-23 age group ($n = 150$)		28-33 age group ($n = 164$)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age	21.34	1.25	29.51	1.60
Relationship duration in months	25.49	21.03	43.55	32.44
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender				
Female	75	50%	82	50%
Male	75	50%	82	50%
Education				
College student	150	100%	-	-
Bachelor's degree	-	-	128	78%
Master's degree	-	-	33	20.1%
PhD degree	-	-	3	1.8%

3.2.2. Procedure

Ethical approval of the current study was obtained from the METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee with the protocol number 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 (See Appendix A).

Participants were recruited through a convenience sampling technique, with the help of undergraduate psychology students who participated in a summer internship program at METU Child and Adolescent Development Lab and enrolled in a workshop in developmental psychology course offered at METU Department of Psychology. The same procedure was applied in the summer internship program and the workshop course to extensively train students for participant recruitment. First, without revealing the aims and hypotheses of the study, the researcher informed students about the

inclusion criteria. After introducing the inclusion criteria, the researcher trained students on how to introduce the study to the potential participants. To ensure that all students follow the pre-determined standardized introduction method, they were required to engage in multiple role-play sessions with the researcher and other fellow students. Each student participated in the role-play at least two times, and the researcher evaluated their performance in delivering the information to the participants. Students who successfully completed this step were provided with the standard text message involving the study's instructions and an online link to the survey.

As in Study 1, this study was conducted on Qualtrics, where participants first filled out the consent form, followed by the demographic information form. Next, participants answered the Key Scenes part of Life-Story Interview – II for themselves and their partners, with the order of the personal and vicarious life stories was counterbalanced. Personal and vicarious life story questions were presented as blocks; participants either completed personal or vicarious life story questions first and then moved to the next. At the end of the study, participants were presented with a debriefing message about the study.

3.2.3. Measures

3.2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form included questions on participants' age, gender, education level, relationship status, and relationship duration.

3.2.3.2. The Life-Story Interview

Personal and vicarious life stories were elicited through a short version of the Key Scenes part of The Life-Story Interview - II (McAdams, 2008). Participants were asked to describe a high point event, a low point event, and a turning point event from their and their partners' lives. An event-specific and Turkish version of the following prompt was given for each memory: *“Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life/in your partner’s life that stands out as an especially positive/negative/life-*

changing experience. This might be the high point/low point/turning point scene of your entire life/your partner's life. Please describe this scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so good/bad/important and what the scene may say about who you are as a person."

3.2.3.3. Phenomenological Characteristics

After each narrative, participants answered two separate single-item follow-up questions, in which they were asked to rate vividness (1 = *not vivid at all*, 10 = *completely vivid*) and valence (1 = *extremely negative*, 10 = *extremely positive*) of the event for themselves.

3.2.3.4. Functions of Autobiographical Memory

After each narrative, participants rated three single-item follow up statements (1 = completely disagree, 5 = completely agree) for social ("*My memory/my partner's memory affects my social relationships with others.*"), directive ("*My memory/my partner's memory helps me to solve problems in my life.*") and self ("*My memory/my partner's memory helps me to better understand myself.*") functions of autobiographical memory.

3.2.4. Coding schemes

In this study, participants' narratives for themselves and their partners were coded for volume and narrative coherence. Narrative coherence was evaluated over three dimensions, namely context, chronology, and theme. For reliability, a randomly selected 25% of the narratives (480 narratives in total) were coded by three coders. The reliability coders were unaware of the aim and hypotheses of the study. Each coder focused on only one dimension of the narrative coherence (i.e., context) and evaluated this dimension across six narrative types (personal low point, personal high point, personal turning point, vicarious low point, vicarious high point, and vicarious turning

point). Reliability scores were estimated with intraclass correlation (ICC). All ICC scores were based on a 2-way mixed-effects model with absolute agreement and single measures ($k = 2$). The master coder's ratings were used for the analysis. Reliability scores for each narrative are presented in Table 8.

For open-ended follow-up questions regarding reasons for sharing vicarious memories, we utilized the same coding scheme developed for Study 1. Randomly selected 25% of the answers were coded by one coder, who was unaware of the aim and hypotheses of the study. The coder evaluated reasons across six narrative types ($N = 246$). Cohen's kappa coefficient was used to assess reliability. The master coder's ratings were used for the analysis.

3.2.4.1. Volume

The total number of words in personal and vicarious life story narratives were counted via the Microsoft Office word count function.

3.2.4.2. Narrative Coherence

Narrative Coherence Coding Scheme (NaCCS; Reese et al., 2011) was used to assess narrative coherence across three dimensions: context, chronology, and theme. As outlined in NaCCS, each dimension is rated on a 4-point scale, ranging from 0 to 3. *Context* refers to the information relating to the time and place of the event in the narrative. A narrative with no mention of either time or place is assigned a score of 0. A narrative that provides information about time or place is given a score of 1. A narrative offering information on time and place but leaving one of these pieces unclear is assigned a score of 2. A narrative with precise information on time and place is given a score of 3. While Cronbach's α scores for context ranged between .84 and .94, and ICC scores ranged between .79 and .89.

Chronology refers to the order of actions mentioned in a narrative. A narrative with no mention or barely any information regarding the order of events is assigned a score of 0. A narrative with less than 50% of the actions that can be aligned along a timeline is assigned a score of 1. A narrative with 50% to 75% of the actions that can be arranged

along a timeline is assigned a score of 2. A narrative with more than 75% of the actions that can be ordered along a timeline is given a score of 3. While Cronbach's α scores for chronology ranged between .88 and .93, and ICC scores ranged between .75 and .84.

Theme/meaning-making refers to the meaning-making in a narrative. A narrative with no salient topic is given a score of 0. A narrative with a specific topic but lacking elaborations, evaluations, and casual connections is assigned a score of 1. A narrative with an identifiable topic that is further developed with elaborations, evaluations, and casual connections is assigned a score of 2. A narrative that has the qualities of a score of 2, but also includes a resolution to the story is assigned a score of 3. In NaCCS, resolution refers to the information that brings closure to the story or provides a new aspect to the topic. Such information can be presented by connecting the event to current or future experiences or to self-concept and identity. While Cronbach's α scores for theme/meaning making ranged between .89 and .96, and ICC scores ranged between .74 and .92.

Table 8. Agreement Between Coders for Dimensions of Narrative Coherence

	Cronbach's α	ICC	95% CI
Personal Low Point			
Context	.94	.89	[.84, .93]
Chronology	.93	.84	[.70, .91]
Theme	.96	.92	[.87, .95]
Personal High Point			
Context	.89	.79	[.65, .87]
Chronology	.88	.75	[.51, .85]
Theme	.86	.74	[.63, .83]
Personal Turning Point			
Context	.84	.70	[.56, .80]
Chronology	.88	.76	[.56, .85]
Theme	.88	.77	[.65, .84]
Vicarious Low Point			

Table 8. (continued)

Context	.90	.81	[.73, .87]
Chronology	.89	.79	[.69, .86]
Theme	.89	.81	[.71, .87]
Vicarious High Point			
Context	.90	.82	[.73, .87]
Chronology	.89	.78	[.63, .86]
Theme	.89	.80	[.71, .87]
Vicarious Turning Point			
Context	.88	.79	[.68, .85]
Chronology	.90	.80	[.69, .87]
Theme	.89	.81	[.72, .87]

3.2.4.3. Reasons

The coding scheme adapted in Study 1 was used to code reasons that participants' romantic partner shared past experiences with them. Reasons were coded into six mutually exclusive categories: to share personal history, since the story was emotionally charged, to seek/provide support, to sustain/enhance intimacy, because the narrator asked, and for no reason. For reliability, a second coder who was unaware of the study goals coded 25% of reasons across three vicarious narrative points ($N = 246$). Strong agreement was obtained for vicarious low point and high point narratives, while an almost perfect agreement was obtained for the turning point narrative.

The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .88 ($p < .001$) for vicarious low point, .88 ($p < .001$) for vicarious high point, and .92 ($p < .001$) for vicarious turning point.

3.2.5. Results

3.2.5.1. Data Screening

All analyses under the current study were performed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 28). Before the main analyses, data screening procedure was conducted to clear data, identify missing values and outliers, and test assumptions.

The initial data set before the data screening consisted of 466 data points. One-hundred and six data were excluded from the dataset as their completion rates were less than 70%. Twenty-two participants were excluded because they were not in the required age range. Once the outliers check was completed, an additional four participants were deleted. The final data set included 314 participants.

Some participants could not remember or did not want to share personal or vicarious memories. In total, two personal low point, two personal high point, two personal turning point, five vicarious low point, 13 vicarious high point, and 14 vicarious turning point narratives were not reported. These narratives were not included pairwise in further analyses.

As a rule of thumb, skewness between -2 to +2 and kurtosis between -3 and +3 are considered normal distribution signs (Westfall & Henning, 2013). According to the normality check, skewness scores fall in between the desired range. Some variables (i.e., valence and vividness ratings for personal high point narrative, valence ratings for personal turning point narratives) were above the desired kurtosis scores. However, there was no absolute kurtosis value greater than five. Considering these are natural variations in the data set, no transformation was applied for these variables.

3.2.5.2. Preliminarily Findings

3.2.5.2.1. Descriptive Statistics

As part of the preliminary analysis, descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations were examined.

According to the descriptive statistics, narrative coherence, valence, vividness, and volume scores of personal narrative points were higher than the respective vicarious narrative points, with the only exception being the personal low point valence score, which was slightly lower than the vicarious low point valence score.

Descriptive statistics for the study variables were summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

	Mean	SD	Min-Max
Personal Low Point (<i>N</i> = 312)			
Narrative Coherence	5.54	2.47	0-9
Valence	3.51	3.15	1-10
Vividness	8.63	1.95	1-10
Social Function	3.69	1.39	1-5
Directive Function	3.40	1.40	1-5
Self Function	3.93	1.23	1-5
Volume	84.01	67.61	10-305
Personal High Point (<i>N</i> = 312)			
Narrative Coherence	5.47	2.23	0-9
Valence	9.13	1.45	3-10
Vividness	9.08	1.45	1-10
Social Function	3.70	1.36	1-5
Directive Function	3.76	1.26	1-5
Self Function	4.12	1.05	1-5
Volume	65.77	46.49	9-246
Personal Turning Point (<i>N</i> = 312)			
Narrative Coherence	5.58	2.20	0-9
Valence	7.04	3.21	1-10
Vividness	8.71	1.80	1-10
Social Function	4.38	.97	1-5
Directive Function	4.21	1.45	1-5
Self Function	4.44	.94	1-5
Volume	65.96	46.39	10-242
Vicarious Low Point (<i>N</i> = 309)			
Narrative Coherence	4.88	2.04	0-9
Valence	3.73	2.87	1-10
Vividness	7.09	2.31	1-10
Social Function	2.13	1.24	1-5
Directive Function	2.60	1.29	1-5
Self Function	2.61	1.32	1-5
Volume	65.60	43.26	11-217
Vicarious High Point (<i>N</i> = 301)			
Narrative Coherence	4.73	1.96	0-9
Valence	8.59	1.88	1-10
Vividness	7.44	2.24	1-10
Social Function	2.49	1.40	1-5
Directive Function	2.51	1.33	1-5
Self Function	2.84	1.43	1-5
Volume	51.65	34.54	9-173
Vicarious Turning Point (<i>N</i> = 300)			
Narrative Coherence	4.58	2.04	0-9
Valence	6.59	3.18	1-10
Vividness	7.55	2.44	1-10
Social Function	2.71	1.44	1-5
Directive Function	2.94	1.44	1-5
Self Function	3.10	1.43	1-5
Volume	51.52	33.46	9-171

Table 10. Bivariate Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	--										
2. Age Group	-.02	--									
3. Education	.01	.87**	--								
4. Relationship duration	.01	.31**	.27**	--							
5. Volume Personal Low	.08	-.12*	-.09	-.03	--						
6. Volume Personal High	.04	-.11*	-.09	-.08	.58**	--					
7. Volume Personal Turning	.06	-.12*	-.09	-.09	.53**	.69**	--				
8. Volume Vicarious Low	.09	-.12*	-.08	-.04	.42**	.47**	.53**	--			
9. Volume Vicarious High	.12*	-.17**	-.13*	-.13*	.45**	.51**	.54**	.62**	--		
10. Volume Vicarious Turning	.17**	-.09	-.05	-.09	.48**	.55**	.55**	.54**	.64**	--	
11. Narrative Coherence Personal Low	.19**	-.09	-.05	.02	.59**	.46**	.40**	.27**	.37**	.39**	--
12. Narrative Coherence Personal High	.20**	-.09	-.06	-.02	.42**	.63**	.47**	.34**	.42**	.46**	.45**
13. Narrative Coherence Personal Turning	.24**	-.19**	-.09	-.07	.37**	.44**	.63**	.35**	.40**	.45**	.44**
14. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Low	.16**	-.06	-.04	-.04	.33**	.32**	.38**	.57**	.50**	.43**	.27**
15. Narrative Coherence Vicarious High	.17**	-.20**	-.17**	-.08	.41**	.39**	.40**	.44**	.71**	.51**	.40**
16. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Turning	.23**	-.08	-.03	-.06	.32**	.38**	.41**	.41**	.49**	.73**	.35**
17. Valence Personal Low	.07	.05	.05	-.12*	-.07	-.06	-.08	-.07	-.04	-.05	-.06
18. Valence Personal High	-.06	.07	.07	.03	-.07	-.12*	-.05	.09	-.05	.01	-.09
19. Valence Personal Turning	-.11	.16**	.12*	.01	-.07	-.07	-.08	-.07	-.13*	-.06	-.12*
20. Valence Vicarious Low	.08	.11	.11	.03	-.02	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.07	.03	-.00
21. Valence Vicarious High	.07	-.01	.02	.05	.03	-.02	.04	.03	.05	-.01	.06
22. Valence Vicarious Turning	-.01	.17**	.12*	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.04	-.11	-.09	.02	.02
23. Vividness Personal Low	.00	.09	.06	-.00	-.03	-.14*	-.06	.02	.04	.00	.05

Table 10. (continued)

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
24. Vividness Personal High	.00	.12*	.13*	.02	-.13*	-.04	-.02	.05	.04	.00	.05
25. Vividness Personal Turning	.02	.10	.07	.05	-.06	-.06	-.03	-.04	-.06	-.03	-.12*
26. Vividness Vicarious Low	.01	.03	-.02	.10	-.02	-.06	-.07	.06	-.01	-.01	-.06
27. Vividness Vicarious High	.01	.09	.11	.04	-.10	-.12*	-.04	.02	-.09	.03	-.09
28. Vividness Vicarious Turning	-.02	.16**	.14*	.04	-.07	-.12*	-.12*	-.12*	.04	-.04	-.06
29. Social Function Personal Low	.11	-.06	-.05	-.03	.14*	.13*	.12*	.00	-.08	.01	-.03
30. Social Function Personal High	-.07	.16**	.09	.11	.03	-.01	-.02	-.14*	.11	.16**	.07
31. Social Function Personal Turning	-.08	.05	.02	.04	.06	.05	.03	-.07	-.09	-.01	-.01
32. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.09	-.06	-.09	.07	.17**	.01	.03	-.04	-.01	.09	.10
33. Social Function Vicarious High	-.04	.00	.00	.12*	.01	-.06	-.02	-.10	.01	-.06	.05
34. Social Function Vicarious Turning	-.03	.02	.00	.17**	.04	-.03	.02	-.10	-.02	.05	.09
35. Directive Function Personal Low	-.04	.16**	.12*	-.03	-.06	-.05	-.03	-.12*	-.06	.03	-.04
36. Directive Function Personal High	.01	.11	.05	.09	-.05	-.03	-.09	-.12*	-.09	.01	-.03
37. Directive Function Personal Turning	-.03	.07	.04	.02	-.05	-.03	-.04	-.06	-.03	.03	-.05
38. Directive Function Vicarious Low	-.05	.12*	.06	.15**	.02	-.12*	-.07	-.03	-.02	.03	-.05
39. Directive Function Vicarious High	-.03	.11	.09	.10	-.09	-.08	-.04	-.07	-.07	-.06	-.07
40. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	.03	.01	-.02	.05	.00	-.04	.04	-.14*	-.01	.04	.06
41. Self Function Personal Low	.09	.14*	.15**	.06	.06	.09	.07	.01	.04	.18**	.09
42. Self Function Personal High	.05	.08	.08	.08	-.06	.01	-.04	-.06	-.02	.05	.03
43. Self Function Personal Turning	-.01	.08	.06	-.01	.03	.04	.10	.03	.04	.08	.08
44. Self Function Vicarious Low	-.08	.08	.01	.03	-.02	-.05	-.00	.00	-.05	-.01	-.03
45. Self Function Vicarious High	-.05	.08	.08	.08	-.02	-.07	-.03	-.03	-.01	-.05	.02
46. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.03	.10	.06	.05	-.06	-.04	.03	-.15*	-.02	.00	.02

Table 10. (continued)

Variable Names	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
12. Narrative Coherence Personal High	--										
13. Narrative Coherence Personal Turning	.50**	--									
14. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Low	.32**	.39**	--								
15. Narrative Coherence Vicarious High	.46**	.41**	.50**	--							
16. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Turning	.44**	.46**	.48**	.54**	--						
17. Valence Personal Low	-.10	-.09	-.10	-.14*	-.50	--					
18. Valence Personal High	-.01	.04	.11	-.03	.02	-.11	--				
19. Valence Personal Turning	-.01	-.11*	-.04	-.14*	-.01	.19**	.14**	--			
20. Valence Vicarious Low	-.03	-.06	-.01	-.04	-.03	.34**	-.03	.11	--		
21. Valence Vicarious High	.09	.09	.06	.14*	.11	-.10	.32**	.03	-.06	--	
22. Valence Vicarious Turning	-.05	-.08	-.03	-.06	-.02	-.01	.01	.21**	.14*	.08	--
23. Vividness Personal Low	-.05	-.06	-.01	.03	.04	-.01	.11*	-.05	.09	.12*	-.03
24. Vividness Personal High	.04	-.02	-.01	-.07	-.01	-.04	.54**	.08	.03	.18**	.04
25. Vividness Personal Turning	-.09	-.06	-.01	-.02	-.01	.01	.13*	.18**	.04	.19**	.13*
26. Vividness Vicarious Low	-.10	-.07	.07	-.05	.01	-.01	.08	.03	.05	.20**	.05
27. Vividness Vicarious High	-.08	-.10	-.02	.05	.01	.01	.11	-.02	.07	.37**	.11
28. Vividness Vicarious Turning	-.00	-.10	-.11	.01	.12*	.10	.04	.08	-.03	.18**	.31**
29. Social Function Personal Low	.06	.11	.04	.08	.10	.05	-.04	-.06	.11	.04	.07
30. Social Function Personal High	-.02	-.08	-.07	-.06	-.01	-.03	.11	.15**	.02	.13*	.07
31. Social Function Personal Turning	.07	.02	.00	.00	.09	.06	.01	.11*	.03	.12*	.01
32. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.06	.01	-.07	-.06	-.10	-.00	-.10	-.04	-.05	-.06	-.00
33. Social Function Vicarious High	-.08	-.05	-.07	.02	-.07	.11	-.06	.10	.10	.17**	.03
34. Social Function Vicarious Turning	-.03	-.04	-.11	.03	-.01	.03	-.10	.05	-.04	.08	.15**

Table 10. (continued)

Variable Names	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
35. Directive Function Personal Low	-.07	-.05	-.06	-.05	.02	.11	-.05	-.02	.06	.02	.10
36. Directive Function Personal High	-.02	-.06	-.06	-.08	.04	-.06	.12*	.10	.04	.19**	.10
37. Directive Function Personal Turning	-.02	-.07	.03	-.03	.00	.03	.04	.21**	.04	.12*	.19**
38. Directive Function Vicarious Low	-.10	-.11	.02	-.03	-.01	.03	.06	.06	.08	.10	.05
39. Directive Function Vicarious High	-.12*	-.09	-.09	-.05	-.04	.10	-.00	-.03	.08	.21**	.07
40. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	-.04	-.02	-.06	.01	.01	.01	-.01	.02	-.04	.19**	.30**
41. Self Function Personal Low	.05	.03	.07	.05	.13*	.02	.01	.02	.11	.13*	.09
42. Self Function Personal High	.05	-.05	.02	-.04	.09	.02	.07	.12*	.05	.15*	.17**
43. Self Function Personal Turning	.05	-.05	.04	.02	.09	-.00	.05	.12*	.03	.08	.17**
44. Self Function Vicarious Low	-.13*	-.13*	-.01	-.04	-.09	.06	.07	.10	.07	.07	.15*
45. Self Function Vicarious High	-.12*	-.11	-.07	-.01	-.04	-.01	-.00	.02	.04	.22**	.14*
46. Self Function Vicarious Turning	-.06	-.04	-.10	.01	.00	.02	.01	.01	.02	.25**	.37**
Variable Names	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
23. Vividness Personal Low	--										
24. Vividness Personal High	.26**	--									
25. Vividness Personal Turning	.25**	.25**	--								
26. Vividness Vicarious Low	.08	.08	.14*	--							
27. Vividness Vicarious High	.18**	.24**	.24**	.35**	--						
28. Vividness Vicarious Turning	.16**	.18**	.26**	.23**	.42**	--					
29. Social Function Personal Low	-.03	-.02	.06	.16**	.13*	.08	--				
30. Social Function Personal High	-.02	.13*	.07	.15**	.18**	.24**	.21**	--			
31. Social Function Personal Turning	.01	.01	.08	.15**	.10	.18**	.27**	.30**	--		
32. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.10	-.20**	.05	.13*	-.02	-.02	.20**	.11	.17**	--	

Table 10. (continued)

Variable Names	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
33. Social Function Vicarious High	.07	.00	.08	.14*	.30**	.20**	.17**	.26**	.20**	.28**	--
34. Social Function Vicarious Turning	-.06	-.13*	.02	.05	.18**	.30**	.20**	.23**	.21**	.27**	.47**
35. Directive Function Personal Low	.01	.01	.06	.15**	.22**	.15*	.19**	.23**	.13*	.04	.11
36. Directive Function Personal High	.03	.18**	.11	.14*	.15*	.17**	.24**	.59**	.22**	.01	.16**
37. Directive Function Personal Turning	.01	.05	.22**	.09	.18**	.21**	.21**	.28**	.48**	.07	.16**
38. Directive Function Vicarious Low	.13*	.11	.14*	.25**	.26**	.20**	.10	.20**	.18**	.27**	.36**
39. Directive Function Vicarious High	.08	.06	.12*	.24**	.44**	.26**	.20**	.26**	.14*	.17**	.61**
40. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	.02	-.04	.04	.12*	.20**	.32**	.16**	.28**	.23**	.12*	.44**
41. Self Function Personal Low	.05	.07	.08	.10	.08	.08	.15**	.12*	.15**	.03	.07
42. Self Function Personal High	.00	.16**	.14*	.05	.07	.17**	.18**	.45**	.23**	-.07	.07
43. Self Function Personal Turning	.08	.12*	.22**	.08	.13*	.21**	.13*	.29**	.47**	.08	.06
44. Self Function Vicarious Low	.04	.12*	.12*	.29**	.22**	.19**	.06	.26**	.19**	.22**	.30**
45. Self Function Vicarious High	.15*	.06	.14*	.24**	.39**	.30**	.20**	.24**	.16**	.12*	.53**
46. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.01	.02	.09	.12*	.29**	.35**	.17**	.32**	.27**	.11	.40**
Variable Names	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
34. Social Function Vicarious Turning	--										
35. Directive Function Personal Low	.18**	--									
36. Directive Function Personal High	.13*	.29**	--								
37. Directive Function Personal Turning	.18**	.24**	.30**	--							
38. Directive Function Vicarious Low	.32**	.14*	.21**	.12*	--						
39. Directive Function Vicarious High	.38**	.27**	.24**	.20**	.46**	--					
40. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	.63**	.22**	.28**	.25**	.38**	.44**	--				
41. Self Function Personal Low	.13*	.50**	.28**	.14*	.18**	.09	.12*	--			

Table 10. (continued)

Variable Names	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
42. Self Function Personal High	.09	.17**	.58**	.25**	.14*	.14*	.20**	.32**	--		
43. Self Function Personal Turning	.12*	.14*	.21**	.62**	.07	.07	.12*	.27**	.39**	--	
44. Self Function Vicarious Low	.27**	.26**	.24**	.14*	.58**	.38**	.29**	.21**	.20**	.12*	--
45. Self Function Vicarious High	.39**	.20**	.25**	.22**	.37**	.68**	.46**	.05	.16**	.15**	.40**
46. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.51**	.27**	.33**	.26**	.30**	.44**	.70**	.15*	.22**	.15**	.35**
Variable Names	45	46									
45. Self Function Vicarious High	--										
46. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.53**	--									

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.2.5.3. Main Findings

3.2.5.3.1. Hypothesis 1a: Narrative coherence in personal life stories would be positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1a regarding the similarities between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations. Findings supported our hypothesis, such that narrative coherence in personal low point narrative was significantly and positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious low point narrative ($r = .27, p < .01$). Similarly, narrative coherence in personal high point narrative was significantly and positively associated with the narrative coherence in vicarious high point narrative ($r = .46, p < .01$). Finally, narrative coherence in personal turning point narrative was significantly and positively correlated with narrative coherence in vicarious turning point narrative ($r = .47, p < .01$).

3.2.5.3.2. Hypothesis 1b: Phenomenological ratings for personal life stories would be positively related to phenomenological ratings for vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1b regarding the similarities between phenomenological ratings regarding valence and vividness in personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations. Findings concerning the valence ratings supported our hypothesis: Personal low point valence was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious low point valence ($r = .34, p < .01$). In addition, personal high point valence was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point valence ($r = .32, p < .01$). Also, personal turning point valence was significantly and positively related to vicarious turning point valence ($r = .21, p < .01$).

The hypothesis regarding vividness ratings was partially supported. While there was no significant correlation between personal low point vividness and vicarious low point vividness ($r = .08, p > .05$), personal high point vividness was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point vividness ($r = .24, p < .01$). Similarly, personal turning point vividness was significantly and positively related to vicarious turning point vividness ($r = .21, p < .01$).

3.2.5.3.3. Hypothesis 1c: Autobiographical memory functions of personal life stories would be positively related to autobiographical memory functions of vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1c regarding the similarities between functions of autobiographical memory ratings in terms of social, directive, and self in personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations. Findings concerning the functions ratings supported our hypothesis: Personal low point social function was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious low point social function ($r = .20, p < .01$). In addition, personal low point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious low point directive function ($r = .14, p < .01$). Similarly, personal low point self function was significantly and positively related to vicarious low point self function ($r = .21, p < .01$).

Likewise, personal high point social function was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious high point social function ($r = .26, p < .01$). Additionally, personal high point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point directive function ($r = .24, p < .01$). Also, personal high point self function was significantly and positively related to vicarious high point self function ($r = .16, p < .01$).

Additionally, personal turning point social function was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious turning point social function ($r = .20, p < .01$). Likewise, personal turning point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious turning point directive function ($r = .24, p < .01$). Finally, personal turning point self function was significantly and positively related to vicarious turning point self function ($r = .15, p < .01$).

3.2.5.3.4. Hypothesis 2a: Personal life stories would be more coherent than vicarious life stories.

We tested the hypothesis concerning differences between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence using paired-sample t-tests. Findings supported

the hypothesis, such that personal low point narratives ($M = 5.57, SD = 2.46$) were more coherent than vicarious low point narratives ($M = 4.87, SD = 2.04$), $t(306) = 4.50, p < .001$. Additionally, personal high point narratives ($M = 5.52, SD = 2.21$) were more coherent than vicarious high point narratives ($M = 4.74, SD = 1.97$), $t(298) = 6.12, p < .001$. Likewise, personal turning point narratives ($M = 5.68, SD = 2.17$) were more coherent than vicarious turning point narratives ($M = 4.61, SD = 2.04$), $t(294) = 8.37, p < .001$. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 11.

3.2.5.3.5. Hypothesis 2b: Phenomenological characteristics of personal life stories would be rated higher than phenomenological characteristics of vicarious life stories.

We employed paired-sample t-tests to test the hypothesis on differences in phenomenological ratings across personal and vicarious life stories. Findings partially supported the hypothesis regarding valence. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 11.

Personal high point valence rating ($M = 9.16, SD = 1.42$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point valence rating ($M = 8.61, SD = 1.84$), $t(298) = 4.87, p < .001$. However, the differences between personal low point valence ($M = 3.47, SD = 3.13$) and vicarious low point valence ($M = 3.72, SD = 2.86$), $t(306) = -1.28, p > .05$; and personal turning point valence ($M = 6.98, SD = 3.23$) and vicarious turning point valence ($M = 6.57, SD = 3.19$), $t(297) = 1.73, p > .05$ were not significant.

On the other hand, findings supported the hypothesis regarding vividness. Personal low point vividness ($M = 8.66, SD = 1.91$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point vividness ($M = 7.08, SD = 2.31$), $t(306) = 9.61, p < .001$. Likewise, personal high point vividness ($M = 9.10, SD = 1.40$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point vividness ($M = 7.43, SD = 2.25$), $t(298) = 12.50, p < .001$. Finally, personal turning point vividness ($M = 8.67, SD = 1.83$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point vividness ($M = 7.54, SD = 2.44$), $t(297) = 7.35, p < .001$.

3.2.5.3.6. Hypothesis 2c: Functions of autobiographical memory for personal life stories would be rated higher than functions of autobiographical memory for vicarious life stories.

We tested the hypothesis concerning differences between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of functions of autobiographical memory using paired-sample t-tests. Findings supported the hypothesis. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 11.

Regarding social functions, personal low point social function ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.39$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point social function ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.24$), $t(306) = 16.29$, $p < .001$. In addition, personal high point social function ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.36$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point social function ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.40$), $t(299) = 12.44$, $p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point social function ($M = 4.36$, $SD = .98$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point social function ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.44$), $t(298) = 18.206$, $p < .001$.

In terms of directive functions, personal low point directive function ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.40$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point directive function ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 1.29$), $t(306) = 7.99$, $p < .001$. In addition, personal high point directive function ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.26$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point directive function ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.32$), $t(299) = 13.38$, $p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point directive function ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.48$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point directive function ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.44$), $t(298) = 13.60$, $p < .001$.

Concerning self functions, personal low point self function ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.23$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point self function ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.32$), $t(306) = 14.46$, $p < .001$. Likewise, personal high point self function ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.06$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point self function ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.43$), $t(299) = 13.45$, $p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point self function ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .96$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point self function ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.43$), $t(298) = 14.38$, $p < .001$.

Table 11. Paired-sample t-tests for narrative coherence, phenomenological ratings, and functions of autobiographical memory

Variable	Memory Type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Narrative Coherence Low Point	Personal	307	5.57	2.46	4.50	<.001
	Vicarious	307	4.87	2.04		
Narrative Coherence High Point	Personal	299	5.51	2.21	6.11	<.001
	Vicarious	299	4.74	1.96		
Narrative Coherence Turning Point	Personal	298	5.64	2.19	8.32	<.001
	Vicarious	298	4.58	2.04		
Valence Low Point	Personal	307	3.47	3.13	-1.29	.198
	Vicarious	307	3.72	2.86		
Valence High Point	Personal	299	9.16	1.42	5.11	<.001
	Vicarious	299	8.58	1.88		
Valence Turning Point	Personal	298	6.98	3.22	1.73	.147
	Vicarious	298	6.57	3.19		
Vividness Low Point	Personal	307	8.66	1.91	9.61	<.001
	Vicarious	307	7.08	2.31		
Vividness High Point	Personal	299	9.11	1.40	12.49	<.001
	Vicarious	299	7.42	2.24		
Vividness Turning Point	Personal	298	8.67	1.83	7.35	<.001
	Vicarious	298	7.54	2.44		
Social Function Low Point	Personal	307	3.68	1.39	16.29	<.001
	Vicarious	307	2.13	1.24		
Social Function High Point	Personal	300	3.69	1.35	12.44	<.001
	Vicarious	300	2.48	1.39		
Social Function Turning Point	Personal	299	4.36	.981	18.21	<.001
	Vicarious	299	2.71	1.44		
Directive Function Low Point	Personal	307	3.40	1.40	7.99	<.001
	Vicarious	307	2.59	1.29		

Table 11. (continued)

Directive Function High Point	Personal	300	3.75	1.26	13.38	<.001
	Vicarious	300	2.52	1.32		
Directive Function Turning Point	Personal	299	4.20	1.14	13.60	<.001
	Vicarious	299	2.94	1.44		
Self Function Low Point	Personal	307	3.93	1.23	14.62	<.001
	Vicarious	307	2.61	1.32		
Self Function High Point	Personal	300	4.10	1.05	13.45	<.001
	Vicarious	300	2.83	1.42		
Self Function Turning Point	Personal	299	4.43	.95	14.37	<.001
	Vicarious	299	3.10	1.43		

3.2.5.3.7. Hypothesis 3a: Compared to men, women participants would have higher scores on narrative coherence for personal and vicarious life stories.

A series of hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to examine the role of gender (males = 0, and females = 1) on narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories. Since volume variables were significantly correlated with the narrative coherence variables, in the first step, we always included the relevant volume variable (i.e., if the dependent variable is personal low point narrative coherence, we included personal low point volume in the first step). Gender was always entered into the model in the second step. Findings supported our hypothesis that even after controlling for respective volume variables, being a woman was a significant positive predictor of narrative coherence across different memory types. The summary of regression findings is presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for Narrative Coherence: Volume and Gender

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>b</i>	95% CI	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ² _{adj.}	ΔF
Personal Low Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.34	160.96
Volume Personal Low	.02	.00	.59	[.02, .023]	<.001		
Model 2						.36	10.47

Table 12. (continued)

Volume Personal Low	.02	.00	.57	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Gender	.73	.23	.15	[.29, 1.17]	<.001		
Personal High Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.39	199.52
Volume Personal High	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.42	16.11
Volume Personal High	.03	.00	.62	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Gender	.78	.19	.17	[.40, 1.16]	<.001		
Personal Turning Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.40	206.16
Volume Personal Turning	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.44	22.46
Volume Personal Turning	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Gender	.90	.19	.20	[.53, 1.26]	<.001		
Vicarious Low Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.33	149.33
Volume Vicarious Low	.03	.00	.57	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.34	6.00
Volume Vicarious Low	.03	.00	.56	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Gender	.47	.19	.11	[.09, .84]	.015		
Vicarious High Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.50	300.71
Volume Vicarious High	.04	.00	.71	[.04, .05]	<.001		
Model 2						.51	1.38
Volume Vicarious High	.04	.00	.70	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Gender	.31	.16	.08	[-.00, .63]	.05		
Vicarious Turning Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.53	330.22
Volume Vicarious Turning	.04	.00	.73	[.04, .05]	<.001		
Model 2						.54	7.53
Volume Vicarious Turning	.04	.00	.71	[.04, .05]	<.001		
Gender	.45	.16	.11	[.13, .77]	.01		

A significant regression equation was obtained $F(2, 309) = 88.18, p < .001$ for personal low point narrative coherence. Both personal low point volume ($\beta = .57, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .02]$), and gender ($\beta = .15, p < .001, 95\% [.29, 1.17]$) significantly predicted personal low point narrative coherence. Similarly, a significant regression equation was found for personal high point narrative coherence $F(2, 309) = 112.68, p < .001$. Both personal high point volume ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) and gender

($\beta = .17, p < .001, 95\% [.40, 1.16]$) significantly predicted personal high point narrative coherence. Likewise, a significant regression equation was found for personal turning point narrative coherence $F(2, 309) = 121.76, p < .001$. Both personal turning point volume ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) and gender ($\beta = .20, p < .001, 95\% [.53, 1.27]$) significantly predicted personal turning point narrative coherence.

The same trend was observed for vicarious narratives. A significant regression equation was obtained for vicarious low point narratives, $F(2, 308) = 78.88, p < .001$. Both vicarious low point volume ($\beta = .56, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) and gender ($\beta = .11, p < .001, 95\% [.09, .84]$) significantly predicted vicarious low point narrative coherence. Another significant regression equation was observed for vicarious high point narrative coherence, $F(2, 298) = 154.21, p < .001$. While vicarious high point volume was a significant predictor ($\beta = .70, p < .001, 95\% [.03, .04]$), gender was not significant ($\beta = .08, p = .05, 95\% [-.00, .63]$). Finally, a significant regression equation was found for the vicarious turning point narrative, $F(2, 294) = 17.53, p < .001$. Both vicarious turning point volume ($\beta = .71, p < .001, 95\% [.04, .05]$) and gender ($\beta = .11, p < .001, 95\% [.13, .77]$) significantly predicted vicarious turning point narrative coherence.

3.2.5.3.8. Hypothesis 3b: Compared to men, women participants would rate phenomenological characteristics higher for personal and vicarious life stories.

Since preliminary findings indicated that gender is not significantly correlated with any phenomenological ratings, we did not perform further analyses to test this hypothesis.

3.2.5.3.9. Exploratory findings on the role of gender on functions of autobiographical memory.

Since preliminary findings indicated that gender is not significantly correlated with any of the functions of autobiographical memory, we did not perform any further analyses.

3.2.5.3.10. Exploratory finding on the role of age group on narrative coherence.

Since preliminary findings indicated that age group (18-23 age group = 0, 28-33 age group = 1) is significantly correlated with personal turning point narrative coherence ($r = -.19, p < .001$) and vicarious high point narrative coherence ($r = -.20, p < .001$), we conducted two exploratory hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses to examine the role of age group on narrative coherence.

A significant regression equation was obtained for personal turning point narrative coherence, $F(2, 308) = 108.76, p < .001$. Both personal turning point volume ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$), and age group ($\beta = -.12, p = .01, 95\% [-.91, -.15]$) significantly predicted personal turning point narrative coherence. Another significant regression equation was found for vicarious high point narrative coherence, $F(2, 298) = 154.08, p < .001$. While vicarious high point volume was a significant predictor of narrative coherence ($\beta = .69, p < .001, 95\% [.035, .044]$), age group did not significantly predict it ($\beta = -.08, p = .06, 95\% [-.63, .01]$).

Overall, these findings revealed that the 18-23 age group significantly produced more coherent personal turning point narratives, even after controlling for personal turning point volume; however, such a relation was not observed for the vicarious high point narrative coherence. The summary of regression findings is presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for Narrative Coherence: Volume and Age Group

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>b</i>	95% CI	<i>p</i>	$R^2_{adj.}$	ΔF
Personal Turning Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.40	206.18
Volume Personal Turning	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.41	7.43
Volume Personal Turning	.03	.00	.612	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Age group	-.53	.19	-.12	[-.91, -.15]	.01		
Vicarious High Point Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.50	301.75
Volume Vicarious High	.04	.00	.70	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Model 2						.51	3.70

Table 13. (continued)

Volume Vicarious High	.04	.00	.71	[.03, .04]	<.001
Age group	-.31	.16	-.08	[-.63, .01]	.06

3.2.5.3.11. Exploratory findings on the role of gender on reasons for sharing vicarious memories.

The reasons why participants’ partners shared vicarious past experiences were coded into six mutually exclusive categories: to share personal history, since the story was emotionally charged, to seek/provide support, to sustain/enhance intimacy, because the narrator asked, and for no reason. Frequencies of reasons for different narrative points across genders are presented in Table 14.

Regarding reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, 27.5% ($n = 85$) of the responses were coded into to sustain/enhance intimacy category, which was followed by to share personal history with 25.2% ($n = 78$). Additionally, 24.3% ($n = 75$) of the responses were grouped under since the story was emotionally charged, while another 15.2% ($n = 47$) were coded into to seek/provide support category. In addition, 4.2% ($n = 13$) of the answers were grouped under because the narrator asked category, whereas 3.6% ($n = 11$) were coded into for no reason.

According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 309) = 6.23, p = .28$.

Regarding sharing vicarious high point memories, 40.7% ($n = 122$) of the responses were coded into the since the story was emotionally charged, which was followed by to share personal history with 25.0% ($n = 75$). In addition, 19.0% ($n = 57$) of the answers were coded into to sustain/enhance intimacy. While 10.7% ($n = 32$) of the responses were grouped under the for no reason category, 2.7% ($n = 8$) were coded into because the narrator asked. Finally, 2.0% of the responses indicated ($n = 6$) to seek/provide support.

According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 300) = 4.33, p = .50$.

Concerning reasons for sharing vicarious turning point memories, 49.2% ($n = 143$) of the answers were coded to share personal history, followed by to sustain/enhance intimacy with 23.0% ($n = 69$). While 8.0% ($n = 24$) of the responses indicated for no reason category, 7.7% ($n = 23$) of them pointed to since the story was emotionally charged. In addition, 7.0% ($n = 21$) of the answers were grouped under to seek/provide support, whereas 5.0% ($n = 15$) of them were coded into because the narrator asked.

According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 300) = 10.25, p = .07$.

3.2.6. Discussion

In this study, we investigated similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory ratings for romantic couples' personal and vicarious life stories, for the first time in the romantic relationship context and with a sample of Turkish participants. In addition, we explored the role of gender on these variables, as well as with the role of age group, whether participants are in the onset or offset of young adulthood, on narrative coherence. Additionally, we identified reasons for sharing vicarious memories, and explored potential gender differences on those reasons.

A relevant line of research indicated similarities between personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015). Similarly, we found that narrative coherence in personal life stories were positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories. A previous study showed that thematic coherence in personal life stories predicts thematic coherence in vicarious life stories (Yenen, 2022); however, to the best of our knowledge, no study previously investigated overall narrative coherence. In this regard, the current study uniquely contributed to the relevant literature by providing first evidence on similarities between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence.

In addition, we found that valence and vividness ratings in personal life stories were positively related to valence and vividness ratings in vicarious life stories, except for vividness for low point narratives. In this sense, the current study replicated previous

research indicating similarities between phenomenological characteristics of personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pond & Patterson, 2020). Furthermore, we found that social, directive and self function ratings in personal life stories were positively related to their vicarious counterparts. This finding was in line with the previous research indicating similarities in functionality of personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015). Overall, these results indicated that how individuals remember their personal past is closely linked to how they recount memories of significant others.

Previous research indicated certain differences between personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015; Pond & Patterson, 2020). In line with the literature, the current study provided the first evidence showing that personal life stories are more coherent than vicarious life stories across different memory types. Similarly, we found that participants rated personal memories as more vivid than vicarious memories for low point, high point, and turning point narratives. In addition, they rated the valence of personal high point memories higher than that of vicarious high point memories. These results replicated previous research indicating that vividness and emotional intensity are higher for personal memories (Pillemer et al., 2015; Pond & Patterson, 2020).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that despite mean scores being in the hypothesized direction, we did not observe a significant difference in valence ratings between personal and vicarious low point and turning point memories. One explanation for the lack of significant difference between valence scores of personal and vicarious low point narratives could be participants' tendency to mention highly challenging life experiences for this memory type, both for themselves and their partners. Given the intimate nature of romantic relationships, participants might have perceived their partners' low points as being as challenging as their personal low point experiences. The finding regarding the valence of the turning point narratives might stem from the fact that turning point narratives consisted of a combination of positive and negative experiences. Participants might have discussed a positive turning point event for themselves but provided a negative event for their partners, or vice versa, which might have operated as a confounding factor for comparing valence ratings.

Additionally, we found that participants rated social, directive, and self memory functions higher for personal life stories compared to vicarious life stories, for all memory types. These results partially replicated the study of Pillemer et al. (2015), as they found personal memories were more functional only for directive function. However, completely replicating the study of Pond and Patterson (2020), in the current study, we also found that personal memories are more functional than vicarious memories.

Concerning gender differences, relevant research indicated overall narrative coherence and its different aspects are higher in women's narratives (Fivush et al., 2012; Grysman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019). In line with this line of research, in the current study we found that even after controlling for volume of narratives, women participants provided more coherent narratives, both for personal and vicarious life stories, except for vicarious high point memory, which was marginally significant ($p = .05$). Although earlier studies indicated that women report their memories as more vivid and emotional than men (Alea & Vick, 2010; Pohl et al., 2005; Ross & Holmberg, 1990), in the current study, we did not observe a significant association between gender and phenomenological characteristics. Similarly, we did not find a significant relation between gender and memory functions, as in the study of Lind & Thomsen (2018). The lack of a significant gender role in scale ratings is a common pattern in the literature (Grysman & Hudson, 2013). When investigating gender differences in autobiographical memory, focusing on how participants talk or write personal past events could be a better proxy for understanding gender differences, as ratings could overlook cognitive processes that might be highlighted in verbal and written assessments of memory (Grysman & Hudson, 2013).

Another finding regarding the lack of gender differences concerned reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Previous research indicated that while sharing vicarious memories with family members, women report emotional reasons more frequently than men, whereas men report teaching purposes more frequently (Bakir-Demir, 2022). However, in the current study, we did not observe gender differences in reasons for sharing vicarious memories. It can be speculated that the observed gender differences in the intergenerational family context might disappear due to the different

nature of romantic relationships. Another explanation for the lack of significant gender differences might be the sample characteristics of this study. Participants were either university students or had at least a university degree. In this sense, the study was composed of highly educated emerging and young adults, which might have hindered the potential gender differences. Future studies should investigate gender differences in reasons for sharing vicarious memories with more diverse populations.

Finally, we exploratorily tested whether being in the emerging adulthood (18-23 years) or young adulthood (28-33 years) is related to narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories. We found a significant result only for personal turning point narrative coherence. After controlling for volume, being in the emerging adulthood significantly predicted higher narrative coherence. One explanation for this finding could be that the emerging adults age group was in one of the most transitional periods of their lives, as they either had newly started college or were about to graduate. Given these transitional periods, they might have reviewed personal turning points in a more coherent manner.

Considering the findings mentioned above, the current study uniquely contributed to the literature by providing the first evidence regarding the similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence. In addition, the current study replicated previous research demonstrating similarities and differences in phenomenological characteristics and memory functions, as well as the role of gender in narrative coherence. Given that the tested associations were investigated in the context of romantic relationships and with Turkish participants for the first time, in Study 3, we chose to replicate the findings of the current study to ensure the robustness of the results.

Table 14. Reasons for sharing vicarious memories across genders

Memory Type	Coding Categories	Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Vicarious Low	Since the story was emotionally charged	39	25.3%	36	23.2%	75	24.3%
	Because the narrator asked	5	3.2%	8	5.2%	13	4.2%
	For no reason	8	5.2%	3	1.9%	11	3.6%
	To seek/provide support	26	16.9%	21	13.5%	47	15.2%
	To share personal history	32	20.8%	46	29.7%	78	25.2%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	44	28.6%	41	26.5%	85	27.5%
Vicarious High	Since the story was emotionally charged	62	42.5%	60	39.0%	122	40.7%
	Because the narrator asked	4	2.7%	4	2.6%	8	2.7%
	For no reason	18	12.3%	14	9.1%	32	10.7%
	To seek/provide support	3	2.1%	3	1.9%	6	2.0%
	To share personal history	29	19.9%	46	29.9%	75	25.0%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	30	20.5%	27	17.5%	57	19.0%
Vicarious Turning	Since the story was emotionally charged	14	9.7%	9	5.8%	23	7.7%
	Because the narrator asked	6	4.2%	9	5.8%	15	5.0%
	For no reason	16	11.1%	8	5.1%	24	8.0%
	To seek/provide support	5	3.5%	16	10.3%	21	7.0%
	To share personal history	71	49.3%	77	49.4%	148	49.3%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	32	22.2%	37	23.7%	69	23.0%

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 3: REPLICATING THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS LIFE STORIES OF ROMANTIC COUPLES

4.1. Introduction

The primary purpose of Study 3 was to replicate the findings of the Study 2 in terms of similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and autobiographical memory functions of romantic couples' personal and vicarious life stories. In addition, we aimed to investigate the role of gender on these memory characteristics and reasons for sharing vicarious memories.

In line with the findings of Study 2, it was hypothesized that (1a) narrative coherence in personal life stories would be positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories; (1b) phenomenological ratings of personal life stories would be positively related to phenomenological ratings for vicarious life stories; (1c) autobiographical memory functions of the personal life stories would be positively related to autobiographical memory functions of vicarious life stories; (2a) personal life stories would be more coherent than vicarious life stories; (2b) phenomenological characteristics of personal life stories would be rated higher than phenomenological characteristics of vicarious life stories; (2c) functions of autobiographical memory for personal life stories would be rated higher than functions of autobiographical memory for vicarious life stories; (3a) compared to men, women participants would have higher scores on narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories.

Since in Study 2, we did not observe gender differences in phenomenological characteristics and functions of autobiographical memory ratings for personal and

vicarious life stories, we exploratorily tested these variables' association with gender. In addition, we exploratorily tested the association between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Finally, in Study 3, we exploratorily examined the association between narrative coherence in personal life stories and life satisfaction, as well as the link between narrative coherence in vicarious life stories for romantic partners and relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of others in the self.

4.2. Method

4.2.1. Participants

Participants of this study were 119 heterosexual couples ($N = 238$) who had been in committed relationships for at least six months. An equal number of females and males (119 for both genders) participated in the study. The inclusion criteria of the current study were being in a committed monogamous and heterosexual relationship for at least six months and being in the age range of 18-23. In addition, to be eligible for this study, participants were required to be undergraduate students. All participants were undergraduate students ($M_{age} = 21.11$, $SD = 1.06$) and dating couples, with an average relationship duration of 23.60 months ($SD = 17.72$, ranging between six months to 9 years).

4.2.2. Procedure

Ethical approval of the current study was obtained from the METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee with the protocol number 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 (See Appendix A).

Participants were recruited through a convenience sampling technique, with the help of undergraduate psychology students who enrolled in a workshop in developmental psychology course offered at METU Department of Psychology. The same procedure applied in the Study 1 and Study 2 was used to train undergraduate students and to collect data.

As in Study 1 and Study 2, this study was conducted on Qualtrics, where participants first filled out the consent form, followed by the demographic information form. Next, participants answered the Key Scenes part of Life-Story Interview – II for themselves and their partners, with the order of the personal and vicarious life stories was counterbalanced. Personal and vicarious life story questions were presented as blocks; participants either completed personal or vicarious life story questions and then moved to the next. At the end of the study, participants were presented with a debriefing message about the study.

4.2.3. Measures

4.2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form included questions on participants' age, gender, education level, relationship status, and relationship duration.

4.2.3.2. The Life-Story Interview

Personal and vicarious life stories were collected through a short version of the Key Scenes part of The Life-Story Interview - II (McAdams, 2008). Participants were asked to describe a high point event, a low point event, and a turning point event from their and their partners' lives. An event-specific and Turkish version of the following prompt was given for each memory: *“Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life/in your partner’s life that stands out as an especially positive/negative/life-changing experience. This might be the high point/low point/turning point scene of your entire life/your partner’s life. Please describe this scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so good/bad/important and what the scene may say about who you are as a person.”*

4.2.3.3. Phenomenological Characteristics

After each narrative, participants answered two separate single-item follow-up questions, in which they were asked to rate vividness (1 = *not vivid at all*, 10 =

completely vivid) and valence (1 = *extremely negative*, 10 = *extremely positive*) of the event for themselves.

4.2.3.4. Functions of Autobiographical Memory

After each narrative, participants rated three single-item follow up statements (1 = completely disagree, 5 = completely agree) for social (“*My memory/my partner’s memory affects my social relationships with others.*”), directive (“*My memory/my partner’s memory helps me to solve problems in my life.*”) and self (“*My memory/my partner’s memory helps me to better understand myself.*”) functions of autobiographical memory.

4.2.3.5. Satisfaction with Life Scale

Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985) was used to assess participants’ global life satisfaction. The scale consists of one factor with five items (e.g., “In most ways my life is close to my ideal.”) that are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$). Initial Turkish adaptation of the scale was conducted by Köker (1991). A more recent adaptation study was conducted by Dağlı and Baysal (2016) to enable participants to rate items on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *completely true*; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .88$). In the current study, Dağlı and Baysal’s (2016) version was used (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$). Items were averaged to calculate a life satisfaction score; higher scores indicated greater satisfaction with life.

4.2.3.6. Relationship Happiness Scale

Relationship Happiness Scale (Fletcher et al., 1990) was used to measure participants’ satisfaction with their romantic relationship. The scale consists of one factor with six items (e.g., “*My relationship with my partner makes me happy.*”) that are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$). Tuterel-Kışlak (1997) conducted the initial Turkish adaptation of the scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .80$). Sümer et al. (2016) conducted a more recent adaptation of the scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .93$). In this study, newer version of the Turkish adaptation was implemented, and participants rated items on a 5-point

Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 5 = *completely true*; Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). Items were averaged to calculate a relationship satisfaction score; higher scores indicated greater satisfaction with romantic relationship.

4.2.3.7. Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale

Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS; Reis et al., 2017) was utilized to assess to what extent participants think their partners comprehend, affirm, and demonstrate care for them. The scale consists of one factor with 18 items (e.g., "*My partner is aware of what I am thinking and feeling.*") that are rated on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 9 = *completely true*; Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). Taşfiliz et al. (2020) conducted the Turkish adaptation of the scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). In this study, the mean score was used, higher scores indicated greater perceived responsiveness by romantic partner (Cronbach's $\alpha = .95$).

4.2.3.8. Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale

Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale (Aron et al. 1992) was used to assess how close participants feel with their partners. The scale consists of one item in which seven different pairs of circles are presented to represent participants' perceived closeness with their partners. Using these circles, participants visually rated the overlap of their self with the partners on a 7-point scale (1 = *no overlap*, 7 = *most overlap*). Dinçer (2017) conducted the Turkish adaptation of the scale, the higher scores indicated greater closeness with the romantic partner.

4.2.4. Coding schemes

As in Study 2, participants' narratives for themselves and their partners were coded for volume and narrative coherence. Narrative coherence was evaluated over same three dimensions: context, chronology, and theme. For reliability, a randomly selected 40% of the narratives (582 narratives in total) were coded by the same three coders who previously coded data from Study 2. The reliability coders were unaware of the aim and hypotheses of the study. Each coder focused on only the same dimension (e.g.,

context only) they previously coded for Study 2 and evaluated this dimension across six narrative types (personal low point, personal high point, personal turning point, vicarious low point, vicarious high point, and vicarious turning point). Reliability scores were estimated with intraclass correlation (ICC). All ICC scores were based on a 2-way mixed-effects model with absolute agreement ($k = 2$), and single measures. The master coder's ratings were used for the analysis. Reliability scores for each narrative are presented in Table 15.

For open-ended follow-up questions regarding reasons for sharing vicarious memories, we utilized the same coding scheme developed for Study 1. For reliability purposes, 100% (692 narratives in total) of the answers were coded by the same second coder who previously coded the reasons for sharing in Study 2. Cohen's kappa coefficient was used to assess reliability. The master coder's ratings were used for the analysis.

4.2.4.1. Volume

The total number of words in personal and vicarious life story narratives was counted via the Microsoft Office word count function.

4.2.4.2. Narrative Coherence

As in Study 2, the Narrative Coherence Coding Scheme (NaCCS; Reese et al., 2011) was used to evaluate narrative coherence across context, chronology, and theme. Each dimension is rated on a 4-point scale, ranging from 0 to 3.

Context refers to the information relating to the time and place of the event in the narrative. A narrative with no mention of either time or place is assigned a score of 0. A narrative that provides information about time or place is given a score of 1. A narrative offering information on time and place but leaving one of these pieces unclear is assigned a score of 2. A narrative with precise information on time and place is given a score of 3. While Cronbach's α scores for context ranged between .83 and .90, and ICC scores ranged between .70 and .83.

Chronology refers to the order of actions mentioned in a narrative. A narrative with no mention or barely any information regarding the order of events is assigned a score of 0. A narrative with less than 50% of the actions that can be aligned along a timeline is assigned a score of 1. A narrative with 50% to 75% of the actions that can be arranged along a timeline is assigned a score of 2. A narrative with more than 75% of the actions that can be ordered along a timeline is given a score of 3. While Cronbach's α scores for chronology ranged between .83 and .88, and ICC scores ranged between .70 and .76.

Theme/meaning-making refers to the meaning-making in a narrative. A narrative with no salient topic is given a score of 0. A narrative with a specific topic but lacking elaborations, evaluations, and casual connections is assigned a score of 1. A narrative with an identifiable topic that is further developed with elaborations, evaluations, and casual connections is assigned a score of 2. A narrative that has the qualities of a score of 2, but also includes a resolution to the story is assigned a score of 3. In NaCCS, resolution refers to the information that brings closure to the story or provides a new aspect to the topic. Such information can be presented by connecting the event to current or future experiences or to self-concept and identity. While Cronbach's α scores for theme ranged between .86 and .93, and ICC scores ranged between .76 and .86.

Table 15. Agreement Between Coders for Dimensions of Narrative Coherence

	Cronbach's α	ICC	95% CI
Personal Low Point			
Context	.83	.70	[.54, .79]
Chronology	.83	.71	[.58, .79]
Theme	.90	.82	[.74, .87]
Personal High Point			
Context	.90	.81	[.73, .87]
Chronology	.88	.76	[.57, .85]
Theme	.93	.86	[.80, .90]

Table 15. (continued)

Personal Turning Point			
Context	.87	.76	[.64, .83]
Chronology	.86	.70	[.43, .83]
Theme	.92	.85	[.77, .89]
Vicarious Low Point			
Context	.90	.80	[.67, .86]
Chronology	.84	.71	[.57, .80]
Theme	.88	.77	[.64, .85]
Vicarious High Point			
Context	.89	.80	[.71, .86]
Chronology	.84	.70	[.57, .79]
Theme	.87	.76	[.65, .83]
Vicarious Turning Point			
Context	.91	.83	[.75, .88]
Chronology	.86	.72	[.53, .82]
Theme	.86	.81	[.44, .83]

4.2.4.3. Reasons

As in Study 1 and Study 2, reasons were coded into six mutually exclusive categories: to share personal history, since the story was emotionally charged, to seek/provide support, to sustain/enhance intimacy, because the narrator asked, and for no reason. For reliability, a second coder who was unaware of the study goals coded 100% of reasons across three vicarious narrative points (692 narratives in total).

Strong agreement was obtained for vicarious low point and high point narratives, while an almost perfect agreement was obtained for the turning point narrative. The Cohen's kappa coefficient was .89 ($p < .001$) for vicarious low point, .86 ($p < .001$) for vicarious high point, and .89 ($p < .001$) for vicarious turning point.

4.2.5. Results

4.2.5.1. Data Screening

All analyses were conducted with the SPSS version 28. A data screening was applied to clear data, identify missing values and outliers, and test assumptions before conducting the main analyses.

The initial dataset consisted of 254 data points. Fourteen data points were removed as their completion rates were lower than %70. Two participants were also excluded as they were not a heterosexual couple. The final data set included 238 participants.

In the literature, skewness between -2 to +2 and kurtosis between -3 and +3 indicate normal distribution (Westfall & Henning, 2013). The skewness and kurtosis check showed that all scores were within the desired range.

Regarding missing values, some participants could not remember or did not want to share personal or vicarious memories. In total, one personal low point, one personal high point, four personal turning points, two vicarious low points, 12 vicarious high points, and eight vicarious turning point narratives were not reported. These narratives were not included pairwise in further analyses.

4.2.5.2. Preliminary Findings

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations were examined as part of the preliminary analysis.

4.2.5.2.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provided the exact same results as Study 2. Narrative coherence, valence, vividness, and volume scores of personal narrative points were higher than the respective vicarious narrative points, with the only exception being the personal low point valence score, which was lower than the vicarious low point valence score. Descriptive statistics for the study variables were summarized in Table 16.

Table 16. Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

	Mean	SD	Min-Max
Personal Low Point (<i>N</i> = 237)			
Narrative Coherence	6.37	2.01	1-9
Valence	3.36	2.88	1-10
Vividness	8.94	1.64	3-10
Social Function	3.49	1.43	1-5
Directive Function	3.48	1.37	1-5
Self Function	3.87	1.26	1-5
Volume	101.79	90.01	9-657
Personal High Point (<i>N</i> = 237)			
Narrative Coherence	5.69	1.83	1-9
Valence	9.42	.91	6-10
Vividness	9.17	1.33	4-10
Social Function	3.65	1.39	1-5
Directive Function	3.70	1.33	1-5
Self Function	4.12	1.01	1-5
Volume	71.60	57.00	1-474
Personal Turning Point (<i>N</i> = 234)			
Narrative Coherence	5.53	2.20	0-9
Valence	6.69	3.23	1-10
Vividness	8.65	1.81	1-10
Social Function	4.26	1.58	1-5
Directive Function	4.03	1.29	1-5
Self Function	4.31	1.053	1-5
Volume	75.09	54.10	11-453
Vicarious Low Point (<i>N</i> = 236)			
Narrative Coherence	5.09	1.74	1-9
Valence	3.69	2.89	1-10
Vividness	7.21	2.21	1-10
Social Function	2.18	1.34	1-5
Directive Function	2.66	1.25	1-5
Self Function	2.72	1.32	1-5
Volume	75.29	51.29	11-350
Vicarious High Point (<i>N</i> = 226)			
Narrative Coherence	4.45	1.80	1-9
Valence	8.67	1.76	1-10
Vividness	7.52	2.36	1-10
Social Function	2.57	1.45	1-5
Directive Function	2.50	1.41	1-5
Self Function	2.85	1.46	1-5
Volume	54.89	36.75	9-208
Vicarious Turning Point (<i>N</i> = 230)			
Narrative Coherence	4.50	1.90	0-9
Valence	6.63	3.30	1-10
Vividness	7.44	2.41	1-10
Social Function	2.81	1.54	1-5
Directive Function	2.91	1.46	1-5

Table 16. (continued)

Self Function	3.00	1.45	1-5
Volume	57.29	38.22	9-235
Life Satisfaction ($N = 238$)	3.29	.82	1-5
Relationship Happiness ($N = 238$)	4.87	.35	2-5
Perceived Partner Responsiveness ($N = 238$)	7.70	1.06	3-9
Inclusion of Other in the Self ($N = 238$)	6.18	.96	3-7

4.2.5.2.2. Bivariate Correlations

The bivariate correlations among study variables were examined and presented in Table 17.

4.2.5.3. Main Findings

4.2.5.3.1. Hypothesis 1a: Narrative coherence in personal life stories would be positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1a regarding the similarities between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations. Findings supported our hypothesis, such that narrative coherence in personal low point narrative was significantly and positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious low point narrative ($r = .36, p < .01$).

Similarly, narrative coherence in personal high point narrative was significantly and positively associated with the narrative coherence in vicarious high point narrative ($r = .37, p < .01$).

Finally, narrative coherence in personal turning point narrative was significantly and positively correlated with narrative coherence in vicarious turning point narrative ($r = .41, p < .01$). The findings replicated the findings regarding the Hypothesis 1a of Study 2.

Table 17. Bivariate Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	--										
2. Age	.05	--									
3. Relationship duration	.00	.01	--								
4. Volume Personal Low	.00	-.03	-.09	--							
5. Volume Personal High	.02	-.01	-.00	.52**	--						
6. Volume Personal Turning	.07	.01	.07	.54**	.65**	--					
7. Volume Vicarious Low	.05	.01	.04	.33**	.51**	.50**	--				
8. Volume Vicarious High	.06	.00	.00	.43**	.49**	.56**	.67**	--			
9. Volume Vicarious Turning	.09	.00	.02	.34**	.49**	.56**	.63**	.69**	--		
10. Narrative Coherence Personal Low	.25**	-.03	-.05	.49**	.40**	.43**	.31**	.33**	.31**	--	
11. Narrative Coherence Personal High	.22**	.05	-.00	.26**	.53**	.38**	.33**	.30**	.36**	.49**	--
12. Narrative Coherence Personal Turning	.34**	.07	-.01	.21**	.31**	.57**	.35**	.42**	.44**	.44**	.45**
13. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Low	.15*	.04	.05	.22**	.34**	.35**	.63**	.53**	.50**	.36**	.43**
14. Narrative Coherence Vicarious High	.17**	.01	.06	.23**	.26**	.32**	.45**	.63**	.49**	.36**	.37**
15. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Turning	.15*	.01	.01	.19**	.32**	.40**	.48**	.51**	.75**	.29**	.40**
16. Valence Personal Low	.01	-.04	.00	-.07	.03	.01	-.05	-.09	-.04	-.04	.02
17. Valence Personal High	.04	.05	.04	-.08	-.06	-.08	-.05	-.03	.02	-.13*	-.01
18. Valence Personal Turning	-.15*	-.11	.11	-.01	-.07	-.14*	-.06	.01	-.03	-.06	-.16*
19. Valence Vicarious Low	.03	-.05	.05	.13*	.05	.01	-.02	-.01	-.03	-.02	-.00
20. Valence Vicarious High	.12	.05	.14*	-.00	.00	.06	.06	.08	.12	-.03	.01
21. Valence Vicarious Turning	-.04	-.00	.06	-.08	-.00	-.11	-.09	-.03	-.11	.00	-.06
22. Vividness Personal Low	.00	.04	.04	.01	-.00	.11	.11	.12	.13*	-.05	-.14*

Table 17. (continued)

Variable Names	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
23. Vividness Personal High	.06	.04	.07	-.09	-.12*	-.12	-.08	.01	-.08	-.12	-.15*
24. Vividness Personal Turning	-.02	.05	.04	-.03	-.04	.01	.00	.04	-.02	-.12	-.12
25. Vividness Vicarious Low	.08	.05	-.01	-.13*	-.10	-.11	.09	.00	-.11	-.10	-.13*
26. Vividness Vicarious High	.04	.08	.09	-.13*	-.09	-.08	.00	.03	-.14*	-.11	-.06
27. Vividness Vicarious Turning	-.03	.05	.07	-.11	-.09	-.18**	-.02	-.03	-.13*	-.04	-.11
28. Social Function Personal Low	.03	-.03	-.03	.05	-.02	.09	.11	.17*	.10	.06	-.00
29. Social Function Personal High	-.07	.07	-.08	.05	.04	.03	-.12	-.09	-.13*	-.08	-.08
30. Social Function Personal Turning	.01	.04	.01	.09	.02	.12	.04	.11	.10	.03	-.03
31. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.07	.08	.01	.13*	.10	.10	.11	.10	.03	.02	.08
32. Social Function Vicarious High	-.04	.15	.00	.04	.00	.08	.09	.01	-.06	-.03	-.04
33. Social Function Vicarious Turning	.00	.00	-.00	.10	.06	.02	.05	.03	.00	.04	-.05
34. Directive Function Personal Low	-.16**	.03	.05	.08	.07	.04	.07	.07	.00	-.03	.02
35. Directive Function Personal High	-.07	.07	.06	.07	.05	.01	.04	-.04	-.05	-.06	-.04
36. Directive Function Personal Turning	-.16*	.05	.02	.05	.03	.00	.05	.16*	.09	-.01	-.06
37. Directive Function Vicarious Low	-.15*	.01	.01	.09	.06	.07	.12	.08	.02	-.03	-.05
38. Directive Function Vicarious High	.01	.07	.02	.06	.01	.10	.00	.01	-.04	-.13*	-.09
39. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	-.01	.04	.08	.09	.04	.03	.06	.10	.02	.00	-.12
40. Self Function Personal Low	-.00	.06	.05	-.09	.00	-.00	.03	.01	-.02	-.01	-.03
41. Self Function Personal High	.00	.07	.04	-.13*	-.04	.02	-.02	-.01	-.03	-.06	-.08
42. Self Function Personal Turning	.00	.05	-.06	-.07	-.10	-.03	.01	.03	-.02	.00	-.06
43. Self Function Vicarious Low	.00	-.08	-.00	.08	.07	.08	.11	.04	.00	-.02	-.01
44. Self Function Vicarious High	-.04	.05	-.04	.04	.06	.07	.08	.04	.05	-.02	.00
45. Self Function Vicarious Turning	-.02	.04	.00	.07	.03	.01	.04	.05	-.03	-.05	-.14*
46. Life Satisfaction	.07	-.00	.02	.03	.03	.07	-.06	-.03	.05	.08	.01
47. Relationship Happiness	-.01	.01	.07	.05	.05	.08	.12	.13*	.10	.04	.01
48. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.04	.00	.05	.07	.08	.11	.11	.15*	.11	.05	-.01
49. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.05	.05	-.03	-.00	-.03	-.00	.05	.03	.02	.00	-.01

Table 17. (continued)

Variable Names	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
12. Narrative Coherence Personal Turning	--										
13. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Low	.40**	--									
14. Narrative Coherence Vicarious High	.43**	.48**	--								
15. Narrative Coherence Vicarious Turning	.40**	.47**	.53**	--							
16. Valence Personal Low	.00	-.09	-.18**	.01	--						
17. Valence Personal High	-.03	.02	-.03	-.01	.06	--					
18. Valence Personal Turning	-.09	-.10	.09	-.06	.09	-.03	--				
19. Valence Vicarious Low	-.08	-.16*	.00	-.03	.19**	-.06	.17**	--			
20. Valence Vicarious High	.09	.05	.06	.13*	.03	.20**	.05	.03	--		
21. Valence Vicarious Turning	-.08	-.10	.04	-.03	.10	.07	.23**	.03	.05	--	
22. Vividness Personal Low	.04	.09	-.01	.09	-.13*	.11	.00	-.10	.24**	-.03	--
23. Vividness Personal High	-.05	.00	-.05	-.05	-.00	.28**	.08	.00	.23**	.10	.27**
24. Vividness Personal Turning	.02	-.01	-.03	-.11	-.11	.10	.19**	.00	.16*	-.04	.21**
25. Vividness Vicarious Low	-.06	.07	-.03	-.13*	-.16*	.09	.00	.04	.14*	.07	.14*
26. Vividness Vicarious High	-.09	.02	.05	-.13*	-.15*	.31**	.00	.04	.27**	.16*	.17**
27. Vividness Vicarious Turning	-.09	-.02	-.04	-.09	-.09	.10	-.02	-.08	.17**	.29**	.03
28. Social Function Personal Low	.07	.17**	.13*	.12	-.06	-.14*	-.10	-.11	.07	-.04	.04
29. Social Function Personal High	-.05	-.08	-.09	-.16*	-.10	.00	.01	-.05	.06	.01	.02
30. Social Function Personal Turning	.05	.04	.12	.01	-.11	.03	.09	-.15*	.10	.01	-.03
31. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.00	.05	.00	.01	.07	-.07	-.05	-.00	.12	-.11	.01
32. Social Function Vicarious High	-.01	-.04	-.02	-.10	.01	.17*	-.04	-.10	.23**	-.00	.09
33. Social Function Vicarious Turning	-.01	-.07	-.05	-.08	.01	.06	-.03	-.08	.15*	-.02	-.00
34. Directive Function Personal Low	-.01	-.00	.04	.01	-.02	.02	-.00	-.08	-.01	-.00	.09
35. Directive Function Personal High	-.11	-.02	-.07	-.09	.04	.06	-.01	-.09	.09	-.02	-.04
36. Directive Function Personal Turning	-.08	-.01	.08	.04	-.08	.05	.32**	-.12	.05	.05	.01
37. Directive Function Vicarious Low	-.01	.04	.00	.02	.04	.04	.01	-.04	.15*	-.03	.03
38. Directive Function Vicarious High	-.00	-.04	-.06	-.09	-.04	.23**	-.06	-.10	.26**	.01	.16*

Table 17. (continued)

Variable Names	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
39. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	-.02	-.06	.02	-.07	-.10	.00	.05	-.13*	.20**	.08	.04
40. Self Function Personal Low	-.07	.09	.00	-.02	-.08	.00	-.13*	-.07	.00	.03	.06
41. Self Function Personal High	-.02	.08	-.05	-.10	.04	.15*	-.02	-.15*	.10	-.01	-.01
42. Self Function Personal Turning	.00	-.01	.06	-.03	-.06	.06	.22**	-.07	.07	.01	-.04
43. Self Function Vicarious Low	.01	.00	-.05	-.00	.04	.00	.08	.07	.19**	-.05	.09
44. Self Function Vicarious High	.00	.00	-.04	-.04	-.10	.17**	-.09	-.17**	.27**	.06	.18**
45. Self Function Vicarious Turning	-.06	-.05	-.02	-.12	-.14*	.08	-.04	-.10	.10	.10	.11
46. Life Satisfaction	.10	-.04	-.00	.01	.09	.16*	.12	.01	.06	.04	-.00
47. Relationship Happiness	.05	.07	.11	.09	-.01	.10	.06	-.07	.06	-.02	.03
48. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.06	.10	.08	.10	.03	.14*	.06	-.13*	.09	-.04	.17**
49. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.06	.05	.05	.04	-.01	.07	.06	-.06	.04	.07	.04
Variable Names	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	30	31	32	33
23. Vividness Personal High	--										
24. Vividness Personal Turning	.23**	--									
25. Vividness Vicarious Low	.21**	.19**	--								
26. Vividness Vicarious High	.27**	.11	.50**	--							
27. Vividness Vicarious Turning	.22**	.12*	.37**	.41**	--						
28. Social Function Personal Low	.06	.00	.01	-.03	.01	--					
29. Social Function Personal High	.05	.02	.11	.10	.12	.24**	--				
30. Social Function Personal Turning	-.03	.11	-.00	.03	.04	.24**	.26**	--			
31. Social Function Vicarious Low	-.05	.00	-.00	.01	-.02	.04	.10	.08	--		
32. Social Function Vicarious High	.18**	.11	.09	.20**	.12	.05	.24**	.20**	.47**	--	
33. Social Function Vicarious Turning	-.01	.08	.04	.09	.22**	.12	.29**	.23**	.36**	.45**	--
34. Directive Function Personal Low	.25**	.09	-.02	.11	.18**	.17**	.10	.06	.02	.19**	.12
35. Directive Function Personal High	.12*	.01	.02	.03	.11	.12	.42**	.10	.23**	.23**	.29**
36. Directive Function Personal Turning	.04	.16*	.00	.06	.03	.05	.04	.35**	.08	.09	.12
37. Directive Function Vicarious Low	.08	.02	.19**	.13*	.14*	-.02	.12	.08	.33**	.33**	.24**
38. Directive Function Vicarious High	.20**	.12	.09	.20**	.13*	.02	.18**	.18**	.36**	.63**	.30**
39. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	.18**	.12	.16*	.16*	.31**	.13*	.25**	.25**	.23**	.32**	.60**

Table 17. (continued)

Variable Names	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	30	31	32	33	
40. Self Function Personal Low	.17**	-.03	.07	.16*	.09	.20**	.16*	-.00	-.04	.06	-.01	
41. Self Function Personal High	.17**	.04	.10	.18**	.09	.09	.33**	.13*	.09	.21**	.05	
42. Self Function Personal Turning	.13*	.20**	.15*	.08	.06	.11	.09	.36**	.03	.19**	.08	
43. Self Function Vicarious Low	.08	.04	.21**	.14*	.03	.02	.20**	.04	.30**	.28**	.28**	
44. Self Function Vicarious High	.06	.06	.10	.25**	.23**	.06	.19**	.20**	.32**	.59**	.45**	
45. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.18**	.04	.13*	.10	.27**	.12	.23**	.17**	.21**	.37**	.56**	
46. Life Satisfaction	.06	.02	-.00	.08	.07	-.04	.03	-.05	-.03	.17**	.15*	
47. Relationship Happiness	.16*	.07	.12	.13*	.08	.18**	.03	.13*	.00	.07	.08	
48. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.12*	.03	.14*	.10	.15*	.17*	.02	.06	.00	.07	.10	
49. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.12*	.13*	.20**	.09	.19**	.02	.00	.05	-.04	.06	.01	
Variable Names	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
34. Directive Function Personal Low	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
35. Directive Function Personal High	.21**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
36. Directive Function Personal Turning	.23**	.19**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
37. Directive Function Vicarious Low	.15*	.23**	.19**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
38. Directive Function Vicarious High	.07	.33**	.20**	.41**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
39. Directive Function Vicarious Turning	.08	.36**	.19**	.39**	.44**	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
40. Self Function Personal Low	.48**	.20**	.03	.01	.03	-.02	--	--	--	--	--	--
41. Self Function Personal High	.20**	.49**	.14*	.18**	.22**	.13*	.41**	--	--	--	--	--
42. Self Function Personal Turning	.18**	-.00	.52**	.08	.16*	.11	.20**	.26**	--	--	--	--
43. Self Function Vicarious Low	.12*	.26**	.17**	.50**	.36**	.28**	.12	.14*	.10	--	--	--
44. Self Function Vicarious High	.10	.31**	.17**	.36**	.72**	.48**	.04	.18**	.08	.39**	--	--
45. Self Function Vicarious Turning	.18**	.32**	.16*	.33**	.37**	.67**	.06	.16*	.10	.36**	.49**	--
46. Life Satisfaction	.08	.04	.07	.06	.07	.13*	.05	-.00	-.07	.12	.13	.24**
47. Relationship Happiness	.02	.05	.04	.14*	.04	.16*	.02	.04	.02	.11	.08	.21**

Table 17. (continued)

Variable Names	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
48. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.08	.05	.13*	.22**	.11	.18**	.00	.03	.07	.17**	.11	.17**
49. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.01	.04	-.00	.03	.04	.10	-.08	.01	.02	-.00	.04	.10
Variable Names	46	47	48	49								
46. Life Satisfaction	--											
47. Relationship Happiness	.20**	--										
48. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.22**	.61**	--									
49. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.06	.31**	.37**	--								

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.2.5.3.2. Hypothesis 1b: Phenomenological ratings for personal life stories would be positively related to phenomenological ratings for vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1b regarding the similarities between phenomenological ratings for personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations. Findings concerning the valence ratings supported our hypothesis: Personal low point valence was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious low point valence ($r = .19, p < .01$). In addition, personal high point valence was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point valence ($r = .20, p < .01$). Also, personal turning point valence was significantly and positively related to vicarious turning point valence ($r = .24, p < .01$).

The hypothesis regarding vividness ratings was also supported. Personal low point vividness was significantly and positively correlated with vicarious low point vividness ($r = .14, p < .05$). In addition, personal high point vividness was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point vividness ($r = .27, p < .01$). Also, personal turning point vividness was significantly and positively related to vicarious turning point vividness ($r = .12, p < .05$). Overall, these results replicated the findings regarding Hypothesis 1b of Study 2, except for the correlation between personal low point vividness and vicarious low point vividness. While in Study 2, the association between personal and vicarious low point vividness was not significant, we obtained a significant correlation in Study 3.

4.2.5.3.3. Hypothesis 1c: Autobiographical memory functions of personal life stories would be positively related to autobiographical memory functions of vicarious life stories.

We tested hypothesis 1c regarding the similarities between functions of autobiographical memory ratings in personal and vicarious life stories with bivariate correlations.

Findings concerning the social function ratings partially supported our hypothesis: While the correlation between personal low point and vicarious low point social

function was not significant ($r = .04, p > .05$), the associations between personal high point and vicarious high point social function ($r = .25, p < .01$), and personal turning point and vicarious turning point social function ($r = .24, p < .01$) were significant.

Findings regarding directive function supported our hypothesis: Personal low point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious low point directive function ($r = .15, p < .05$). Additionally, personal high point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious high point directive function ($r = .33, p < .01$). Likewise, personal turning point directive function was significantly and positively associated with vicarious turning point directive function ($r = .19, p < .01$).

Findings concerning the self function ratings partially supported our hypothesis: There was a significant correlation between personal high point and vicarious high point self function ($r = .18, p < .01$). However, the associations between personal low point and vicarious low point self function ($r = .12, p = .06$), and personal turning point and vicarious turning point self function ($r = .10, p = .12$) were not significant.

Overall, these findings partially replicated Hypothesis 1b from Study 2. In Study 2, personal narratives' social, directive, and self function ratings were significantly correlated with their vicarious counterparts. However, in Study 3, we did not obtain a significant correlation between social function ratings for low point narratives and self function ratings for low point and turning point narratives.

4.2.5.3.4. Hypothesis 2a: Personal life stories would be more coherent than vicarious life stories.

We tested the hypothesis concerning differences between personal and vicarious life stories regarding narrative coherence using paired-sample t-tests. Findings supported the hypothesis: Personal low point narratives ($M = 6.40, SD = 1.96$) were more coherent than vicarious low point narratives ($M = 5.09, SD = 1.75$), $t(234) = 9.43, p < .001$. Additionally, personal high point narratives ($M = 5.73, SD = 1.83$) were more coherent than vicarious high point narratives ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.80$), $t(225) = 9.45, p < .001$. Likewise, personal turning point narratives ($M = 5.58, SD = 2.20$) were more coherent than vicarious turning point narratives ($M = 4.51, SD = 1.90$), $t(227) = 7.17,$

$p < .001$. These results fully replicated the findings of Study 2 concerning Hypothesis 2a. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 18.

4.2.5.3.5. Hypothesis 2b: Phenomenological characteristics of personal life stories would be rated higher than phenomenological characteristics of vicarious life stories.

We employed paired-sample t-tests to test the hypothesis on differences in phenomenological ratings across personal and vicarious life stories. Findings partially supported the hypothesis regarding valence. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 18.

Personal high point valence rating ($M = 9.41$, $SD = .92$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point valence rating ($M = 8.67$, $SD = 1.76$), $t(225) = 6.05$, $p < .001$. However, the differences between personal low point valence ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 2.89$) and vicarious low point valence ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 2.87$), $t(234) = -1.31$, $p > .05$; and personal turning point valence ($M = 6.74$, $SD = 3.23$) and vicarious turning point valence ($M = 6.61$, $SD = 3.31$), $t(227) = .45$, $p > .05$ were not significant.

Findings supported the hypothesis regarding vividness. Personal low point vividness ($M = 8.94$, $SD = 1.65$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point narratives ($M = 7.20$, $SD = 2.15$), $t(234) = 10.36$, $p < .001$. Likewise, personal high point vividness ($M = 9.16$, $SD = 1.34$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point vividness ($M = 7.52$, $SD = 2.36$), $t(225) = 10.32$, $p < .001$. Finally, personal turning point vividness ($M = 8.69$, $SD = 1.76$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point vividness ($M = 7.46$, $SD = 2.38$), $t(227) = 6.67$, $p < .001$. Overall, these findings fully replicated the findings of Study 2 concerning Hypothesis 2b.

4.2.5.3.6. Hypothesis 2c: Functions of autobiographical memory for personal life stories would be rated higher than functions of autobiographical memory for vicarious life stories.

We tested the hypothesis concerning differences between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of functions of autobiographical memory using paired-sample t-tests.

Findings supported the hypothesis. Details regarding t-tests are summarized in Table 18.

Regarding social functions, personal low point social function ($M = 3.49, SD = 1.43$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point social function ($M = 2.17, SD = 1.33$), $t(234) = 10.56, p < .001$. In addition, personal high point social function ($M = 3.65, SD = 1.37$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point social function ($M = 2.57, SD = 1.45$), $t(225) = 9.30, p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point social function ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.15$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point social function ($M = 2.80, SD = 1.54$), $t(227) = 13.06, p < .001$.

Concerning directive functions, personal low point directive function ($M = 3.48, SD = 1.37$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point directive function ($M = 2.65, SD = 1.25$), $t(234) = 7.39, p < .001$. In addition, personal high point directive function ($M = 3.70, SD = 1.32$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point directive function ($M = 2.50, SD = 1.41$), $t(225) = 11.40, p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point directive function ($M = 4.03, SD = 1.29$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point directive function ($M = 2.91, SD = 1.47$), $t(227) = 9.63, p < .001$.

In terms of self functions, personal low point self function ($M = 3.87, SD = 1.26$) was significantly higher than vicarious low point self function ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.32$), $t(234) = 10.291, p < .001$. In addition, personal high point self function ($M = 4.12, SD = 1.01$) was significantly higher than vicarious high point self function ($M = 2.85, SD = 1.46$), $t(225) = 11.74, p < .001$. Similarly, personal turning point self function ($M = 4.31, SD = 1.05$) was significantly higher than vicarious turning point self function ($M = 3.00, SD = 1.46$), $t(227) = 11.51, p < .001$. Taken together, these findings fully replicated the findings of Study 2.

Table 18. Paired-sample t-tests for narrative coherence, phenomenological ratings, and functions of autobiographical memory

Variable	Memory Type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Narrative Coherence Low Point	Personal	235	6.40	1.96	9.43	<.001
	Vicarious	235	5.09	1.75		

Table 18. (continued)

Narrative Coherence High Point	Personal	226	5.73	1.83	9.45	<.001
	Vicarious	226	4.45	1.80		
Narrative Coherence Turning Point	Personal	228	5.58	2.20	7.17	<.001
	Vicarious	228	4.51	1.90		
Valence Low Point	Personal	235	3.35	2.89	-1.31	.189
	Vicarious	235	3.67	2.87		
Valence High Point	Personal	226	9.41	.95	6.05	<.001
	Vicarious	226	8.67	1.76		
Valence Turning Point	Personal	228	6.74	3.23	.45	.647
	Vicarious	228	6.61	3.31		
Vividness Low Point	Personal	235	8.94	1.65	10.36	<.001
	Vicarious	235	7.20	2.21		
Vividness High Point	Personal	226	9.16	1.34	10.32	<.001
	Vicarious	226	7.52	2.36		
Vividness Turning Point	Personal	228	8.69	1.76	6.67	<.001
	Vicarious	228	7.46	2.38		
Social Function Low Point	Personal	235	3.49	1.43	10.56	<.001
	Vicarious	235	2.17	1.33		
Social Function High Point	Personal	226	3.65	1.37	9.30	<.001
	Vicarious	226	2.57	1.45		
Social Function Turning Point	Personal	228	4.27	1.15	13.06	<.001
	Vicarious	228	2.80	1.54		
Directive Function Low Point	Personal	235	3.48	1.37	7.32	<.001
	Vicarious	235	2.65	1.25		
Directive Function High Point	Personal	226	3.70	1.32	11.40	<.001
	Vicarious	226	2.50	1.41		
Directive Function Turning Point	Personal	228	4.03	1.29	9.63	<.001
	Vicarious	228	2.91	1.47		

Table 18. (continued)

Self Function Low Point	Personal	235	3.87	1.26	10.29	<.001
	Vicarious	235	2.71	1.32		
Self Function High Point	Personal	226	4.12	1.01	11.74	<.001
	Vicarious	226	2.85	1.46		
Self Function Turning Point	Personal	228	4.31	1.05	11.51	<.001
	Vicarious	228	3.00	1.46		

4.2.5.3.7. Hypothesis 3a: Compared to men, women participants would have higher scores on narrative coherence of personal and vicarious life stories.

A series of hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to examine the role of gender (males = 0, and females = 1) on narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories. Since volume variables were significantly correlated with the narrative coherence variables, in the first step, we always included the relevant volume variable (i.e., if the dependent variable is personal low point narrative coherence, we included personal low point volume in the first step). Gender was always entered into the model in the second step. Findings supported our hypothesis that even after controlling for respective volume variables, being a woman was a significant positive predictor of narrative coherence across different memory types, except for vicarious turning point narrative coherence.

A significant regression equation was obtained $F(2, 234) = 52.11, p < .001$ for personal low point narrative coherence. Both personal low point volume ($\beta = .49, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .01]$), and gender ($\beta = .25, p < .001, 95\% [.58, 1.42]$) significantly predicted personal low point narrative coherence. Likewise, a significant regression equation was found for personal high point narrative coherence $F(2, 234) = 58.37, p < .001$. Both personal high point volume ($\beta = .53, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .02]$) and gender ($\beta = .21, p < .001, 95\% [.39, 1.16]$) significantly predicted personal high point narrative coherence. Similarly, a significant regression equation was found for personal high turning point narrative coherence $F(2, 231) = 86.97, p < .001$. Both personal turning

point volume ($\beta = .55, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .02]$) and gender ($\beta = .30, p < .001, 95\% [.92, 1.79]$) significantly predicted personal turning narrative coherence.

The same trend was observed for vicarious narratives. A significant regression equation was obtained for vicarious low point narratives, $F(2, 233) = 84.37, p < .001$. Both vicarious low point volume ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .02]$) and gender ($\beta = .12, p = .014, 95\% [.09, .77]$) significantly predicted vicarious low point narrative coherence. Additionally, a significant regression equation was found for vicarious high point narrative coherence $F(2, 223) = 80.51, p < .001$. Both vicarious high point volume ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) and gender ($\beta = .13, p = .008, 95\% [.12, .85]$) significantly predicted vicarious high point narrative coherence. Finally, a significant regression equation was found for the vicarious turning point narrative, $F(2, 227) = 152.78, p < .001$. While vicarious turning point volume was a significant predictor ($\beta = .74, p < .001, 95\% [.03, .04]$), gender was not significant ($\beta = .07, p = .07, 95\% [-.03, .62]$) of vicarious turning point narrative coherence.

Overall, these results replicated the findings of Study 2, except that while gender was not a significant predictor of vicarious high point narrative coherence in Study 2, in this study we found that it is significantly related to vicarious high point narrative coherence. In addition, while gender was a significant predictor of vicarious turning point narrative coherence in Study 2, in this study, we did not obtain such a result.

Table 19. Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for Narrative Coherence: Volume and Gender

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>b</i>	95% CI	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ² _{adj.}	ΔF
Personal Low Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.24	76.12
Volume Personal Low	.01	.00	.49	[.01, .01]	<.001		
Model 2						.30	21.47
Volume Personal Low	.01	.00	.49	[.01, .01]	<.001		
Gender	1.01	.21	.125	[.58, 1.44]	<.001		
Personal High Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.28	94.70
Volume Personal High	.01	.00	.53	[.01, .02]	<.001		

Table 19. (continued)

Model 2						.32	15.99
Volume Personal	.01	.00	.63	[.01, .02]	<.001		
High							
Gender	.78	.19	.21	[.39, 1.16]	<.001		
Personal Turning							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.33	116.75
Volume Personal	.02	.00	.57	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Turning							
Model 2						.42	38.37
Volume Personal	.02	.00	.55	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Turning							
Gender	1.35	.21	.30	[.92, 1.79]	<.001		
Vicarious Low							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.40	159.05
Volume Vicarious	.02	.00	.63	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Low							
Model 2						.41	6.17
Volume Vicarious	.02	.00	.62	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Low							
Gender	.43	.17	.12	[.09, .74]	.014		
Vicarious High							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.39	149.79
Volume Vicarious	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
High							
Model 2						.41	7.13
Volume Vicarious	.03	.00	.62	[.02, .03]	<.001		
High							
Gender	.49	.18	.13	[.12, .85]	.008		
Vicarious Turning							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.56	299.47
Volume Vicarious	.03	.00	.75	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Turning							
Model 2						.57	3.20
Volume Vicarious	.03	.00	.74	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Turning							
Gender	.29	.16	.07	[-.03, .62]	.07		

4.2.5.3.8. Exploratory findings on the role of gender on phenomenological ratings of personal and vicarious life stories.

In Study 2, gender was not significantly related to any of the phenomenological ratings, which are single-item follow up questions for valance and vividness, for

personal and vicarious life stories; thus, we did not propose a hypothesis, but tested its role exploratorily. Similarly, in Study 3, gender (males = 0, females = 1) was not significantly related to phenomenological ratings, except for personal turning point valence ($r = -.15, p < .05$). To better understand the nature of the significant association, we conducted an independent-samples t-test. According to the results, mean difference between men's ($M = 6.77, SD = 3.27$), and women's ($M = 6.49, SD = 3.34$), valence scores did not reach significance, $t(228) = .647, p = .58$.

4.2.5.3.9. Exploratory findings on the role of gender on functions of autobiographical memory ratings for personal and vicarious life stories.

In Study 2, gender was not significantly related to any of the autobiographical memory function ratings for personal and vicarious life stories; thus, we did not propose a hypothesis, but tested its role exploratorily. Similarly, in Study 3, gender (males = 0, females = 1) was not significantly related to autobiographical functions, except for personal turning point directive function ($r = -.16, p < .01$), and vicarious low point directive function ($r = -.15, p < .05$). We conducted independent-samples t-tests to further investigate gender differences in these two variables. According to the results, men's ($M = 4.24, SD = 1.13$) ratings for personal turning point directive function was significantly higher than women's ratings ($M = 3.83, SD = 1.39$), $t(232) = 2.46, p = .02$. Likewise, men's ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.24$) ratings for vicarious low point directive function was significantly higher than women's ratings ($M = 2.46, SD = 1.23$), $t(234) = 2.46, p = .01$.

4.2.5.3.10. Exploratory findings on the role of gender on reasons for sharing vicarious memories.

The reasons why participants' partners shared vicarious past experiences were coded into six mutually exclusive categories: since the story was emotionally charged, because the narrator asked, for no reason, to seek/provide support, to sustain/enhance intimacy, and to share personal history, Frequencies of reasons for different narrative points across genders are presented in Table 20.

Regarding reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, 44.9% of ($n = 106$) of the responses were coded into to share personal history, which was followed by to

sustain/enhance intimacy category, with 21.2% ($n = 50$). Additionally, 16.5% ($n = 39$) of the responses were coded into to seek/provide support, while 12.3% ($n = 29$) of them indicated since the story was emotionally charged category. In addition, 3.8% ($n = 9$) of the answers were grouped under for no reason, whereas 1.3% ($n = 3$) were coded into because the narrator asked category. According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 236) = 7.33, p = .19$.

Regarding sharing vicarious high point memories, 35% ($n = 79$) of the responses were coded into since the story was emotionally charged, which was followed by to share personal history with 34.1% ($n = 77$). In addition, 13.7% ($n = 31$) of the answers were coded into to sustain/enhance intimacy. While 10.2% ($n = 23$) of the responses were grouped under the for no reason category, 4.4% ($n = 10$) were coded into to seek/provide support. Finally, 2.7% ($n = 6$) of the responses indicated because the narrator asked. According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 226) = 5.17, p = .39$.

Concerning reasons for sharing vicarious turning point memories, 53.9% ($n = 124$) of the answers were coded to share personal history, followed by to sustain/enhance intimacy with 17.0% ($n = 39$). While 10.0% ($n = 23$) of the responses indicated for no reason category, 7.0% ($n = 16$) of them pointed since the story was emotionally charged. In addition, 6.5% ($n = 15$) of the answers were grouped under because the narrator asked, whereas 5.7% ($n = 13$) of them were coded into to seek provide support. According to chi-square test results, there was no significant relation between gender and reasons for sharing vicarious low point memories, $\chi^2(5, 230) = 7.95, p = .15$.

4.2.5.3.11. Exploratory findings on the association between narrative coherence and psychosocial outcomes.

Bivariate correlations were tested for the association between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life story narratives and life satisfaction. In addition, we examined correlations between narrative coherence in vicarious life story narratives

and relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of other in the self variables. According to the results, life satisfaction was not significantly related to narrative coherence in personal and vicarious narratives. Likewise, narrative coherence in vicarious narratives were not significantly associated with relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of other in the self. Still, we ran a series of exploratory hierarchical regression analyses to better understand the role of these variables together. Findings of these exploratory analyses are presented in the supplementary material.

4.2.6. Discussion

The current study was designed as a replication of Study 2. As in Study 2, in this study, we tested the similarities and differences between narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and autobiographical memory functions of romantic couples' personal and vicarious life stories. In addition, we investigated the role of gender on these memory characteristics and reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Finally, we exploratorily tested the association between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life story narratives and life satisfaction, and narrative coherence in vicarious life story narratives and relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of other in the self. To avoid redundancy, in this section findings of Study 3 was discussed in relation to Study 2. A comprehensive discussion of findings of all studies were presented in general discussion.

The results regarding the similarities between study variables across personal and vicarious life stories replicated the findings of Study 2. We found that narrative coherence in personal life stories were positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories. Similarly, valence and vividness ratings of personal life stories were positively correlated with their vicarious counterparts. However, we obtained partial replication for the similarities between memory functions. While findings regarding directive functions fully replicated the Study 2, for social function we found that the associations were significant for high point and turning point narratives. In addition, we only obtained a significant association for low point narratives for the self

function. It is important to note that, in Study 2, we collected data from two different age groups (18-23 years and 28-33 years), but in this study, all participants were aged between 18-23 years. This change in sample characteristics might be one possible explanation for the partial replication of memory functions. Nevertheless, in general, these results supported the findings of Study 2 and reconfirmed that how individuals remember their personal past is closely linked to how they recall memories of their romantic partners (Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018).

Concerning differences between study variables across personal and vicarious life stories, we obtained the exact results as in Study 2. Personal life stories were significantly more coherent than vicarious life stories. Likewise, participants rated personal memories as more vivid than vicarious memories for all memory types. Additionally, they rated the valence of personal high point memories higher than that of vicarious high point memories. As in Study 2, although it was in the hypothesized direction, the difference in valence ratings for low point and turning point memories did not reach significance. Furthermore, for each memory type, participants rated social, directive, and self memory functions higher for personal life stories compared to vicarious life stories.

Regarding the gender differences, as in Study 2, we found that being a woman predicted more coherent narratives for personal life stories and vicarious low point narratives. Unlike Study 2, in this study, being a woman was associated with higher coherence in vicarious high point narratives, while the association was lost in vicarious turning point narratives. These results showed that gender differences for personal memories and vicarious low point memories might be more robust compared to vicarious high point and turning point memories. Still, the current study supported the previous literature in terms of women's advantage in producing more coherent narratives (Fivush et al., 2012; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019).

Overall, the findings also supported Study 2 in terms of the lack of gender differences in the phenomenological characteristics and functions of autobiographical memory. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, contrary to our expectations and the literature,

in this study, we found that men's ratings for personal turning point directive function and vicarious low point directive function were significantly higher than women's ratings. Given the lack of significant results for the remaining memory function variables, these findings should be interpreted cautiously and tested in future studies. Moreover, as in Study 2, in this study we did not observe gender differences in reasons for sharing vicarious memories. Although this finding is not in line with the relevant literature (Bakir-Demir, 2022), it replicated the results of Study 2. As discussed in Study 2, the lack of significant results might be due to the sample characteristics. Future studies should retest the role of gender in reasons for sharing vicarious memories with different samples.

Furthermore, in this study, we exploratorily tested the association between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious narratives and life satisfaction and found that they were not significantly related to each other. Previous literature provided mixed results regarding the role of narrative coherence in overall well-being. While some studies showed that greater narrative coherence is related to higher well-being (Baerger & McAdams, 1999; Booker et al., 2020; Waters & Fivush, 2015; Vanaken et al., 2022), other studies indicated that narrative coherence is not related to well-being (Fivush et al., 2003; Vanderveren et al., 2019). In this sense, the relationship between narrative coherence and well-being might be more complex, and there could be potential factors influencing the nature of the association, such as age (Chen et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2020). Considering this, future studies should continue to examine these two variables across different samples and memory contexts.

Finally, we found that narrative coherence in vicarious narratives was not related to romantic relationship-related variables, namely relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of the other in the self. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate the associations between these variables and narrative coherence in vicarious life story narratives for romantic partners. Despite the lack of scientific literature, which challenges interpreting findings, one possible explanation might be that different features of life story narratives, such as motivational themes or various aspects of autobiographical reasoning, could be more

critical for relationship-related variables. Future studies should consider these factors while examining vicarious memories in the romantic relationship context.

Taken together, this study supported Study 2 by replicating the findings regarding the similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory. In addition, the current study provided insight for the role of gender in different features of personal and vicarious life story narratives and reasons for sharing vicarious memories.

Table 20. Reasons for sharing vicarious memories across genders

Memory Type	Coding Categories	Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Vicarious Low	Since the story was emotionally charged	11	9.3%	18	15.3%	29	12.3%
	Because the narrator asked	2	1.7%	1	0.8%	3	1.3%
	For no reason	7	5.9%	2	1.7%	9	3.8%
	To seek/provide support	16	13.6%	23	19.5%	39	16.5%
	To share personal history	53	44.9%	53	44.9%	106	44.9%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	29	24.6%	21	17.8%	50	21.2%
Vicarious High	Since the story was emotionally charged	34	30.6%	45	39.1%	79	35%
	Because the narrator asked	4	3.6%	2	1.7%	6	2.7%
	For no reason	14	12.6%	9	7.8%	23	10.2%
	To seek/provide support	7	6.3%	3	2.6%	10	4.4%
	To share personal history	36	32.4%	41	35.7%	77	34.1%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	16	14.4%	15	13.0%	31	13.7%
Vicarious Turning	Since the story was emotionally charged	9	8.0%	7	6.0%	16	7.0%
	Because the narrator asked	9	8.0%	6	5.1%	15	6.5%
	For no reason	16	14.2%	7	6.0%	23	10.0%
	To seek/provide support	8	7.1%	5	4.3%	13	5.7%
	To share personal history	53	46.9%	71	60.7%	124	53.9%
	To sustain/enhance intimacy	18	15.9%	21	17.9%	39	17.0%

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION

5.1. Recap of the Current Studies

This dissertation aimed to investigate the similarities and differences between personal life stories and vicarious life stories for romantic partners. To achieve this, three independent studies were conducted. In the first study, thematic similarities across personal and vicarious low point, high point, and turning point life story narratives were investigated. Additionally, the relationship status' (dating vs. married) and its association with the main themes and reasons for sharing vicarious memories were examined. Building on the findings of the first study, the second study explored the similarities and differences between romantic couples' personal and vicarious life stories in terms of narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory. The role of gender in these memory characteristics and the reasons for sharing vicarious memories were also considered. Furthermore, the second study examined the role of age group (emerging adulthood vs. young adulthood) on narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life story narratives. Finally, since Study 2 provided the first evidence regarding the tested research question for the first time within the Turkish cultural context and in the context of romantic relationships, the third study was designed as a replication of the second study. Beyond replication, Study 3 also examined the association between narrative coherence in personal life stories and life satisfaction; and the association of narrative coherence in vicarious life stories for romantic partners to relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of the other in the self, respectively. By exploratorily testing these associations, we aimed to provide a basis for understanding complex relations between narrative coherence and psychosocial

outcomes by exploratorily testing associations between the above-mentioned variables.

5.2. Similarities Between Personal and Vicarious Life Stories

Previous research showed that the way we remember our personal past is closely linked to how we remember vicarious memories for significant others (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015). Likewise, in the current studies, we observed similarities in terms of themes, narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics, and functions of autobiographical memory across personal and vicarious life stories.

Concerning thematic similarities, despite the order of personal and vicarious life stories being counterbalanced, we found that themes in personal life story narratives were parallel to vicarious life story narratives. It can be argued that focusing on similar themes in personal and vicarious life stories might stem from participants' motivation to increase their sense of closeness and similarity with their romantic partners. In this regard, recalling similar events for personal and vicarious life stories might enhance the romantic bond (Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018).

Furthermore, as hypothesized, the results of Study 2 and Study 3 indicated that narrative coherence in personal life stories was positively related to narrative coherence in vicarious life stories. Individuals who recalled their low point, high point, and turning point narratives in a coherent manner tended to do so while narrating respective vicarious memories for their romantic partners. To the best of our knowledge, no study has compared overall narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories. Nevertheless, a previous study showed that thematic coherence in personal life stories predicts thematic coherence in vicarious life stories (Yenen, 2022). In this regard, the current dissertation supported this previous study and uniquely contributed to the literature.

In addition, supporting our hypotheses, the findings of Study 2 and Study 3 revealed that phenomenological ratings in terms of valence and vividness for personal life

stories were positively associated with those ratings for vicarious life stories, with the only exception being the vividness for low point narratives in Study 2. In this regard, the current studies replicated previous research showing phenomenological similarities between personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pond & Patterson, 2020).

Finally, the results of Study 2 showed that social, directive, and self function ratings in personal life stories were positively associated with their vicarious counterparts. Likewise, in Study 3, we found that directive function ratings for all narrative types, social function ratings for high point and turning point narratives, and self function ratings for low point narratives were significantly correlated across personal and vicarious life stories. Concerning the partial replication of social and self function ratings in Study 3, the change in sample characteristics might be one possible explanation. In Study 2, data were collected from two different age groups (18-23 years and 28-33 years). However, in Study 3, all participants were aged between 18-23 years. This change in sample characteristics might have resulted in the partial replication of the findings. Nevertheless, these results supported the previous literature showing similarities in the functionality of personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015).

5.3. Differences Between Personal and Vicarious Life Stories

Earlier studies identified specific differences between personal and vicarious memories (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015; Pond & Patterson, 2020). Supporting the literature, in the current studies, we found differences in narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics and functions of autobiographical memory in personal and vicarious life story narratives.

Study 2 and Study 3 offered the first evidence demonstrating that personal life stories are more coherent than vicarious life stories across different memory types. Likewise, in Study 2 and Study 3, our results indicated that participants rated their personal memories as more vivid than their vicarious memories for low point, high point, and turning point narratives. Additionally, they gave higher valence ratings to personal

high point memories compared to vicarious high point memories. These results align with previous research showing that personal memories tend to have greater vividness and emotional intensity (Pillemer et al., 2015; Pond & Patterson, 2020).

However, despite the average scores being in the expected direction, there was no significant difference in valence ratings between personal and vicarious low point and turning point memories in Study 2 and Study 3. In low point memories, participants shared highly challenging life experiences for both themselves and their partners. Considering the intimate nature of romantic relationships, participants might have considered their partners' low points as equally challenging as their own. The finding regarding the valence of turning point narratives might be due to the fact that these narratives include a mix of positive and negative experiences. Participants may have described a positive turning point for themselves but a negative one for their partners, or vice versa, which could confound the comparison of valence ratings.

Moreover, according to the results of Study 2 and Study 3, participants gave higher ratings to social, directive, and self memory functions for personal life stories compared to vicarious life stories, across all memory types. In this sense, both Study 2 and Study 3 partially supported the findings of Pillemer et al. (2015), where personal memories were found to be more functional only in terms of directive function. However, in complete support of the study by Pond and Patterson (2020), the current studies replicated the findings that personal memories are more functional than vicarious memories.

5.4. Gender Differences in Personal and Vicarious Life Story Narratives

Earlier studies indicated potential role of gender in narrative coherence (Fivush et al., 2012; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019), phenomenological characteristics (Alea & Vick, 2010; Boyacioglu & Akfirat, 2014; Gryzman & Fivush, 2016), functions of autobiographical memory (Bluck & Alea, 2009; Harris et al., 2014; Liao et al., 2015; Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Maki et al., 2015; Pillemer et al., 2003; Vranic et al., 2018), and reasons for sharing vicarious memories (Bakir-Demir, 2022).

As hypothesized, we found that even after controlling for volume of narratives, being a woman was associated with more coherent narratives, both for personal and vicarious life stories, except for vicarious high point memory in Study 2, which was marginally significant ($p = .05$), and vicarious turning point memory in Study 3. To the best of our knowledge, the current studies provided first evidence on gender differences in narrative coherence of vicarious life story narratives. In addition, these results supported the previous research showing women's advantage in producing coherent narratives. Considering the marginally significant association in vicarious high point in Study 2, and insignificant association for vicarious turning point in Study 3, it might be speculated that gender differences in personal narratives and vicarious low point narratives might be more robust compared to vicarious high point and turning point narratives. Future studies should continue to investigate gender differences in narrative coherence in the context of vicarious memories.

Despite previous research showing that women report more vivid and emotional memories than men (Alea & Vick, 2010; Pohl et al., 2005; Ross & Holmberg, 1990), and contrary to our hypotheses, in Study 2 and Study 3, gender was not significantly related to any of the phenomenological ratings. Regarding gender differences in the functions of autobiographical memory, earlier studies revealed mixed results. While some studies indicated gender differences in favor of women (Maki et al., 2015; Pillemer et al., 2003; Vranic et al., 2018), other studies indicated no gender differences (Bluck & Alea, 2009; Harris et al., 2014; Liao et al., 2015; Lind & Thomsen, 2018). Supporting the mixed nature of previous research, gender was not related to any of the memory functions in Study 2, and it was not associated with the majority of functions in Study 3. Nevertheless, the results of Study 3 indicated that men's ratings for personal turning point directive function and vicarious low point directive function were significantly higher than women's ratings. According to a systematic review (Grysmen & Hudson, 2013), the absence of a significant gender effect is a common pattern for scale-based ratings in autobiographical memory research. To better understand gender differences, it might be more effective to examine how participants describe or write about personal past events, as these methods could reveal cognitive processes that scale-based ratings might miss. Regarding the men's advantage in personal turning point directive function and vicarious low point directive function

ratings in Study 3, men might have written narratives that they referred to for lessons learned. Of course, considering the insignificant results for the remaining function variables, these findings should be interpreted cautiously.

Previous research shown that when sharing vicarious memories, women often mention emotional reasons more frequently than men, who are more likely to cite teaching purposes (Bakir-Demir, 2022). However, in Study 2 and Study 3, we did not find any gender differences in the reasons for sharing these memories. This lack of difference might be due to the nature of romantic relationships differing from family contexts. Also, the lack of gender difference could be attributed to the sample characteristics of the current studies, which consisted of highly educated emerging adults and young adults. These factors may have masked potential gender differences. Future research should explore gender differences in reasons for sharing vicarious memories among a more varied population.

5.5. Personal and Vicarious Life Stories and Age Group

Previous research revealed that life story narratives gradually develop starting from the teenage years into emerging and young adulthood. During emerging and young adulthood, individuals are usually motivated to produce full-fledged life story narratives due to social changes in their lives and societal expectations (McAdams & Olson, 2010; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Habermas & Paha, 2001; Habermas & Silveira, 2008). Considering the gradual development of life stories and the social nature of emerging adulthood and young adulthood, in Study 2, we explored whether being in emerging adulthood (18-23 years) or young adulthood (28-33 years) predicts narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories.

The results revealed the significant role of age group on narrative coherence only for personal turning point narratives. It was found that, after controlling for volume, being in emerging adulthood significantly predicted higher narrative coherence. One explanation for this finding could be that the emerging adults' age group was in one of the most transitional periods of their lives, as they had either newly started college or were about to graduate. Given these transitional periods, they might have provided

more coherent narratives for personal turning points. Considering the lack of research in this regard, future research should investigate narrative coherence across different developmental periods.

5.6. Personal and Vicarious Life Stories and Psychosocial Outcomes

Earlier studies revealed mixed results concerning the relationship between narrative coherence and well-being. Some studies indicated that narrative coherence is positively related to well-being (Baerger & McAdams, 1999; Booker et al., 2020; Waters & Fivush, 2015; Vanaken et al., 2022), whereas others showed no significant relation between narrative coherence and well-being (Fivush et al., 2003; Vanderveren et al., 2019). Following this line of research, in Study 3, we explored the association between narrative coherence in personal and vicarious narratives and life satisfaction. The results revealed that narrative coherence was not related to life satisfaction. Considering the lack of significant association and mixed findings in the literature, it can be argued that the relationship between narrative coherence and life satisfaction might be complex and that the association could be moderated by other individual factors such as age (Chen et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2020) or gender (Reese et al., 2017; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019). Alternatively, the association between narrative coherence and well-being might be evident with different conceptualizations of well-being, such as better coping with stress (Booker et al., 2020) or social well-being (Waters & Fivush, 2015). Future studies should continue to examine the interplay between narrative coherence and well-being by considering potential individual factors and different conceptualizations of well-being.

In addition, we explored the association between narrative coherence in vicarious narratives and romantic relationship-related variables, namely relationship happiness, perceived partner responsiveness, and inclusion of the other in the self. The results revealed that none of these variables were related to narrative coherence. It might be speculated that different features of life story narratives, such as motivational themes or various aspects of autobiographical reasoning, could be more relevant for relationship-related variables. Given the lack of prior literature knowledge, there is a

need for future studies investigating different aspects of vicarious narratives for romantic partners and romantic relationship-level outcomes.

5.7. Contributions and Strengths

The current dissertation contributed to the literature in several ways. First, it examined personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples for the first time within the Turkish cultural context. Across three studies, the findings validated the similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories of romantic couples using a sample of Turkish participants. Second, to the best of our knowledge, the current studies were the first to examine the similarities and differences in narrative coherence between personal and vicarious life stories. The findings showed that although narrative coherence is similar across both types of stories, personal narratives are more coherent than vicarious ones.

Third, the current studies contributed to the literature by demonstrating similarities and differences in the phenomenological characteristics and functions of autobiographical memory ratings for personal and vicarious life stories. The findings replicated previous research, such that while personal and vicarious life stories are similar, personal memories are rated higher in phenomenology and are more functional than vicarious memories. Furthermore, the studies elevated research on gender differences in autobiographical memory. These studies replicated previous findings that women produce more coherent narratives. Additionally, to the best of our knowledge, this research provided the first evidence of gender differences in narrative coherence in the context of vicarious memories. The lack of gender differences in the phenomenological characteristics, functions of autobiographical memory, and reasons for sharing vicarious memories revealed the complex interplay between gender and autobiographical memory. Thus, future research should continue to explore these factors across different samples.

Regarding methodological strengths, the investigation of personal and vicarious life stories across three distinct studies offered a comprehensive approach to the relevant literature. The first study presented qualitative evidence of similarities between

personal and vicarious life stories. Study 2 employed a mixed-method design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative elements. Finally, Study 3, as a replication of Study 2, provided a robust framework for understanding personal and vicarious life stories in the context of romantic relationships for the first time in a comprehensive fashion, to our knowledge.

5.8. Limitations and Future Directions

The current dissertation has several limitations. First, the studies consisted of participants with high educational backgrounds. In Study 1, majority of the participants were university graduates, while in Study 2, participants were either university students or university graduates. Similarly, in Study 3, all participants were university students. Overall, these sample characteristics restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should expand this line of research to include more diverse sample characteristics, such as populations with different age groups and lower educational backgrounds.

In addition, although having a replication study provides a more robust approach to the findings, the correlational nature of the data is another limitation. Future studies should consider conducting longitudinal studies to understand the stability and change of similarities and differences between personal and vicarious life stories.

Finally, life story narratives were collected in written format. Previous research showed that individuals are likely to provide more comprehensive narratives in verbal assessments (Bakir-Demir et al., 2021). Thus, future studies should replicate the findings with a verbal assessment methodology.

5.9. Conclusion

Recent theoretical accounts suggest that autobiographical memory is not solely comprised of personally experienced event memories; rather, it encompasses personal experiences as well as specific and semantic knowledge learned from others (Fivush & Grysman, 2023; Pillemer et al., 2024). Thus, personal and vicarious memories stored within the autobiographical memory network may operate similarly, leading to

certain similarities in the way we remember both personally experienced and acquired memories (Pillemer et al., 2015). Nevertheless, given the inherent connection between self and memory (Conway, 2005), and human's inclination to remember self-related information (Klein & Loftus, 1988; Markus, 1977; İlgün, 2024) it is reasonable to expect some differences between personal and vicarious memories.

In line with these arguments, findings of the current studies revealed certain similarities and differences across personal and vicarious narratives. Narrative coherence, phenomenological characteristics of valence and vividness, and functions of autobiographical memory in personal narratives were positively associated with their vicarious counterparts. However, personal narratives were more coherent and rated higher on phenomenology and functions of autobiographical memory. In addition, the current studies revealed gender differences in narrative coherence in personal and vicarious life stories. Women participants provided more coherent narratives compared to men. Overall, the findings suggest that how we remember our personal past is closely linked to how we remember vicarious memories of significant others, particularly for romantic partners as examined by the current study.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

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15 MAYIS 2023

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Başak Şahin ACAR

Danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz Uzm. Psk. Serhan Yağmur İlgün'ün "*Romantik İlişkisi Olan Yetişkinlerin Kendilerine ve Partnerlerine Ait Yaşam Hikayesi Anılarının İncelenmesi*" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek 0281-ODTÜİAEK-2023 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN
Başkan

Prof. Dr. İ. Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Doç. Dr. Şerife SEVİNÇ
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Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
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Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

B. INFORMED CONSET FORM

Bu araştırma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikoloji Bölümü Gelişim Psikolojisi Anabilim Dalında doktora eğitimine devam eden Uzman Psikolog Yağmur İlgün tarafından, Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir? Bu araştırma romantik ilişkisi olan yetişkinlerin kendilerinin ve partnerlerinin hayatından bazı önemli olayları incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz? Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz sizden kendinizin ve partnerinizin hayatından öne çıkan üç olayı anlatmanız ve bazı ölçekleri yanıtladığınız istenecektir. Tüm bu sürecin ortalama 30 dakika kadar sürmesi beklenmektedir.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız? Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Çalışma sırasında sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmeyecektir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak, sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve yalnızca bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacaktır.

Katılımla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler: Çalışma, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulan sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmadan çekilme hakkına sahipsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı uygulayan kişiye, çalışmadan ayrılmak istediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz: Bu çalışmaya katılmayı Kabul ettiğiniz için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Araştırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Uzman Psikolog. Yağmur İlgün ya da Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin Acar ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

C. DEBRIEFING FORM

Bu araştırma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikoloji Bölümü bünyesindeki Gelişim Psikolojisi Anabilim Dalında doktora eğitimine devam eden Uzm. Psk. Yağmur İlgün tarafından, Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırmanın amacına dair bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Katılmış olduğunuz çalışmanın amacı romantik bir ilişkisi olan yetişkin kişilerin kendilerine ve partnerlerine ait hayat hikayesi anılarını nasıl anlattıklarını incelemektir. Bu kapsamda, sizden kendinizin ve partnerinizin hayatından bir çok olumlu, bir çok olumsuz, bir de dönüm noktası olan üçer olayı anlatmanız istenmiştir. Anlatmış olduğunuz anılar anlatım bütünlüğü bakımından incelenecektir. Ek olarak, anlatım bütünlüğü ve anıları takiben verdiğiniz cevapların, kişisel ve parter anıları için nasıl bir değişiklik gösterdiği istatistiksel analizlerle test edilecektir.

Araştırmanın amacına yönelik detaylı bilgilendirmenin katılımcıların araştırma sorularına verecekleri tepkileri etkileyebileceği düşünülerek, araştırmanın amacı çalışmanın sonuna kadar kısmen gizlenmiştir.

Bu çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz için tekrar teşekkür ederiz. Araştırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak ya da çalışmanın bulgularından haberdar olmak için Uzm. Psk. Yağmur İlgün ya da Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

D. EXAMPLES OF LIFE STORY NARRATIVES

A well-developed personal high point narrative example: “Since I was little boy, my biggest dream has been to become a scientist, and I always dreamed of pursuing graduate studies in the United States. When I completed my undergraduate education in 2016 in İstanbul, I applied for an international scholarship fund to pursue my master’s education, and I was awarded the scholarship in the same year. The day I found out I was selected for the scholarship; I was out having dinner with my family. Although I am not usually someone who can cry easily in front of others, I remember crying with joy when I received this news. During the preparation process for the scholarship, the psychosocial support of family was immense. Until the moment I learned that I had won the scholarship, I was very tense and anxious. From the moment I received the news (including the day I mentioned above), I felt great happiness and excitement. The moment I learned I was selected is a very positive and important moment for me. Because on one hand, the biggest dream I had since I was a little boy had come true, and on the other hand, the excitement for the education I would receive was very intense for me. Even now, whenever I feel tired or bad, I go back to that day, and it reminds me of who I am.”

A well-developed personal low narrative example: “On February 6, 2023, during the earthquake, my mother, my older sister, my younger sister, and I were in our home in Kahramanmaraş. Everything was very normal, it was a very normal night, but I woke up to the earthquake. Immediately, I opened the door so it wouldn't get stuck, and my family, we all waited together in the hallway for the earthquake to end. Since there are many earthquakes in the area, we knew what to do, but we had never experienced one this severe. At first, I was very scared, but then I was almost certain we were going to die, and the fear turned into mere disappointment. The screams and cries for help coming from the apartment had a huge impact on me. When the earthquake ended and we left the building, everyone in front of the apartment was crying. Everyone was trying to reach their loved ones. I only thought that I had to be strong and I couldn't cry at all. Later, I learned that my cousin had been pulled from the rubble in Hatay. My life changed completely after that day. No matter how hard I try, I can't forget the sounds I heard from the apartment during the earthquake. Whenever the topic of earthquakes comes up, I only think of those sounds, and I get very scared. After this incident, I couldn't sleep at night for about 5 months. I started to be afraid of normal days. Because that day was very normal, and if a day was very normal, I began to fear that something bad would happen to me. That's why I felt very happy when abnormal, silly things happened, convincing myself that nothing else bad would happen that day. Every night before going to bed, I think about what happened to me that day, and if the day was very normal, I often have many sleepless nights fearing an earthquake would happen at night. But because I have lived my life

since that day thinking that we can die at any moment, I try not to break anyone's heart and not to go to bed angry with my loved ones. Since that day, I believe it's best to make amends for all grudges in a timely manner.”

A well-developed personal turning point example: “My cousin is two years older than me. He was living in Konya and he came for a family visit. Last summer one evening, my cousin, our mutual friends, and I were invited to my uncle’s house in Mersin for dinner. Before 8:00 PM, I felt incredibly sleepy. I was on the verge of falling asleep right where I was, which had never happened to me before. I stayed not to be rude to my uncle’s family, otherwise, I would have gone home to sleep. We had dinner, and it was around 9:00 PM. My friends, my cousin, and I were supposed to go out after the dinner. I repeatedly said I couldn't go because I was very sleepy. My friend insisted, saying we wouldn't have another chance to get together like this, so I agreed to go. We finished dinner and got up. My mother was downstairs with my grandmother. I went to tell her I was going out, and she refused with a reaction I had never encountered before. When I insisted, she told me to talk to my father. In such situations, I usually call my father, and he tells me not to be too late. The same thing would have happened, but I didn't feel like calling him, so I didn't. I told my friends I couldn't go, and they left. I fell asleep at 9:30 PM that night. At 7:00 AM, I woke up to a scream. My mother came to my room and told me my cousin had an accident. She said the car had exploded due to a malfunction, and everyone inside, including my friends, was injured. We immediately went to the hospital; their condition was severe. We were very sad and scared. The only thing I couldn't get out of my mind was that I would have been in that car that night, and because I would have been sitting in the middle of the back seat, I would have taken the most damage. I somehow avoided this incident due to an unusual sleepiness and my family's reactions. I still get chills when I think about the possibility of being in that car.”

A well-developed vicarious high point example: “My partner's happiest moment was probably during the university year before we met. After the first year, which was online due to the pandemic, the second year, when we were able to attend school in person, and the new relationships and friendships she started at that time, must have been the highlight. She always says that starting university after spending years in her hometown of Burdur with almost no friends and feeling lonely was a significant improvement for her. She frequently talks about how she met two friends during that year who are now very close to her. Initially, she found people at the university to be cold and insincere, and she didn't find their behavior genuine. That changed when she met those two friends in the faculty’s canteen. They were also her classmates, and she describes how they started to bond while sitting at the same table in the canteen. She felt she saw a part of herself in them and finally found people with whom she could relate. She said she had never felt as happy as she did then and began to act more sincerely. These friendships continue to this day, and she expresses a strong fear of separating from them and returning to a state of isolation. She fears being alone and wants to avoid going back to that place.”

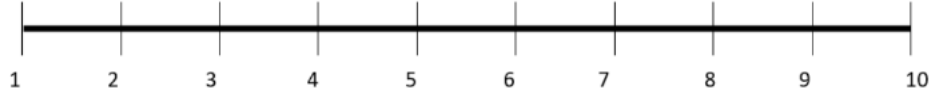
A well-developed vicarious low point example: “When her cat Lokum’s mother, Tahin, died. For several years, she had been feeding street cats in their garden. Tahin was one of them. However, due to Tahin's character and the bond they had, she loved Tahin so much that she wanted to bring Tahin into the house and take care of her there, but her mother didn't allow it. So she continued to feed Tahin and her kittens outside.

The kittens were still very young, not even a week old, and Tahin had left them. Normally, Tahin would leave and then return to nurse them. But this time, she hadn't returned after half an hour, then an hour, and by the evening, she still hadn't come back. They waited until it was dark and eventually accepted that Tahin had died and took the orphaned kittens into the house. After this event, she mourned Tahin for a long time and couldn't forget his beloved cat. Even though it has been about 7 years since the incident, her eyes still well up and his voice trembles when she talks about her dear cat. Since then, she has had a fear of losing loved ones and has mourned her cat for a long time."

A well-developed vicarious turning point example: "On the day the university exam results were announced, his father was called to the private tutoring center. The teachers there said, 'We know that he would receive the same score if he study for another year, but don't worry, his current score is enough for engineering schools, let make him apply to college this year.' My partner really hadn't studied for the exam, and his father insisted he had to start the university that year. However, my partner wanted to prepare for another year and get into his dream program and university, but his father, who would enroll him in the tutoring center and buy the books again, was very stressed and upset. While thinking about all this, his eldest sister called my partner. He explained the situation to his sister. His sister immediately sent money and said, 'Buy the books I mentioned, and I'll tutor you all summer.' Later, his sister also convinced their father. Indeed, she tutored him all year, and my partner achieved his goal. His eldest sister is ten years older than him but has always looked out for him like a mother. When he talks about his sister and this memory, he always smiles sincerely. While his father said he couldn't do it, his sister believed in him, valued him, and made an effort. His sister's call and help might be the biggest turning point in his life because otherwise, he would have studied a program and attended a school he didn't want, living with the negative effects for years. Now, he is satisfied with the univerity he graduated from and his workplace. I think this turning point transformed him into his current self—a confident, successful, and social person."

E. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

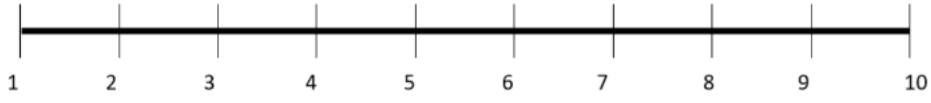
1. Kaç yaşındasınız?
2. Cinsiyetiniz:
3. Bu çalışmaya hangi şehirden katılıyorsunuz?
4. En son tamamladığınız eğitim seviyesi nedir?
5. Aşağıdaki cetvelde 1 en düşük, 10 en yüksek gelir seviyesini göstermektedir. İçinde yaşadığınız topluma kıyasla kendi gelir seviyenizi nerede görüyorsanız o sayıyı işaretleyin.



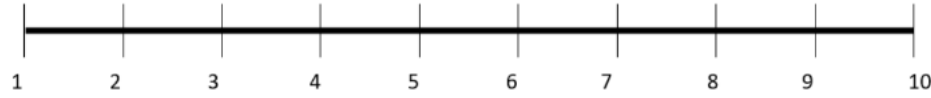
6. Aşağıdakilerden hangisi partnerinizle olan ilişki durumunuzu en iyi şekilde yansıtır?
 - () Devam eden romantik bir ilişkim var.
 - () Devam eden romantik bir ilişkim var ve partnerimle birlikte yaşıyorum.
 - () Devam eden romantik bir ilişkim var ve partnerimle ayrı şehirlerde yaşıyoruz.
7. Partnerinizle birlikteliğiniz ne kadar süredir devam ediyor? Ay cinsinden yazınız:

F. PHENEMENOLOGICAL CAHARACTERISTICS FOR PERSONAL AND VICARIOUS LIFE STORY NARRATIVES

1 çok olumsuz, 10 çok olumlu olmak üzere, bu anı sizin için ne kadar olumsuz ya da olumludur? Lütfen yanıtınızı aşağıdaki cetvelde gösterin.



1 hiç net değil, 10 çok net olmak üzere; anlattığınız bu olay sizin için ne kadar nettir (bu olayı gözünüzde ne kadar net canlandırabiliyorsunuz?) Lütfen yanıtınızı aşağıdaki cetvelde gösterin.



**G. FUNCTIONS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY FOR PERSONAL
LIFE STORY NARRATIVES**

	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Oldukça Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
Bu anım başkalarıyla olan sosyal ilişkilerimi etkiler.	1	2	3	4	5
Bu anım hayatımdaki problemlerimi çözmeme konusunda bana yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5
Bu anım kendimi daha iyi anlamam konusunda bana yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5

H. FUNCTIONS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY FOR VICARIOUS LIFE STORY NARRATIVES

Aşağıdaki her bir ifadeye ne derece katılıp katılmadığınızı işaretleyin.	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Oldukça Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
Partnerimin bu anısını hatırlamak başkalarıyla olan sosyal ilişkilerimi etkiliyor.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimin bu anısını hatırlamak hayatımdaki problemlerimi çözmeme konusunda bana yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimin bu anısını hatırlamak kendimi daha iyi anlamamı sağlıyor.	1	2	3	4	5

I. SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

Aşağıdaki her bir ifadeye ne derece katılıp katılmadığınızı işaretleyin.	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Oldukça Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
Pek çok açıdan ideale yakın bir yaşamım var.	1	2	3	4	5
Yaşam koşullarım mükemmeldir.	1	2	3	4	5
Yaşamım beni tatmin ediyor.	1	2	3	4	5
Şimdiye kadar, hayatta istediğim önemli şeyleri elde ettim.	1	2	3	4	5
Hayatımı bir daha yaşama şansım olsaydı, hemen hemen hiçbir şeyi değiştirmezdim.	1	2	3	4	5

J. RELATIONSHIP HAPPINESS SCALE

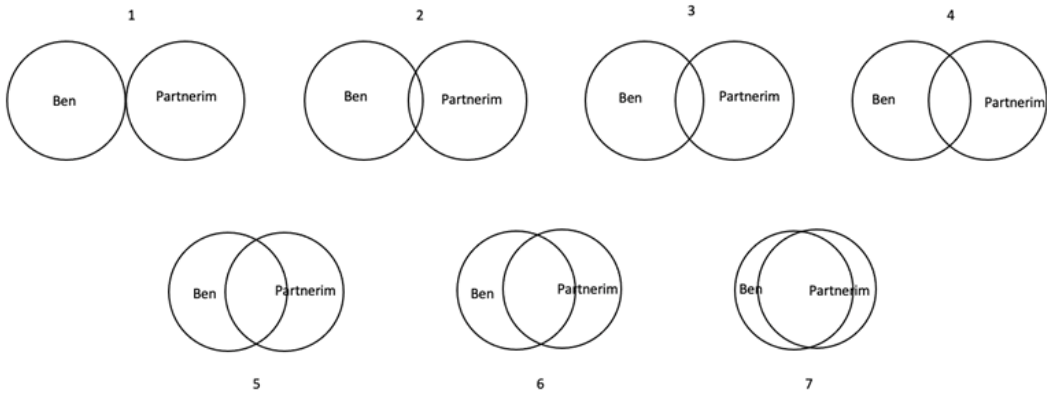
Aşağıdaki her bir ifadeye ne derece katılıp katılmadığınızı işaretleyin.	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Biraz Katılıyorum	Oldukça	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
Partnerimle iyi bir ilişkim var.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimle olan ilişkim beni mutlu ediyor.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimle ilişkim çok güçlü.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimle aramız iyidir.	1	2	3	4	5
Partnerimle kendimi gerçekten bir bütünün parçası gibi hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
Genel olarak ilişkimdeki her şeyden çok memnunum.	1	2	3	4	5

K. PERCEIVED PARTNER RESPONSIVENESS SCALE

Partnerim (eşim, sevgilim, nişanlım) çoğu zaman...	1 Hiç doğru değil	2	3 Biraz doğru	4	5 Kısmen doğru	6	7 Oldukça doğru	8	9 Tamamen doğru
nasıl biri olduğumu çok iyi bilir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
“gerçek ben”i görür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
iyi yönlerimi ve kusurlarımı, benim kendimde gördüğüm gibi görür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
söz konusu bensem yanılmaz.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
zayıf yönlerim de dahil her şeyimi takdir eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
beni iyi tanır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
iyisiyle kötüsüyle “gerçek ben”i oluşturan her şeye değer verir ve saygı gösterir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
çoğu zaman en iyi yönlerimi görür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ne düşündüğümün ve hissettiğim farkındadır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
beni anlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
beni gerçekten dinler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
bana olan sevgisini gösterir ve beni yüreklendirir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ne düşündüğümü ve hissettiğimi duymak ister.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
benimle birlikte bir şeyler yapmaya heveslidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
yetenek ve fikirlerime değer verir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
benimle aynı kafadadır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
bana saygı duyar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ihtiyaçlarıma duyarlıdır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

L. INCLUSION OF OTHER IN THE SELF SCALE

Aşağıdaki dairelerde ben kümesi sizi, partnerim kümesi ise sevgilinizi temsil etmektedir. Lütfen partnerinizle olan ilişkinizi en iyi betimleyen şekli işaretleyiniz. Cevaplarken birbirinize ne kadar yakınlık duygusu hissettiğinizi göz önünde bulundurunuz.



M. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Table S1
Bivariate Correlations Among Narrative Coherence, Life Satisfaction, Relationship Happiness, Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Inclusion of Other in the Self

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Life Satisfaction	--									
2. Relationship Happiness	.20**	--								
3. Perceived Partner Responsiveness	.22**	.61**	--							
4. Inclusion of Other in the Self	.06	.31**	.37**	--						
5. Narrative Coherence, Per Low	.08	.04	.05	.00	--					
6. Narrative Coherence, Per High	.01	.01	-.01	-.01	.49**	--				
7. Narrative Coherence, Per Turn	.10	.05	.06	.06	.44**	.45**	--			
8. Narrative Coherence, Vic Low	-.04	.07	.10	.05	.36**	.43**	.40**	--		
9. Narrative Coherence, Vic High	-.00	.11	.08	.12	.36**	.37**	.43**	.48**	--	
10. Narrative Coherence, Vic Turn	.01	.09	.10	.04	.29**	.40**	.40**	.47**	.53**	--

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

Table S2. Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for Narrative Coherence: Life Satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>b</i>	95% CI	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ² _{adj.}	ΔF
Personal Low							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.24	76.12
Volume Per Low	.01	.00	.49	[.01, .01]	<.001		
Model 2						.25	1.32
Volume Per Low	.01	.00	.49	[.01, .01]	<.001		
Life Satisfaction	.15	.13	.06	[-.11, .43]	.25		
Personal High							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.28	94.70
Volume Per High	.01	.00	.53	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Model 2						.28	.007
Volume Per High	.01	.00	.63	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Life Satisfaction	-.01	.12	-.00	[-.25, .23]	.93		
Personal Turning							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.33	116.75
Volume Per Turning	.02	.00	.57	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Model 2						.33	1.20
Volume Per Turning	.02	.00	.55	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Life Satisfaction	.15	.14	.05	[-.12, .44]	.27		
Vicarious Low							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.40	159.05
Volume Vic Low	.02	.00	.63	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Model 2						.40	.000
Volume Vic Low	.02	.00	.62	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Life Satisfaction	.00	.10	.00	[-.21, .21]	.98		
Vicarious High							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.39	149.79
Volume Vic High	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.39	.132
Volume Vic High	.03	.00	.62	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Life Satisfaction	.04	.11	.01	[-.18, .27]	.71		
Vicarious Turning							
Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.56	299.47
Volume Vic Turning	.03	.00	.75	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Model 2						.56	.46
Volume Vic Turning	.03	.00	.74	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Gender	-.06	.1	-.03	[-.26, .13]	.49		

Table S3. Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for Narrative Coherence: Relationship Happiness, Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Inclusion of Other in the Self

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>b</i>	95% CI	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ² _{adj.}	ΔF
Vicarious Low Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.40	159.05
Volume Vic Low	.02	.00	.63	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Model 2						.39	.27
Volume Vic Low	.02	.00	.62	[.01, .02]	<.001		
Rel Happiness	-.21	.33	-.04	[-.87, .44]	.52		
Perc Part Respon	.07	.10	.04	[-.14, .28]	.50		
Other in the Self	.04	.10	.02	[-.15, .24]	.67		
Vicarious High Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.39	149.79
Volume Vic High	.03	.00	.63	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Model 2						.40	1.75
Volume Vic High	.03	.00	.62	[.02, .03]	<.001		
Rel Happiness	.15	.34	.02	[-.53, .84]	.65		
Perc Part Respon	-.12	.11	-.07	[-.34, .10]	.27		
Other in the Self	.22	.10	.12	[.02, .42]	.03		
Vicarious Turning Narrative Coherence							
Model 1						.56	299.47
Volume Vic Turning	.03	.00	.75	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Model 2						.56	.09
Volume Vic Turning	.03	.00	.74	[.03, .04]	<.001		
Rel Happiness	.05	.31	.01	[-.57, .68]	.86		
Perc Part Respon	.00	.10	.00	[-.19, .20]	.97		
Other in the Self	.03	.09	.01	[-.15, .21]	.72		

N. CURRICULUM VITAE

S. YAĞMUR İLGÜN

EDUCATION

Middle East Technical University, Türkiye	2020-Present
PhD in Developmental Psychology	
CGPA: 4.00/4.00	
PhD Candidate, 2022	
Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar	
Middle East Technical University, Türkiye	2018-2020
MSc in Developmental Psychology	
CGPA: 4.00/4.00	
Thesis: <i>“The Roles of Maternal Reminiscing Style and Self-Constraint on Children’s Independent Memory Skills in Researcher-Child Recounting Task”</i>	
Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar	
Examining committee: Prof. Dr. Qi Wang (Cornell University), Prof. Dr. Sami Gülgöz (Koç University)	
TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Türkiye	2013-2018
BA in Psychology	
CGPA: 3.61/4.00	

WORK EXPERIENCE

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Türkiye	
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	01/2024 - Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leading or contributing to pledge-based donor reporting• Leading qualitative and quantitative analysis• Leading or contributing to assessment reports related to earthquake operations	
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	02/2023 – 12/2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led proposal, implementation, analysis and reporting of focus group discussions• Led or contributed to quantitative assessments and analyses• Led or contributed to assessment reports related to earthquake operations• Led secondary data analysis for M&E activities	
Monitoring & Evaluation Assistant	05/2022-02/2023

- Contributed to proposal, implementation, analysis and reporting of focus group discussions

Middle East Technical University, Türkiye

Research/Project Assistant

04/2019-04/2022

- Worked on two different TUBITAK-funded research projects
- Contributed to the scientific project proposals and reports
- Collected data through field visits
- Analyzed quantitative data using SPSS and AMOS

PUBLICATIONS IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

*Denotes equal contribution

*Alkis, A., *İlgün, Y., & Sahin-Acar, B. (2024). Mother–child memory conversation and children’s independent memory: The roles of maternal characteristics. *Memory*, 32(8) 968-980. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658211.2024.2373897>

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İplikçi, A. B., İlgün, Y., Memisoglu-Sanlı, A., Aydogdu Sözen, E., Sahin-Acar, B., Dogan, A., Tahiroglu, D., & Berument, S. K. (2024). Role of pandemic-related experiences and maternal psychological distress in maternal rejection. *Family Relations*, 73(1), 74-94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12984>

BOOK CHAPTERS

İlgün, Y. (2023). Benlikle ilgili bilginin işlenmesi ve organizasyonu. In Çebi, E. (Ed.), *Benlik Psikolojisi* (pp. 91-101). Nobel Yayınları.

PEER-REVIWED ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Alkis, A., İlgün, Y., & Sahin-Acar, B. (2023). The Roles of Maternal Characteristics in Children’s Emotion Regulation, Flash Talk Presentation. Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) on March 23-25, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

İlgün Y., Alkış, A., & Şahin-Acar B. (2022). Geçmiş Yaşantı Konuşmalarında Annelerin Konuşma Stili ve Çocukların Konuşma Çıktıları, [Mothers’ conversational style and children’s conversation outcomes in the past event conversations], Sözel Bildiri. 21. Ulusal Psikoloji Kongresi, 13-16 Ekim, İstanbul, Türkiye [Oral Presentation. 21st National Psychology Congress of Turkey, 13-16 October, Istanbul, Turkey].

Alkış, A., İlgün Y., Şahin-Acar B. (2022). Annelerin kaçınmacı bağlanması ve çocuk yetiştirme yaklaşımları ilişkisinde destekleyici duygu sosyalleştirme davranışlarının aracı rolü [The mediator role of maternal emotion socialization behaviors in the link between maternal attachment avoidance and child rearing practices], Sözel Bildiri. 21.

Ulusal Psikoloji Kongresi, 13-16 Ekim, İstanbul, Türkiye [Oral Presentation. 21st National Psychology Congress of Turkey, 13-16 October, Istanbul, Turkey].

İlgün, Y., Coşkun, M., Sarı, E., & İplikci, B. (2022). Cinsiyet iç grubuyla özdeşim ve kadına yönelik şiddete karşı kolektif eylem niyetleri: Ahlaki kanaatlerin aracı ve cinsiyetin düzenleyici rolü [Gender In-group identification and collective action intentions for violence against women: The mediator role of moral conviction and the moderator role of gender], Panel Sunumu, 4. Sosyal Psikoloji Kongresi, 11-12 Haziran, İzmir, Türkiye., [Panel Presentation. 4th Social Psychology Congress of Turkey, 11-12 June, Izmir, Turkey].

Gönül, B., Şahin-Acar, B., & **İlgün, S. Y.** (2018). Çocukların toplumsal cinsiyet bağlamında sosyal değerlendirmeleri: Karma yöntemli bir çalışma [Children's Social Evaluations in the Context of Gender: A Mixed-Method Study], Sözel Bildiri. 20. Ulusal Psikoloji Kongresi, 15-17 Kasım, Ankara, Türkiye, [Oral Presentation. 20th National Psychology Congress of Turkey, 15-17 November, Ankara, Turkey].

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Akay, N., Borhan, N., Alkis, A., **İlgün, Y.**, Yenen, Z., Yön, F., Yiğit, B., Ersoy, H., Kozak, E., Zeybek, S., Aydın, C., & Sahin-Acar, B. (2023). The role of family alliance on child well-being. Individual Poster Presentation. Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) on March 23-25, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

İplikçi, A. B., **İlgün, Y.**, Aydoğdu, E., Anaçali, E., Şahin-Acar, B., Doğan, A. Tahiroğlu, D., & Berument, S. K. (2023). The stability and change of school connectedness pre and during COVID-19 pandemic: The moderator role of cyberbullying, Individual Poster Presentation. Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) on March 23-25, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

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Aydoğdu, E., **İlgün, Y.**, Doğan, A., Şahin-Acar, B., Tahiroğlu, D., & Berument, S. K. (2022). Covid-19 pandemisi sırasında siber zorbalık ve akademik ilgi: Ruminasyon ve içselleştirme problemlerinin aracı rolleri, Poster Bildiri. 3. Gelişim Psikolojisi Sempozyumu, 8-9 Eylül, İstanbul, Türkiye.

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Individual Poster Presentation, Virtual Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) on April 7-9.

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MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

*Denotes equal contribution

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RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

2019-2022

- Project: The Effects of Parenting Attitudes and Parent Child Interaction on Child and Adolescent Developmental Outcomes
- Project No: 118K033-118K034-118K034 (Funded by TUBITAK)
- Project Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Sibel Kazak Berument

Research Assistant

07/2021-Present

- Project: Mother-Father-Child Triads’ Play and Memory Conversations: The Effects of Gender and Parents’ Gender Ideologies
- Project No: 121K258 (Funded by TUBITAK)
- Project Coordinator: Assoc. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar

Research Assistant

05/2020 – 01/2021

- Project: The Effects of COVID-19 on Children’s and Adolescents’ Cognitive and Psychosocial Development and Academic Life
- Project No: 120K385 (Funded by TUBITAK)
- Project Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Sibel Kazak Berument

Graduate Researcher

01/2019-08/2020

- Project: The Roles of Maternal Self-Construal, Attachment Style, and Sensitivity on Children’s Autobiographical Memory Outcomes
- Project No: 199K642 (Founded successful to be supported by TUBIRAK; however, we chose not accepting the funding.)
- Project Coordinators: Assoc. Dr. Başak Şahin-Acar, Yağmur İlgün, Aysu Alkiş

HONARS & SCHOLARSHIPS

03/2023

International Travel Award

Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)

03/2022-09/2024

Ph.D. Scholarship

04/2021-03/2022	TUBITAK 100/2000 Ph.D. Scholarship The Higher Education Council of Türkiye (YÖK)
2016-2018	Merit Scholarship TOBB University of Economics and Technology
2015-2018	High Honors TOBB University of Economics and Technology
2014-2018	Honors TOBB University of Economics and Technology
2013	National Bachelor's Placement Exam Scholarship TOBB University of Economics and Technology

LANGUAGES

<i>Native</i>	Turkish
<i>Advanced</i>	English (TOEFL IBT: 99, 03/2020; YÖKDİL: 95, 03/2022)
<i>Elementary</i>	Spanish

SOFTWARE

<i>Advanced</i>	SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences)
<i>Advanced</i>	Nvivo (A qualitative data analysis software)
<i>Advanced</i>	AMOS (A package program for structural equation modeling)
<i>Intermediate</i>	HLM (A package program for multilevel analysis)
<i>Intermediate</i>	Power BI (A software for data visualization)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

2019 - Present	Türk Psikologlar Derneği [Turkish Psychological Association]
2020 - Present	Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)

AD HOC REVIEWER

Family Relations
Selçuk Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi (SEFAD)

INVITED TALK

12/2022	Ankara Medipol University, Psychology Club
11/2021	Psikoloji Çalışma Grubu
06/2020	TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Psychology Club

REFERENCES

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P. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Otobiyografik Bellek ve Kişisel Yaşam Öyküsü

Otobiyografik bellek, kişilerin geçmişte tecrübe ettikleri olayların anılarını ve gelecekte başlarına gelebilecek olası olayları kapsar. Bu bellek türü, episodik ve semantik bellekle benzerlikler gösterse de iki temel özelliğiyle bu bellek türlerinden ayrılır: otobiyografik bellek geçmişteki bir olayın nerede, ne zaman ve ne olduğu hakkında bilgi sunar ve kişinin benlik duygusu orijinal olayda ve olayın hatırlanması sırasında mevcuttur (Conway, 2005; Rubin ve Umanath, 2015).

Yaşam öyküsü, kişinin yaşamındaki olayların zihinsel temsilleridir ve geçmişi, bugünü ve geleceği birleştirerek benliğin tutarlı bir açıklamasını oluşturur. Otobiyografik bellek, yaşam öyküsü gelişiminde temel bir rol oynar ve kişiler bu belleğe dayanarak dinamik ve tutarlı bir yaşam öyküsü oluşturabilirler (Adler vd., 2016; McAdams, 2001). Anlatı kimliği perspektifine göre, bireylerin kişilik özellikleri, sosyal kimlikleri ve yaşam hedefleri zamanla değişebilir (McAdams, 2013; Singer, 2004). Yaşam öyküsü, kişisel geçmişi mevcut ve gelecekteki hedeflerle birleştirerek hayata anlam, birlik ve amaç sunar. Ek olarak, bireylerin "Ben kimim?" ve "Nasıl bugün olduğum kişi oldum?" gibi temel sorulara yanıt vermesini sağlar (McAdams, 2001).

Yaşam Öyküsü Gelişimi

Yaşam öyküsü gelişimi, çocukluk dönemindeki sosyal ve bilişsel ilerlemelerle birlikte, ergenlik ile beliren yetişkinlik dönemlerindeki toplumsal beklentilerle şekillenir (McAdams & McLean, 2013; Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Çocuklar küçük yaşta kişisel hikayelerini anlatmaya başlarlar, ancak tam anlamıyla bütünlüklü bir yaşam öyküsünün oluşumu ergenlik ve genç yetişkinlik dönemlerinde gerçekleşir. Bu dönemlerde çocuklar, hikayelerini zamansal bütünlük içinde organize etmeyi öğrenirler

ve kültürel normlara uygun olarak yaşamlarındaki olayları düzenlerler. Ergenlikte bireyler, olaylar arasındaki neden-sonuç ilişkilerini açıklayarak ve inançlarını, kişilik özelliklerini ve tercihlerini dahil ederek tutarlı anlatılar oluştururlar. Beliren yetişkinlik döneminden itibaren, kişiler zamansal, biyografik, nedensel ve tematik bütünlüğe sahip yaşam öyküleri üretme konusunda yetkin hale gelirler (McAdams & Olson, 2010; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Habermas & Paha, 2001; Habermas & Silveira, 2008). Bu nedenle, bu dönemlerdeki yetişkinlerin yaşam öykülerinin incelenmesi literatür için kritik öneme sahiptir.

Otobiyografik Bellek Özellikleri ve Kişisel Anlatılardaki Bireysel Farklılıklar

Anlatı Bütünlüğü

Anlatı bütünlüğü, dinleyici veya okuyucunun anlatıda bahsi geçen olay hakkında önceden bilgisi olmadan, bu olayı ne ölçüde anlayabileceğini ifade eder. Bütünlüklü bir anlatı, dinleyiciyi veya okuyucuyu olayın içeriği, zamanı, yeri ve olayı aktaran kişi açısından önemi hakkında bilgilendirmelidir (Reese vd., 2011). İlgili alan yazında anlatı bütünlüğü farklı şekillerde incelenmiştir. Mevcut tez çalışmasındaysa anlatı bütünlüğü, anlatı bütünlüğünün çok boyutlu modeli kullanılarak ele alınmaktadır. Anlatı bütünlüğünün çok boyutlu modeline göre, anlatı bütünlüğü bağlam, kronoloji ve tema olmak üzere üç ana unsurdan oluşur. Bağlam, olayın nerede ve ne zaman gerçekleştiği gibi bağlamsal ayrıntıları içerir. Kronoloji, anlatının zamansal sırasını gösterir ve eylemlerin sırasını belirler. Tema ise anlatının kişisel önemini ve anlamını ifade eder. Tematik olarak bütünlüklü bir anlatı, duygusal ve değerlendirici bilgileri, nedensel bağlantıları ve çözümü içermelidir. Bu unsurların detaylı bir şekilde anı içerisinde bahsedilmesi, anının genel anlamda sahip olduğu anlatı bütünlüğünü artırır ve her unsur yaşam öyküsü anlatılarında farklı derecelerde yer alabilir (Reese vd., 2011).

Fenomenolojik Özellikler

Bir olayı hatırlarken, kişi olayı zihinsel olarak tekrar canlandırabilir. Bu süreçte canlılık, hatırlanan anının görsel berraklığı, otobiyografik anıların temel

özelliklerinden biridir (D'Argembeau ve Van der Linden, 2008; Rubin ve ark., 2003). Canlılık, genellikle bir anıyı hatırladıktan sonra verilen tek maddelik ifadelerle ölçülür ve kişisel olarak önemli anılar genellikle daha yüksek canlılıkla hatırlanır (Boyacıoğlu ve Akfırat, 2015). Canlı anılar, bireylerin geçmişlerinden ders çıkarmalarına ve hedefe yönelik davranışlarını desteklemelerine yardımcı olur (Pillemer, 1998; Singer ve Salovey, 1993). Ayrıca, canlılık, kişinin benlik değişimi algısıyla ilişkilidir (Libby ve Eibach, 2002; Libby vd., 2005) ve yaşam öyküsü anlatılarının ayrılmaz bir bellek özelliğidir.

Bireyler, kişisel anılarını hatırladıklarında olaylar ilk kez yaşandığı sıradaki duyguları yeniden hissedebilirler (Wood ve Conway, 2006). Bu bağlamda, anının duygusal değeri de önemlidir. Değerlik, bir anının duygusal tonunu veya olayın ne ölçüde olumlu veya olumsuz algılandığını ifade eder (Boyacıoğlu vd., 2022). Değerlik de genellikle bir anıyı hatırladıktan sonra verilen tek maddelik ifadelerle ölçülür (Boyacıoğlu ve Akfırat, 2015). Araştırmalar, duygu yükü fazla olan anıların daha yüksek canlılıkla hatırlandığını göstermektedir (Buchanan, 2007; Reisberg ve Hertel, 2004).

Otobiyografik Belleğin İşlevleri

Otobiyografik belleğin sosyal, yönlendirme ve benlik olmak üzere üç temel işlevi vardır (Alea ve Bluck, 2007; Bluck ve Alea, 2008; Pillemer, 2003; Harris vd., 2014). Önceki çalışmalar, kişisel anıları başkalarıyla paylaşmanın ve başkalarının anıları üzerine sohbet etmenin kişilerarası yakınlığı artırdığını göstermiştir (Alea ve Bluck, 2007; Alea ve Vick, 2010). Bu kapsamda, otobiyografik belleğin sosyal işlevi, kişilerin geçmiş deneyimler hakkında konuşarak sosyal ilişkiler başlatmasına ve sürdürmesine yardımcı olur (Alea ve Bluck, 2003; Pasupathi, 2001; Harris ve vd., 2014). Bununla birlikte, geçmiş deneyimler karar alma sürecini kolaylaştırır ve mevcut ve olası gelecek sorunları çözme konusunda kişilere destek olur (Bluck, 2003). Bu bağlamda, otobiyografik belleğin yönlendirme işlevi sorun çözmek, geçmişten ders çıkarmak ve geleceğe yönelik hazırlık yapmayı sağlar (Pillemer, 2003). Son olarak, otobiyografik belleğin benlik işlevi kişilerin yaşam öyküsü oluşturmalarına ve zaman içerisinde benlik

sürekliliğini hissetmesine yardımcı olur (Conway, 2005; Habermas & Bluck, 2000; Waters vd., 2014).

Mevcut arařtırmalara göre, olumlu anıları paylařırken bireyler benliklerinin önemli yönlerini paylařırlar ve benliğin olumlu öykülerde iletirme biçimi genellikle eğlence, yakınlık ve baę kurma gibi sosyal amaçlar için kullanılır (McLean, 2005; McLean ve Thorne, 2006; Pals, 2006; Pasupathi, 2006). Bununla birlikte, olumsuz deęerli öykülerin kendini anlama, anlam çıkarma ve geçmiş ve řimdiki benlikler arasında bir baęlantı kurma amacıyla kullanılması muhtemeldir (McLean, 2005; Pasupathi, 2006).

Cinsiyet

Cinsiyetin otobiyografik bellek üzerindeki etkisine odaklanan çalıřmalar, cinsiyetin çeřitli otobiyografik anı özellikleriyle iliřkili olduęunu göstermiřtir. Anlatı bütünlüęü açısından kadınların daha yüksek puanlar aldıęı bulunmuřtur (Fivush vd., 2012; Gryzman & Hudson, 2013; McLean, 2008; Vanden Poel & Hermans, 2019). Örneęin, genç yetişkinlerden kimlikle iliřkili ve iliřkisiz anıları anlatmaları istendięinde, kadınların her iki anı türü için de anlamlı düzeyde yüksek genel anlatı bütünlüęü gösterdięi saptanmıřtır (Vanden vd., 2019). Bařka bir çalıřmada, kadınların tematik bütünlüęü daha yüksek olan anlatılar ürettięi görölmüřtür (McLean, 2008). Bununla birlikte, bazı arařtırmalar cinsiyet farkı olmadıęını da göstermektedir (Gryzman ve Hudson, 2010; Lind vd., 2020; Yenen, 2023).

Fenomenolojik özelliklerde cinsiyetin rolünü arařtıran sınırlı sayıda çalıřma, kadınların otobiyografik anıları hatırlarken daha fazla duyusal ayrıntı ve duygusal yoğunluk bildirdięini ortaya koymuřtur (Alea ve Vick, 2010; Boyacioglu ve Akfırat, 2014; Gryzman ve Fivush, 2016; Pohl ve ark., 2005; Pillemer, 1998; Ross ve Holmberg, 1990; Sutin ve Robins, 2007). Otobiyografik belleğin iřlevleriyle ilgili olarak, bazı çalıřmalar bellek iřlevlerinde cinsiyet farklılıkları bulunmadıęını belirtirken, dięerleri bu farklılıklara dikkat çekmiřtir (Bluck ve Alea, 2009; Harris vd., 2014; Liao vd., 2015; Lind ve Thomsen, 2018; Maki vd., 2015; Pillemer vd., 2003; Vranic vd., 2018). Örneęin, ileri yařlı yetişkinlerde kadınların kimlik ve yakınlık iřlevlerini daha sık kullandıkları (Pillemer vd., 2013), üniversite öęrencisi kadınların

ise öz-süreklilik ve sosyal bağ kurma işlevlerini daha sık kullandıkları görülmüştür (Maki vd., 2015).

Dolaylı Bellek ve Dolaylı Yaşam Öyküsü

Otobiyografik bellek arařtırmaları geleneksel olarak bireylerin birinci elden deneyimlediđi anılara odaklanmış olsa da güncel çalışmalar kişilerin başkalarından öğrendiđi dolaylı anılara ve bu kişilerin hayatlarına dair genel bilgilere de sahip olduğunu göstermektedir (Rubin ve Umanath, 2015; Thomsen, 2015). Dolaylı anılar, bir kişinin olayı birinci elden deneyimlememesi ve daha sonra bu olay hakkında bilgi edinmesiyle oluşur. Kişiler dolaylı anıları hatırlarken, bu olayın başka birinin başına geldiđinin bilincindedirler (Pillemer vd., 2015; Rubin & Umanath, 2015).

İlgili arařtırmalara göre, insanlar arkadaşları, ebeveynleri ve romantik partnerleri için dolaylı anılara sahip olabilirler. Bu dolaylı anılar, kişilerin başkalarının yaşamlarına ilişkin zihinsel temsillere sahip olabileceđini de gösterir (Bakir-Demir vd., 2020; Panattoni ve Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer vd., 2015; Reese vd., 2017). Son çalışmalar, insanların kendileri için önemli olan kişiler için dolaylı yaşam öyküleri oluşturabildiklerini ortaya koymuştur (Lind ve Thomsen, 2018; Pond ve Peterson, 2020). Dolaylı yaşam öyküleri, kişinin kendi yaşamı için belirli işlevlere sahiptir. Başkalarının yaşamları hakkında bilgi sahibi olmak, kişinin kendi yaşamı için anlam oluşturmayı ve öz düzenlemeyi kolaylaştırabilir (Pillemer vd., 2024). Ayrıca, dolaylı yaşam öyküleri, bireylerin kişilerarası ilişkiler kurmasına ve bu ilişkileri sürdürmesine yardımcı olabilir (Thomsen & Pillemer, 2017). Başkalarının hayat hikayelerini bilmenin yanı sıra, bireylerin kişisel deneyimlerini başkalarıyla paylaşması da önemli işlevlere sahiptir. Örneđin, ebeveynler çocuklarıyla bağlarını sürdürmek, onlara bir şeyler öğretmek ve rehberlik etmek amacıyla geçmiş deneyimlerini paylaşmaktadırlar (McLean, 2015).

Kişisel ve Dolaylı Yaşam Öyküleri Arasındaki Benzerlikler ve Farklılıklar

Otobiyografik bellek arařtırmaları, kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasında benzerlikler ve farklılıklar olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu alandaki ilk çalışmalardan

birinde Thomsen ve Pillemer (2017), üniversite öğrencilerinin ve yakınlarının kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerini incelemiş ve kişisel yaşam öykülerinin daha olumlu, fenomenolojik olarak daha yüksek ve kendini anlama açısından daha önemli olduğunu bulmuşlardır. Bununla birlikte, Lind ve Thomsen (2018) ise, ergenlerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerini işlevsellik, nedensel bağlantılar ve duygusal değerlik açısından incelemiş ve her iki tür öykü arasında pozitif bir ilişki bulmuştur. Thomsen ve Vedel (2019), beliren yetişkinlik dönemindeki kişilerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinde benzer özellikler bulmuş, ancak kişisel yaşam öykülerinin daha olumlu değişim içerdiğini tespit etmişlerdir. Panattoni ve Thomsen (2018), romantik ilişkiler bağlamında kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerini inceleyerek, kişisel öykülerin daha yüksek faillik ve iyileşme/kurtarma temaları içerdiğini bulmuşlardır. Thomsen ve arkadaşları (2020), eski partnerler ve eski yakın arkadaşlar için dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin daha az olumlu ve daha düşük düzeyde faillik, birlik ve iyileşme/kurtarma temaları içerdiğini göstermiştir.

Kişisel ve Dolaylı Yaşam Öyküleri ve Psikolojik İşleyiş

Önceki araştırmalar, kişisel yaşam hikayesi anlatılarının hem kısa hem de uzun vadede sosyal ve psikolojik işleyiş üzerinde etkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Anlatılarında daha yüksek anlatı bütünlüğü sergileyen bireylerin daha fazla psikolojik esenlik deneyimleme eğiliminde olduğu bulunmuştur (Adler vd., 2016). Özellikle, anlatı bütünlüğü yüksek olan bireylerin daha yüksek psikolojik esenlik yaşadığı gösterilmiştir (Baerger ve McAdams, 1999; Booker vd., 2020; Waters ve Fivush, 2015). Ancak, anlatı bütünlüğünün psikolojik esenlikle ilişkili olmadığını veya bu ilişkinin cinsiyet ve yaş gibi bireysel özellikler tarafından düzenlendiğini gösteren çalışmalar da bulunmaktadır (Vanderveren vd., 2019; Chen vd., 2012; Mitchell vd., 2020; Vanden Poel ve Hermans, 2019).

Sınırlı sayıda çalışma, dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin farklı özellikleri ile psikolojik esenlik arasındaki bağlantıya odaklanmıştır. Örneğin, Thomsen ve Vedel (2019), ebeveynlerin dolaylı yaşam öyküsü anlatılarındaki olumlu duygusal tonun, beliren yetişkinlerin refahı ile olumlu yönde ilişkili olduğunu bulmuşlardır. Bununla birlikte, dolaylı anılar ve yaşam öyküleri ile esenlik arasındaki ilişki üzerine karışık bulgulara

işaret eden çalışmalar da vardır. Örneğin, Thomsen vd. (2020), dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin farklı özellikleri ile esenlik arasındaki ilişkiyi birden fazla çalışmayla test etmişlerdir. Bazı çalışmalarda esenlik, dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin özellikleriyle ilişkili bulunmazken, diğer çalışmalarda kişisel yaşam öyküleri kontrol edildikten sonra bu ilişki kaybolmuştur.

Romantik İlişkiler Bağlamında Otobiyografik Bellek

Önceki araştırmalar, romantik ilişkiye özgü anıları hatırlamanın ilişki memnuniyetini artırma işlevi olabileceğini ileri sürmüştür (Alea ve Bluck, 2007; Alea ve Vick, 2010; Aydın ve Buyukcan-Tetik, 2021). Örneğin, Alea ve Vick (2010) katılımcılardan ilişki tanımlayıcı anıları, yani bir ilişki sırasında meydana gelen ve ilişki için büyük önem taşıyan önemli olayların anılarını hatırlamalarını istemiştir. Sonuçlara göre, pozitif, yüksek canlılık ve duygusal yoğunlukla karakterize olan anılar, evlilik memnuniyetini pozitif şekilde yordamıştır. Farklı bir çalışmada, Dunlop vd., (2019) yaşam öyküsü kavramını romantik ilişkilere uygulamış ve katılımcılardan "aşk hayatlarından" önemli bir olayı anlatmalarını istemişlerdir. Birlik teması ve pozitif duygulanımın daha yüksek ilişkiye bağlı öz saygıyı yordadığını bulmuşlardır.

Mevcut Çalışmalar

İlgili literatüre uygun olarak, mevcut çalışmaların temel amacı, en az altı aydır ciddi, tek eşli ve heteroseksüel romantik ilişki içinde olan Türk yetişkinlerinin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları araştırmaktır. Bu amaca ulaşmak için bir nitel çalışma ve iki karma yöntemli çalışma yürütülmüştür.

Romantik ilişkiler ve Türk kültürel bağlamında ilgili araştırmaların eksikliği nedeniyle, Çalışma 1 (nitel), en az altı aydır ciddi, tek eşli ve heteroseksüel romantik ilişki içinde olan Türk katılımcılardan oluşan bir örnekleme kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin varlığını doğrulamayı amaçlamıştır. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışmada flört eden veya evli bireylerin kişisel yaşam öyküleri ile romantik partnerlerinin dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasındaki tematik benzerlikleri nitel olarak incelenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, Çalışma 2'nin örneklem özelliklerini belirlemek için bir temel

oluşturmuştur. Ek olarak, bu çalışmada, Çalışma 2 ve Çalışma 3'te kullanılmak üzere dolaylı anıları paylaşmanın nedenleri için bir kodlama şeması (Reese ve diğerleri, 2017) uyarlanmıştır.

Çalışma 2'de (karma yöntemli), ilk kez Batılı olmayan romantik çiftlerden oluşan bir örnekleme, kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri için anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları inceledik. Ek olarak, cinsiyetin romantik çiftlerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküsü özellikleri ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleri üzerindeki rolünü test ettik. Bununla birlikte, yaş grubunun (beliren yetişkinlik ve genç yetişkinlik) kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin anlatı bütünlüğü üzerindeki rolünü keşifsel olarak test ettik.

Çalışma 3'ün birincil amacı, romantik çiftlerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerindeki anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleri arasındaki benzerlikler ve farklılıklarla ilgili Çalışma 2'nin bulgularının replikasyonunu yapmaktır. Ek olarak, cinsiyetin bu bellek özellikleri ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleri üzerindeki rolünü tekrarlamayı amaçladık. Son olarak, bu çalışmada, kişisel yaşam öykülerindeki anlatı bütünlüğü ile yaşam doyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerindeki anlatı bütünlüğü ile ilişki mutluluğu, algılanan partner duyarlılığı ve başkalarının benliğe dahil edilmesi arasındaki bağlantıyı keşifsel olarak test ettik. Hipotezler ilgili çalınmaların giriş bölümlerinde sunulmuştur.

Çalışma 1

Keşifsel bir araştırma olan mevcut çalışmanın başlıca amacı, en az altı aydır ciddi, tek eşli ve heteroseksüel romantik ilişkisi olan ve Türk katılımcılardan oluşan bir örnekleme kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin varlığını teyit etmektir. Bu bağlamda, flört eden ve evli bireylerin kişisel yaşam öyküleri ile romantik partnerlerinin dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasındaki tematik benzerlikleri nitel olarak araştırılmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın bulgularını Çalışma 2'nin örneklem özelliklerini belirlerken rehber olarak kullanılması amaçlanmıştır; bunu yaparken kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerindeki ana temaların ilişki durumuna göre farklılık gösterip göstermediği

araştırılmıştır. Son olarak, Çalışma 2 ve Çalışma 3'te kullanılmak üzere dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleri için bir kodlama şeması (Reese vd. 2017) uyarlanmıştır. Bu alandaki mevcut çalışmaların azlığı ve araştırmanın keşifsel doğası gözetilerek herhangi bir hipotez önerilmemiştir.

Yöntem

Katılımcılar

Katılımcılar en az altı aydır ciddi, tek eşli ve heteroseksüel bir romantik ilişkisi olan flört eden veya evli 64 (44 flört) yetişkinden ($Ort_{yaş} = 28.15$, $SS = 5.76$). Katılımcıların 37'si kadın, 27'si erkektir. Katılımcıların ilişki süreleri ortalama 60.71 aydır, ($SS = 68.13$).

İşlem

Mevcut çalışmanın etik onayı, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 protokol numarasıyla alınmıştır.

Katılımcılar kolay örnekleme tekniği kullanılarak bulundu. Çalışma Qualtrics üzerinden yürütüldü ve katılımcılar önce onay formunu, ardından demografik bilgi formunu doldurdu. Ardından katılımcılar kendileri ve partnerleri için Yaşam Öyküsü Görüşmesi - II'nin Anahtar Sahneler bölümünü yanıtladı. Kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin sorulma sırası karşılıklı olarak dengelendi. Kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküsü soruları bloklar halinde sunuldu; katılımcılar önce kişisel veya dolaylı yaşam öyküsü sorularını tamamladı ve sonra diğerine geçti. Çalışmanın sonunda katılımcılara çalışma hakkında bir bilgilendirme mesajı sunuldu.

Ölçüm Araçları

Bu çalışmada demografik bilgi formu ve Yaşam Öyküsü Görüşmesi – II'nin (McAdams, 2008) yazılı versiyonu kullanılmıştır.

Kodlama Şeması

Nedenler

Partnerlerin kişisel geçmişlerini paylaşmalarının nedenlerini kodlamak için Reese vd., (2017) kodlama şemasını uyarlanmıştır. Katılımcıların partnerlerinin dolaylı geçmiş deneyimlerini paylaşma nedenleri, birbirini dışlayıcı altı kategoriye kodlandı: kişisel geçmişi paylaşmak, duygusal bir hikâye olduğu için, destek aramak/sağlamak, yakınlığı sürdürmek/artırmak, anlatıcı sorduğu için ve öylesine. Güvenilirlik amacıyla, tüm yanıtlar (188 yanıt) çalışmanın hedeflerinden habersiz ikinci bir kodlayıcı tarafından da kodlandı. Güvenilirliği test etmek için Cohen kappa kullanıldı. Cohen kappa, olumsuz anlatılar için .81 ($p < .001$), olumlu anlatılar için .81 ($p < .001$) ve dönüm noktası anlatıları için .82 ($p < .001$) idi.

Analiz

Tematik Analiz

Tematik analiz, Braun ve Clarke (2006) tarafından önerilen prosedür izlenerek gerçekleştirildi. Güvenilirlik amaçları için, tüm anlatılar çalışmanın hedeflerinden habersiz ikinci bir kodlayıcı tarafından da kodlandı. İkinci kodlayıcı, ana kodlayıcı tarafından eğitildi ve yukarıda özetlenen prosedürü uyguladı. Güvenilirliği değerlendirmek için Cohen kappa katsayısı kullanıldı; her anlatı türü için güvenilirlik puanları ilgili bölümler altında sunuldu. Ana kodlayıcıların kodlamaları analizler için kullanıldı.

Temel Bulgular

Kişisel Olumsuz Anıların Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar, kişilerarası çatışma ($n = 17$, % 26.6), sosyal destek ($n = 11$, % 17.2), sağlık ($n = 10$, % 15.6), eğitim ($n = 10$, % 15.6), ölüm ($n = 6$, % 9.4), kariyer ($n = 5$, % 7.8) ve diğer ($n = 5$, % 7.8) olmak üzere birbirini dışlayan yedi ana tema altında

kategorize edilmiş 64 kişisel düşük nokta anlatısı ürettiler. Cohen kappa ana temalar için .93 ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için .92 ($p < .001$) olarak hesaplanmıştır.. İlişki durumu ile duygusal olarak olumsuz kişisel anıların ana temaları arasındaki ilişki test ediliş ve ana temalar ve ilişki durumu arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmamıştır, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 9.94, p = .12$.

Kişisel Olumlu Anıların Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar, birbirini dışlayan sekiz ana tema altında gruplandırılmış 64 kişisel duygusal olarak olumlu anı anlatısı ürettiler: eğitim ($n = 24, \% 37.5$), romantik ilişkiler ($n = 9, \% 14.1$), gezi ($n = 8, \% 12.5$), kariyer ($n = 7, \% 10.9$), sosyal destek ($n = 4, \% 6.3$), sağlık ($n = 4, \% 6.3$), doğum ($n = 3, \% 4.7$), ve diğer ($n = 5, \% 7.8$). Cohen kappa katsayısı ana temalar için .94 ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için .90 ($p < .001$) idi. İlişki durumu ile duygusal olarak olumlu kişisel anıların ana temaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunamadı, $\chi^2(7, 64) = 9.17, p = .24$.

Kişisel Dönüm Noktası Anılarının Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar, birbirini dışlayan yedi ana tema altında gruplandırılmış 64 kişisel dönüm noktası anlatısı ürettiler: romantik ilişkiler ($n = 14, \% 21.9$), eğitim ($n = 14, \% 21.9$), kişilerarası çatışma ($n = 11, \% 17.2$), taşınma ($n = 8, \% 13.1$), sosyal destek ($n = 5, \% 7.8$), kariyer ($n = 5, \% 7.8$) ve diğer ($n = 7, \% 11$). Cohen kappa ana temalar için .86 ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için .83 ($p < .001$) olarak tespit edildi. İlişki durumu ile kişisel dönüm noktası anılarının ana temaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunamadı, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 5.71, p = .45$.

Dolaylı Olumsuz Anıların Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar, partnerlerinin hayat hikayeleri için 64 duygusal olarak olumsuz dolaylı anlatı ürettiler. Bu anlatılar, birbirini dışlayan yedi ana tema altında kategorize edildi: kişilerarası çatışma ($n = 22, \% 34.4$), ölüm ($n = 12, \% 18.8$), sosyal destek ($n = 10, \% 15.6$), sağlık ($n = 8, \% 12.5$), aşağılanma ($n = 5, \% 7.8$), kariyer ($n = 3, \% 4.7$) ve diğer ($n = 4, \% 6.3$). Cohen katsayısı ana temalar için .86 ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için .84

($p < .001$) olarak hesaplandı İlişki durumu ile dolaylı duygusal olarak olumsuz anıların ana temaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunamadı, $\chi^2(6, 64) = 3.71, p = .71$.

Dolaylı Olumlu Anıların Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar partnerlerinin hayat hikayeleri için 62 dolaylı duygusal olarak olumlu anı anlattı; iki katılımcı partnerlerinin onlara böyle bir anı anlatmadığını belirtti. Bu anlatılar birbirini dışlayan sekiz ana tema altında kategorize edildi: kariyer ($n = 15, \% 23.4$), eğitim ($n = 14, \% 21.9$), sosyal destek ($n = 7, \% 10.9$), gezi ($n = 6, \% 9.4$), romantik ilişki ($n = 6, \% 9.4$), doğum ($n = 5, \% 7.8$), sosyal olay ($n = 4, \% 6.3$) ve diğer ($n = 5, \% 7.8$). Cohen'in kappa ana temalar için $.82$ ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için $.82$ ($p < .001$) idi. İlişki durumu ile dolaylı duygusal olarak olumlu anıların ana temaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunamadı, $\chi^2(7, 62) = 14.41, p = .06$.

Dolaylı Dönüm Noktası Anılarının Tematik Analizi

Katılımcılar, partnerlerinin hayat hikayeleri için 63 dolaylı dönüm noktası anlatısı ürettiler; bir katılımcı böyle bir anı bilmediğini belirtti. Bu anlatılar birbirini dışlayan yedi ana tema altında kategorize edildi: eğitim ($n = 17, \% 26.6$), kariyer ($n = 14, \% 21.9$), taşınma ($n = 8, \% 12.5$), kişilerarası çatışma ($n = 8, \% 12.5$), romantik ilişki ($n = 4, \% 6.3$), sosyal destek ($n = 3, \% 4.7$) ve diğer ($n = 9, \% 14.1$).

Cohen kappa ana temalar için $.75$ ($p < .001$) ve alt temalar için $.75$ ($p < .001$) olarak hesaplandı. İlişki durumu ile kişisel dönüm noktası anılarının ana temaları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edildi, $\chi^2(6, 62) = .47, p = .01^3$.

Dolaylı Yaşam Öykülerini Paylaşma Sebepleri

Katılımcıların partnerlerinin dolaylı geçmiş deneyimlerini paylaşma nedenleri, altı birbirini dışlayıcı kategoriye kodlandı: kişisel geçmişi paylaşmak, duygusal bir hikâye olduğu için, destek aramak/sağlamak, yakınlığı sürdürmek/artırmak, anlatıcı sorduğu

³ Beklenen frekansların en az %57'sinin beşten az olduğu için Yates düzeltmesi raporlanmıştır. Bu varsayımın ihlali nedeniyle, rapor edilen anlamlı ilişki dikkatli bir şekilde yorumlanmalıdır.

için ve öylesine. İlişki durumu, olumsuz anıları ($\chi^2(5, 64) = 2.74, p = .73$), olumlu anıları ($\chi^2(5, 62) = 7.01, p = .22$) ve dönüm noktası anılarını ($\chi^2(5, 62) = 6.81, p = .23$) paylaşma nedenleriyle ilişkili değildir.

Çalışma 2

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri için anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları ilk kez romantik çiftlerden oluşan bir örnekleme, Batılı olmayan bir örnekleme incelemektir. Bu kapsamda, aşağıdaki hipotezler oluşturulmuştur:

(1a) kişisel yaşam öykülerindeki anlatı bütünlüğü, dolaylı yaşam öykülerindeki anlatı bütünlüğü ile pozitif yönde ilişkili olacaktır; (1b) kişisel yaşam öykülerinin fenomenolojik özellikler dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin fenomenolojik özellikleriyle pozitif yönde ilişkili olacaktır; (1c) kişisel yaşam öykülerinin otobiyografik bellek işlevleri dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin otobiyografik bellek işlevleriyle pozitif yönde ilişkili olacaktır;

(2a) kişisel yaşam öykülerinin anlatı bütünlüğü dolaylı yaşam öykülerinkinden yüksek olacaktır; (2b) kişisel yaşam öykülerinin fenomenolojik özelliklerinin dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin fenomenolojik özelliklerinden daha yüksek puan alacaktır; (2c) kişisel yaşam öyküleri için otobiyografik bellek işlevleri dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin otobiyografik bellek işlevlerinden daha yüksek puan alacaktır;

(3a) erkeklerle karşılaştırıldığında, kadın katılımcılar kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin anlatı bütünlüğünde daha yüksek puanlar alacaktır; (3b) erkeklerle karşılaştırıldığında, kadın katılımcılar kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin fenomenolojik özelliklerini daha yüksek puanlayacaktır. Otobiyografik bellek işlevlerindeki cinsiyet farklılıklarına ilişkin araştırmalar sınırlı olduğundan ve karışık sonuçlar verdiği için, bu ilişki keşifsel olarak test edilmiştir. Ek olarak, cinsiyetin dolaylı yaşam öykülerini paylaşma nedenleriyle ilişkili olup olmadığını keşifsel olarak incelenmiştir. Son olarak, yaş grubunun (beliren yetişkinlik ve genç yetişkinlik) anlatı bütünlüğü üzerindeki rolü bu çalışma kapsamında keşifsel olarak test edilmiştir.

Yöntem

Katılımcılar

Bu çalışmaya 157 heteroseksüel çift katılmıştır ($N = 314$). Çalışmaya dahil edilme kriterleri en az altı aydır ciddi, heteroseksüel ve tek eşli ilişki içinde olmak ve 18-23 veya 28-33 yaş aralığında olmaktır. Bu çalışmaya katılabilmek için 18-23 yaş grubundaki katılımcıların lisans öğrencisi olması, 28-33 yaş grubundaki katılımcıların ise en az lisans mezunu olma şartı aranmıştır. Katılımcılar, ortalama ilişki süresi 34.92 ay olan ($SD = 25,61$) flört eden çiftlerdi.

İşlem

Mevcut çalışma, ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 protokol numarasıyla onaylanmıştır. Katılımcılara, ODTÜ Çocuk ve Ergen Gelişimi Laboratuvarı'nda yaz stajı programına ve ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümünde verilen gelişim psikolojisi çalıştay dersine katılan lisans psikolojisi öğrencilerinin yardımıyla kolay örnekleme tekniği ile ulaşılmıştır. Çalışma 1'deki prosedür bu çalışma için de takip edilmiştir.

Ölçüm Araçları

Bu çalışmada demografik bilgi formu, Yaşam Öyküsü Görüşmesi – II'nin (McAdams, 2008) yazılı versiyonu, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri için tek maddelik takip soruları kullanılmıştır.

Kodlama Şeması

Anlatı Bütünlüğü

Anlatı Bütünlüğü Kodlama Şeması (NaCCS; Reese vd., 2011), anlatının bütünlüğünü üç boyutta değerlendirmek için kullanıldı: bağlam, kronoloji ve tema. Güvenilirlik açısından anlatıların %25'i raslantısal olarak (480 anlatı) kodlanmıştır. Bağlam için

Cronbach α puanları .84 ile .94 arasında deęişirken, ICC puanları .79 ile .89 arasında deęişmektedir. Benzer şekilde, kronoloji için Cronbach α puanları .88 ile .93 arasında deęişirken, ICC puanları .75 ile .84 arasında deęişmektedir. Son olarak, tema için Cronbach α puanları .89 ile .96 arasında deęişirken, ICC puanları .74 ile .92 arasında deęişmektedir.

Nedenler

Dolaylı gemiş deneyimleri paylaşma nedenleri, alıřma 1'deki kategorilere kodlanmıřtır. Güvenilirlik amacıyla, rastlantısal olarak seilmiş %25 ($N = 246$) yanıt alıřmanın hedeflerinden habersiz ikinci bir kodlayıcı tarafından da kodlandı.

Güvenilirlięi test etmek için Cohen kappa katsayısı kullanıldı. Cohen kappa katsayısı, olumsuz anlatılar için .88 ($p < .001$), olumlu anlatılar için .88 ($p < .001$) ve dönüm noktası anlatıları için .92 ($p < .001$) olarak bulundu.

Temel Bulgular

Hipotez 1a:

Bulgular Hipotez 1a'yı destekledi.

Olumsuz anılardaki anlatı bütünlükleri ($r = .27, p < .01$), olumlu anılardaki anlatı bütünlükleri ($r = .46, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anılarındaki anlatı bütünlükleri pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .47, p < .01$).

Hipotez 1b:

Deęerlięe ilişkin bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Olumsuz anılardaki deęerlikler ($r = .34, p < 0.01$), olumlu anılardaki deęerlikler ($r = .32, p < 0.01$) ve dönüm noktası anılarındaki deęerlikler pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .21, p < 0.01$). Canlılıęa ilişkin bulgular hipotezi kısmen destekledi. Olumsuz anılardaki canlılıklar ilişkili deęildi ($r = .08, p > .05$). Olumlu anılardaki canlılıklar ($r = .24, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anılardaki canlılıklar pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .21, p < .01$).

Hipotez 1c:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Olumsuz anlardaki sosyal işlevler ($r = .20, p < .01$). Olumlu anlardaki sosyal işlevler ($r = .26, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anlardaki sosyal işlevler pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .20, p < .01$). Olumsuz anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri ($r = .14, p < .01$), olumlu anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri ($r = .24, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .24, p < .01$). Olumsuz anlardaki benlik işlevleri ($r = .21, p < .01$), olumlu anlardaki benlik işlevleri ($r = .16, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anlardaki benlik işlevleri pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .15, p < .01$).

Hipotez 2a:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Kişisel olumsuz anlatılar ($M = 5.57, SD = 2.46$), dolaylı olumsuz anlatılardan ($M = 4.87, SD = 2.04$), $t(306) = 4.50, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü.. Kişisel olumlu anlatılar ($M = 5.52, SD = 2.21$), dolaylı olumlu anlatılardan ($M = 4.74, SD = 1.97$), $t(298) = 6.12, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü. Kişisel dönüm noktası anlatıları ($M = 5.68, SD = 2.17$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anlatılarından ($M = 4.61, SD = 2.04$), $t(294) = 8.37, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü.

Hipotez 2b:

Değerliğe ilişkin bulgular Hipotez 2b'yi kısmen destekledi. Kişisel olumlu anlının değerliği ($M = 9.16, SD = 1.42$), dolaylı olumlu anlının değerliğinden ($M = 8.61, SD = 1.84$), $t(298) = 4.87, p < .001$ yüksekti. Ancak kişisel olumsuz anlının değerliliği ($M = 3.47, SD = 3.13$) ile dolaylı olumsuz anlının değerliliği ($M = 3.72, SD = 2.86$) arasındaki fark, $t(306) = -1.28, p > 0.05$; ve kişisel dönüm noktası anlının değerliliği ($M = 6.98, SD = 3.23$) ve dolaylı dönüm noktası anlının değerliliği ($M = 6.57, SD = 3.19$), $t(297) = 1.73, p > 0.05$ arasındaki fark anlamlı değildi.

Canlılığa ilişkin hipotezi desteklendi. Kişisel olumsuz anlının canlılığı ($M = 8.66, SD = 1.91$), dolaylı olumsuz anlının canlılığından ($M = 7.08, SD = 2.31$), $t(306) = 9.61, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anlının canlılığı ($M = 9.10, SD = 1.40$), dolaylı olumlu

anıların canlılığından ($M = 7.43, SD = 2.25$), $t(298) = 12.50, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası canlılığı ($M = 8.67, SD = 1.83$), dolaylı dönüm noktası canlılığından ($M = 7.54, SD = 2.44$), $t(297) = 7.35, p < .001$ yüksekti.

Hipotez 2c:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki sosyal işlev ($M = 3.58, SD = 1.39$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.13, SD = 1.24$), $t(306) = 16.29, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki sosyal işlev ($M = 3.69, SD = 1.36$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.48, SD = 1.40$), $t(299) = 12.44, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası anılardaki sosyal işlev ($M = 4.36, SD = 0.98$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılardaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.44$), $t(298) = 18.206, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 3.40, SD = 1.40$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.59, SD = 1.29$), $t(306) = 7.99, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 3.75, SD = 1.26$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.52, SD = 1.32$), $t(299) = 13.38, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası anılardaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 4.20, SD = 1.48$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılardaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.94, SD = 1.44$), $t(298) = 13.60, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki benlik işlevi ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.23$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 2.61, SD = 1.32$), $t(306) = 14.46, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki benlik işlevi ($M = 4.10, SD = 1.06$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 2.83, SD = 1.43$), $t(299) = 13.45, p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası anılardaki benlik işlevi ($M = 4.43, SD = .96$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılardaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 3.10, SD = 1.43$), $t(298) = 14.38, p < .001$ yüksekti.

Hipotez 3a:

Kişisel olumsuz anı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 309) = 88.18, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .57, p < .001, 95\% [.01, .02]$) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .15, p < .001, 95\% [.29, 1.17]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Kişisel olumlu anı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 309) =$

112.68, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .17, p < .001, 95\% [.40, 1.16]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Kişisel dönüm noktası anısı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 309) = 121.76, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .20, p < .001, 95\% [.53, 1.27]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı.

Dolaylı olumsuz anı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 308) = 78.88, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .56, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .11, p < .001, 95\% [.09, .84]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Dolaylı olumlu anı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 298) = 154.21, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .70, p < .001, 95\% [.03, .04]$) yordarken, cinsiyetse ($\beta = .08, p = .05, 95\% [-.00, .63]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordamadı. Dolaylı dönüm noktası anısı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 294) = 17.53, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .71, p < .001, 95\% [.04, .05]$) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .11, p < .001, 95\% [.13, .77]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı.

Hipotez 3b:

Mevcut çalışmada cinsiyet ve fenomenolojik özellikler arasında anlamlı bir korelasyon olmadığı görülmüştür. Bu nedenle Hipotez 3b desteklenmemiştir.

Keşifsel Hipotezler:

Cinsiyet otobiyografik bellek işlevleriyle ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleriyle ilişkili çıkmamıştır.

Kişisel dönüm noktası anısı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 308) = 108.76, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .62, p < .001, 95\% [.02, .03]$) ve yaş grubu ($\beta = -.12, p = .01, 95\% [-.91, -.15]$), anlatı bütünlüğünü anlamlı şekilde yordadı. Dolaylı olumlu anı tutarlılığı için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 298) = 154.08, p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .69, p < .001, 95\%$

[.035, .044]) anlamlı şekilde yordarken, yaş grubu ($\beta = -.08$, $p = .06$, 95% [-.63, .01]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordamadı.

Çalışma 3

Bu çalışmanın amacı, farklı bir örneklem kullanarak Çalışma 2'nin bulgularının replikasyonunu yapmaktır. Bu kapsamda, Çalışma 2'deki hipotezler yeniden test edilmiştir. Çalışma 2'de cinsiyet, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleriyle ilişkili çıkmadığı için bu bağlantılar kişisel olarak test edilmiştir.

Ek olarak, anlatı bütünlüğü ve kişisel ve ilişkisel psikolojik işleyişle ilgili değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler kişisel olarak test edilmiştir.

Yöntem

Katılımcılar

Bu çalışma 119 heteroseksüel çiftten oluşmuştur ($N = 238$). Bütün katılımcılar lisans öğrencisidir ($Ort_{yaş} = 21.11$, $SS = 1.06$). Katılımcıların ortalama ilişki süresi 23.60 aydır ($SS = 17.72$).

İşlem

Mevcut çalışma, ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'ndan 0281-ODTUIAEK-2023 protokol numarasıyla onaylanmıştır. Çalışma 1 ve 2'deki prosedür uygulanmıştır.

Ölçüm Araçları

Bu çalışmada demografik bilgi formu, Yaşam Öyküsü Görüşmesi – II'nin (McAdams, 2008) yazılı versiyonu, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri için tek maddelik takip soruları kullanılmıştır. Ek olarak, Yaşam Doyumu Ölçeği, İlişki Mutluluğu Ölçeği, Algılanan Partner Duyarlılığı ve İlişkisel Benlik ölçekleri kullanılmıştır.

Kodlama Şeması

Anlatı Bütünlüğü

Anlatı Bütünlüğü Kodlama Şeması (NaCCS; Reese vd., 2011), anlatının bütünlüğünü değerlendirmek için kullanılmıştır. Güvenilirlik için anlatıların %40 raslantısal olarak (582 anlatı) kodlanmıştır. Bağlam için Cronbach α puanları .83 ile .90 arasındayken, ICC puanları .70 ile .83 arasındaydı. Benzer şekilde, kronoloji için Cronbach α puanları .83 ile .88 arasındayken, ICC puanları .70 ile .76 arasındaydı. Son olarak, tema için Cronbach α puanları .86 ile .93 aralığındayken, ICC puanları .76 ile .86 arasındaydı.

Nedenler

Dolaylı geçmiş deneyimlerini paylaşma nedenleri, Çalışma 1'deki kategorilere kodlanmıştır. Güvenilirlik amacıyla, rastlantısal olarak seçilmiş %100 ($N = 692$) yanıt çalışmanın hedeflerinden habersiz ikinci bir kodlayıcı tarafından da kodlandı. Güvenilirliği test etmek için Cohen kappa kullanıldı. Cohen kappa, olumsuz anlatılar için .89 ($p < .001$), olumlu anlatılar için .86 ($p < .001$) ve dönüm noktası anlatıları için .89 ($p < .001$) idi.

Temel Bulgular

Hipotez 1a:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Olumsuz anılardaki anlatı bütünlükleri ($r = .36, p < .01$), olumlu anılardaki anlatı bütünlükleri ($r = .37, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anılardaki anlatı bütünlükleri ($r = .41, p < .01$) pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi.

Hipotez 1b:

Değerliğe ilişkin bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki değerlikler ($r = .19, p < .01$), kişisel olumlu anılardaki değerlikler ($r = .20, p < .01$) ve kişisel dönüm noktası anılardaki değerlikler birbirlerinin dolaylı karşılıklarıyla pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .24, p < .01$). Canlılığa ilişkin bulgular hipotezi kısmen destekledi.

Olumsuz anlardaki canlılıklar ($r = .14, p < .01$), olumlu anlardaki canlılıklar ($r = .27, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anlardaki canlılıklar pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .12, p < .01$).

Hipotez 1c:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Olumsuz anlardaki sosyal işlevler ilişkili değildi ($r = .04, p = .48$). Olumlu anlardaki sosyal işlevler ve ($r = .25, p < .01$) dönüm noktası anlardaki sosyal işlevler pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .25, p < .01$). Olumsuz anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri ($r = .15, p < .05$), olumlu anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri ($r = .33, p < .01$) ve dönüm noktası anlardaki yönlendirme işlevleri pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .19, p < .01$). Olumsuz anlardaki benlik işlevleri pozitif yönde ilişkiliydi ($r = .18, p < .01$). Olumlu anlardaki benlik işlevleri ve ($r = .12, p = .06$) dönüm noktası anlardaki benlik işlevleri ilişkili değildi ($r = .10, p = .12$).

Hipotez 2a:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Kişisel olumsuz anlatılar ($M = 6.40, SD = 1.96$, dolaylı olumsuz anlatılardan ($M = 5.09, SD = 1.75$), $t(234) = 9.43, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü. Kişisel olumlu anlatılar ($M = 5.73, SD = 1.83$), dolaylı olumlu anlatılardan ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.80$), $t(225) = 9.45, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü. Benzer şekilde, kişisel dönüm noktası anlatıları ($M = 5.58, SD = 2.20$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anlatılarından ($M = 4.51, SD = 1.90$), $t(227) = 7.17, p < .001$ daha bütünlüklüydü.

Hipotez 2b:

Değerliğe ilişkin bulgular hipotezi kısmen destekledi. Kişisel olumlu anlamların değerliği ($M = 9.41, SD = .92$), dolaylı olumlu anlamların değerliğinden ($M = 8.67, SD = 1.76$), $t(225) = 6.05, p < .001$ anlamlı derecede yüksekti. Ancak kişisel olumsuz anlamların değerliliği ($M = 3.35, SD = 2.89$) ile dolaylı olumsuz anlamların değerliliği ($M = 3.67, SD = 2.87$), $t(234) = -1.31, p > .05$; arasındaki fark ve kişisel dönüm noktası anlamların değerliliği ($M = 6.74, SD = 3.23$) ve dolaylı dönüm noktası anlamların değerliliği ($M = 6.61, SD = 3.31$), $t(227) = .45, p > .05$ arasındaki fark anlamlı değildi. Canlılığa ilişkin hipotezi desteklendi. Kişisel olumsuz anlamların canlılığı ($M = 8.94, SD = 1.65$), dolaylı

olumsuz anıların canlılığından ($M = 7.20$, $SD = 2.15$), $t(234) = 10.36$, $p < .001$ anlamlı derecede yüksekti.

Kişisel olumlu anıların canlılığı ($M = 9.16$, $SD = 1.34$ dolaylı olumlu anıların canlılığından ($M = 7.52$, $SD = 2.36$), $t(225) = 10.32$, $p < .001$ anlamlı derecede yüksekti.

Kişisel dönüm noktası canlılığı ($M = 8.69$, $SD = 1.76$), dolaylı dönüm noktası canlılığından ($M = 7.46$, $SD = 2.38$), $t(227) = 6.67$, $p < .001$ anlamlı derecede yüksekti.

Hipotez 2c:

Bulgular hipotezi destekledi. Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki sosyal işlev ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.43$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(234) = 10.56$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki sosyal işlev ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.37$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.45$), $t(225) = 9.30$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası anılarındaki sosyal işlev ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 1.15$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılarındaki sosyal işlevden ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.54$), $t(227) = 13.06$, $p < .001$ yüksekti.

Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.37$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.25$), $t(234) = 7.39$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.32$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.41$), $t(225) = 11.40$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel dönüm noktası anılarındaki yönlendirme işlevi ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.29$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılarındaki yönlendirme işlevinden ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.47$), $t(227) = 9.63$, $p < .001$ yüksekti.

Kişisel olumsuz anılardaki benlik işlevi ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.23$), dolaylı olumsuz anılardaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.32$), $t(306) = 14.46$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel olumlu anılardaki benlik işlevi ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.06$), dolaylı olumlu anılardaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.43$), $t(299) = 13.45$, $p < .001$ yüksekti. Kişisel

dönüm noktası anılarındaki benlik işlevi ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .96$), dolaylı dönüm noktası anılarındaki benlik işlevinden ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.43$), $t(298) = 14.38$, $p < .001$ yüksekti.

Hipotez 3a:

Kişisel olumsuz anı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 234) = 52.11$, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$, 95% [.01, .01]) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$, 95% [.58, 1.42]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Benzer şekilde, olumlu anı tutarlığı için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 234) = 58.37$, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .53$, $p < .001$, 95% [.01, .02]) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .21$, $p < .001$, 95% [.39, 1.16]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı.

Kişisel dönüm noktası anısı anlatı bütünlüğü için de anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 231) = 86.97$, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .55$, $p < .001$, 95% [.01, .02]) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .30$, $p < .001$, 95% [.92, 1.79]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Dolaylı olumsuz anı anlatı bütünlüğü için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi, $F(2, 233) = 84.37$, $p < .001$. Hem toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .62$, $p < .001$, 95% [.01, .02]) hem de cinsiyet ($\beta = .12$, $p = .014$, 95% [.09, .77]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı.

Benzer şekilde, dolaylı olumlu anı tutarlığı için anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 223) = 80.51$, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .62$, $p < .001$, 95% [.02, .03]) ve cinsiyet ($\beta = .13$, $p = .008$, 95% [.12, .85]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordadı. Dolaylı dönüm noktası anısı anlatı bütünlüğünü için de anlamlı bir regresyon denklemi elde edildi $F(2, 227) = 152.78$, $p < .001$. Toplam kelime sayısı ($\beta = .71$, $p < .001$, 95% [.04, .05]) yordarken, cinsiyet $\beta = .07$, $p = .07$, 95% [-.03, .62]), anlatı bütünlüğünü yordamadı.

Keşifsel Hipotezler:

Cinsiyet, fenomenolojik özellikler, otobiyografik bellek işlevleri ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleriyle ilişkili çıkmamıştır. Ayrıca, anlatı bütünlüğünün kişisel ve

ilişkisel psikolojik çıktılarla (yaşam doyumu, ilişki doyumu, algılanan partner duyarlılığı ve başkasının benlikte içerilmesi) ilişkili değildir.

Genel Tartışma

Önceki araştırmalar, kişisel geçmişimizi hatırlama şeklimizin, başkaları için dolaylı anıları hatırlama şeklimizle yakından bağlantılı olduğunu göstermişti (Lind & Thomsen, 2018; Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015). Benzer şekilde, bu tez çalışmasında da kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinde temalar, anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevleri açısından benzerlikler olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu kapsamda, mevcut çalışmalar alan yazını desteklemiştir. Kişisel ve dolaylı anıların benzer doğasına rağmen, önceki çalışmalar bu anılar arasında belirli farklılıklar saptamıştır (Pillemer vd., 2015; Pond ve Patterson, 2020). Literatürü destekler şekilde, güncel çalışmalarda da kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküsü anlatılarında anlatı bütünlüğü, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik belleğin işlevlerinde farklılıklar bulduk. Kişisel anıların daha bütünlüklü olduğunu, fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleri açısından daha yüksek skorlar aldığını tespit ettik. Bu bulgular ışığında, bulgular ilgili alan yazını desteklemiştir.

Önceki çalışmalar cinsiyetin anlatı bütünlüğünde, fenomenolojik özelliklerde, otobiyografik bellek işlevlerinde ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenlerinde potansiyel bir rolü olduğunu göstermiştir. Alan yazınla uyumlu olarak, bu tez çalışmasında da kadınların kişisel ve dolaylı anılar için daha bütünlüklü anlatılar ürettiği görülmüştür. Ne var ki, cinsiyet ile fenomenolojik özellikler ve otobiyografik bellek işlevleri arasında ilişki bulunmamıştır. Sistemik bir incelemeye göre, ölçek temelli ölçümlerde cinsiyet farklarının çıkmaması otobiyografik bellek literatürü için yaygın bir durumdur (Grysmen & Hudson, 2013). Cinsiyetin rolünü daha iyi anlamak için katılımcıların kişisel geçmiş olayları nasıl tanımladıklarını veya yazdıklarını incelemek daha etkili olabilir. Bu sayede, ölçek temelli derecelendirmelerin kaçırabileceği bilişsel süreçleri daha iyi tespit edilebilir. Aile bağlamında yapılan önceki çalışmaların aksine, bu tez çalışmalarında cinsiyet ve dolaylı anıları paylaşma nedenleri arasında da anlamlı bir ilişki çıkmamıştır. Bu durum, romantik ilişkilerin

farklı doğasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Ayrıca, anlamsız sonuçlar, mevcut çalışmaların örneklem özelliklerine de atfedilebilir. Katılımcıların yüksek eğitim seviyesinden gelen yetişkinler olması, cinsiyet farklılıklarını maskeleyebilir.

Ek olarak sonuçlar, yaş grubunun anlatı bütünlüğü üzerinde yalnızca kişisel dönüm noktası anlatıları anlamlı olduğunu gösterdi. Beliren yetişkinlik dönemi daha yüksek anlatı bütünlüğünü yordamıştır. Bu bulgunun bir açıklaması, bu yaş grubunun hayatlarının en hareketli dönemlerinden birinde olması olabilir. Bu nedenle, beliren yetişkinlik dönemindeki katılımcılar kişisel dönüm noktaları için daha bütünlüklü anlatılar üretmiş olabilirler. Anlatı bütünlüğü ve kişisel ve ilişkisel psikolojik çıktılar özelindeyse, anlatı bütünlüğünün çalışmada kullanılan yaşam doyumu, ilişki mutluluğu, algılanan partner duyarlılığı ve ilişkisel benlik değişkenleriyle ilişkili olmadığı görülmüştür. Bu kapsamda bu değişkenleri farklı bellek özellikleriyle test etmek önemli olabilir.

Yukarıdaki bilgiler ışığında, bu tez literatüre önemli katkılarda bulunmuştur. İlk olarak, romantik çiftlerin kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerini ilk kez Türk kültürel bağlamında incelemiştir. İkincisi, bildiğimiz kadarıyla, mevcut çalışmalar kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri arasındaki anlatı bütünlüğündeki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları inceleyen ilk çalışmalardır. Üçüncü olarak, mevcut çalışmalar kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öyküleri için otobiyografik hafıza değerlendirmelerinin fenomenolojik özellikleri ve işlevlerindeki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları göstererek literatüre katkıda bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, çalışmalar otobiyografik bellekte cinsiyet farklılıklarına dair araştırmaları genişletmiştir. Bildiğimiz kadarıyla, bu araştırma dolaylı anılar açısından anlatı bütünlüğünde cinsiyet farklılıklarına dair ilk kanıtları sağlamıştır. Yöntemsel güçlü yönler gelince, kişisel ve dolaylı yaşam öykülerinin üç farklı çalışma boyunca incelenmesi, ilgili literatüre kapsamlı bir yaklaşım sunmuştur. Sonuç olarak, bulgular, kişisel geçmişimizi nasıl hatırladığımızın, diğer kişilerin, özellikle de romantik partnerlerin, dolaylı anılarını nasıl hatırladığımızla yakından ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

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