

TESTING THE VULNERABILITY-STRESS-ADAPTATION MODEL IN
TURKEY: A DYADIC MODEL

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ABSTRACT

TESTING THE VULNERABILITY-STRESS-ADAPTATION MODEL IN TURKEY: A DYADIC MODEL

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The main aim of this dissertation was to test the role of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles as potential mediators of the relationships among affect, negative life events and marital adjustment within the framework of the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model of marriage. To that end, it was planned to conduct the actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) to investigate not only the association among person's own dimensions (actor effect) but also the association between person's own and partner's dimensions (partner effect). The study involved 165 married couples who were in their first marriages, had at least primary school education, lived in big cities, and got official marriage. A demographic information form, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, Life Experiences Survey, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and Conflict Resolution Styles Scale were administered. The models were tested by utilizing a series of path analyses, using the APIM and by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. Results yielded a number of actor and partner effects.

Firstly, they revealed that husbands who showed higher positive affect and experienced lower negative life events, perceived higher social support, and this in turn, predicted own marital adjustment as higher. Secondly, another finding was that wives who reported higher positive affect tended to use more positive conflict resolution, and this in turn, increased both their and their husbands' marital adjustment. However, both wives and husbands who reported higher negative affect tended to use more negative conflict resolution, and this in turn, decreased both their and their partner's marital adjustment. Additionally, husbands who experienced higher negative life events tended to use higher negative conflict resolution, and this in turn, decreased both their and their wives' marital adjustment. Furthermore, when wives experienced higher negative life events, husbands used less negative conflict resolution, and this in turn, increased both wives' and husbands' marital adjustment. The results were discussed with reference to the related literature together with the implications and limitations of the research.

Keywords: Affect, life events, social support, conflict resolution, marital adjustment

ÖZ

İNCİNEBİLİRLİK-STRES-UYUM MODELİNİN TÜRKİYE ÖRNEKLEMİNDE SINANMASI: ÇİFT MODELİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, evlilikte incinebilirlik-stres-uyum modeli çerçevesinde algılanan sosyal desteğin ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin, duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkilerdeki potansiyel aracı rolünü incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Aktör-Partner Bağımlılık Modeli (APIM), kişinin kendi boyutlarıyla beraber (aktör etkisi) kişinin kendisi ve partnerinin boyutları (partner etkisi) arasındaki ilişkiyi de incelemek üzere kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada hepsi ilk evliliklerinde, en az ilkokul eğitimini tamamlamış, büyük şehirlerde yaşayan, resmi nikahlı 165 evli çifte yer verilmiştir. Demografik bilgi formu, Çiftler Uyum Ölçeği, Pozitif ve Negatif Duygu Durum Ölçeği, Yaşam Deneyimleri Ölçeği, Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği ve Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. APIM yoluyla evlilik süreleri, çocuk sayısı ve çiftlerin eğitim seviyeleri kontrol edilerek modelin sınanması amacıyla bir dizi yol analizi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar ele alındığında birçok aktör ve partner etkisi bulunmuştur. İlk olarak, olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan ve olumsuz yaşam deneyimi düşük olan erkekler sosyal

desteklerini de yüksek olarak algılamakta ve bu durum yüksek evlilik uyumunu yordamaktadır. İkinci olarak, olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan kadınların olumlu çatışma çözüm stillerini kullanma eğilimleri yüksek olmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak yükseltmektedir. Aksine, olumsuz duygulanımı yüksek olan kadınların ve erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini kullanma eğilimleri yüksek olmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak düşürmektedir. Buna ek olarak, erkeklerin tecrübe ettiği olumsuz yaşam olayları arttığında olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili kullanma eğilimi artmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak düşürmektedir. Diğer yandan, kadınların tecrübe ettiği olumsuz yaşam olayları arttığında erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili kullanma eğilimi azalmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak yükseltmektedir. Çıkan sonuçlar daha önce alanda yapılmış çalışmalarla birlikte değerlendirilip araştırmanın varsayımları ve sınırlamaları tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Duygulanım, yaşam olayları, sosyal destek, çatışma çözümü, evlilik uyumu

To my beloved husband, Cenk Balkan

&

To my lovely parents and sister, Ayşegül, Yusuf & Burçin

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this section, background information on the topic of study is presented in the first place. Secondly, the aims of the study are stated. Next, the hypotheses of the study are enumerated and lastly, the significance and implications of the study are discussed.

1.1. Background of the Study

Marriage is an intimate relationship that affects physical and psychological health of people (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001), and marital adjustment is seen as a key issue for person's overall happiness (Young, Denny, Luquis, & Young, 1998) and life satisfaction (Be, Whisman, & Uebelacker, 2013; Chiu, 1998). The key concept of marriage, is defined as a relatively stable union between two individuals, who may be, but are not necessarily, sexually involved and procreative with each other, and co-residential (Miller, 2011). Bird and Melville (1994) indicate that a supportive romantic or marital partner acts as a barrier or buffer between individuals and the problems of life. Moreover, Fleeson (2004, as cited in Be et al., 2013) examined factors related to overall life satisfaction such as finances, children, health, work, sexuality, contributions to others, and marital satisfaction, and showed that the strongest association exists between marital satisfaction and overall life satisfaction. On the other hand, distressed (Burman & Margolin, 1992) and low quality (Williams, 2003) marriages lead to health risks. Therefore, the quality and stability of marriage

have extremely important implications for psychological health and well-being (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000).

“Adjustment”, “quality”, “satisfaction”, “success”, “happiness”, “distress” and “stability” are the most commonly used terms in the investigation of marital relationship. Some researchers use these different terms in the same meaning. For example, Timm (1999) suggests that it is suitable to use the terms such as happiness, adjustment, satisfaction, stability and quality as synonyms. Similarly, Kluwer (2000) describes marital adjustment as marital satisfaction, marital success, marital happiness and marital quality. Spanier and Cole (1976) also conceptualize marital adjustment as a general concept that encapsulates both the terms satisfaction and happiness. Moreover, Vangelisti (2004) defines marital quality as overall quality of life within a marital relationship, measured in terms of adjustment, stability and satisfaction. Eventually, in this study, these terms and marital adjustment were used interchangeably.

Most research on marital quality has examined various factors that predict marital adjustment. Karney and Bradbury (1995) developed a vulnerability–stress–adaptation model (VSA) for understanding the process how marriages sustain or are damaged by reviewing findings of 115 longitudinal studies. The model is a comprehensive framework that explains the relationships between enduring vulnerabilities, stressful life events, adaptive processes, marital quality, and stability. According to the model, enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events apply their effect on marriage through adaptive processes. Enduring vulnerabilities or individual factors are the stable characteristics which people bring into marriage, such as demographic, personality traits, attachment styles, family history, and psychopathology. Stressful events are the daily incidents that spouses confront such as transitions, situations, incidents and chronic or acute circumstances. Adaptive processes are the ways spouses use to cope with differences, difficulties and transitions, and their appraisals of marital interaction. Therefore, the model proposes that relations among vulnerabilities,

stressors, and behaviors, both adaptive and maladaptive, are expected to lead to alterations in marital adjustment and maladjustment and, ultimately, marital stability and instability.

Enduring vulnerabilities or stable characteristics that each spouse brings into marriage has a considerable influence on marital quality (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). In the literature on the subject, researchers have provided that different variables such as age, length of marriage, education, employment status, number of marriages (Jose & Alfons, 2007), gender (e.g., Jose & Alfons, 2007; Renaud, Byers, & Pan, 1997; Sprecher, 2002), existence of children (e.g., Jose & Alfons, 2007; White & Edwards, 1990), personality traits (e.g., Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Gattis, Berns, Simpson, & Christensen 2004; Reath, Piercy, Hovestadt, & Oliver, 1980), attachment (e.g., Clymer, 2009; Egeci & Gençöz, 2006), loneliness (Demir & Fıfılođlu, 1999), and psychological problems (e.g., Lemmens, Buysse, Heene, Eisler, & Demyttenaere, 2007; Shek, 1995) are associated with marital adjustment. Besides, trait affect is more like a stable and enduring personality characteristics and it is generally investigated with reference to two constructs: positive affect and negative affect (Watson & Clark, 1984). Positive affect is defined as a tendency to “experience frequent and intense episodes of pleasant, pleasurable mood; generally speaking, being cheerful, enthusiastic, energetic, confident, and alert” (Watson, 2002, p. 106), negative affect, on the other hand, is described as a tendency to be distressed, upset and have a negative view of self (Watson & Clark, 1984).

Affect is an important enduring vulnerability helps us understand marital relationship. In the literature, results show that both positive (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009; Watson et al., 2000) and negative affect (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Donnellan, Conger, & Bryant, 2004; Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Renshaw, Blais, & Smith, 2010; Watson et al., 2000) are the predictors of marital adjustment. Additionally, individual’s affect is associated not only with their own marital adjustment, but also with their partner’s marital adjustment (Fisher & McNulty, 2008;

Gordon & Baucom, 2009; Hanzal & Segrin, 2009; Watson et al., 2000). Specifically, the suggestion is that especially negative affect has a connection with poor marital quality and risk of divorce (Kelly & Conley, 1987). Furthermore, affect is also related to how individuals perceive social support (Steptoe, Dockray, & Wardle, 2009; Swickert, Hittner, & Foster, 2010; Swickert & Owens, 2010) and how individuals resolve conflict (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009; Montes, Rodriguez, & Serrano, 2012; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a, 2013b) in marriage. In brief, trait affect is an essential enduring vulnerability provides us informing about marriage.

In addition to enduring vulnerabilities, Karney and Bradbury (1995) state that stressful events, which are the daily incidents including transitions, situations, incidents and chronic or acute circumstances that spouses confront, have a substantial impact on marital quality. Most individuals get married, become parents, move, change job, get sick, divorce, lose their jobs, and retire over the life time. The influence of these life events may vary based on the individuals' subjective feelings of the impacts of life events as positive or negative under different circumstances (Sarason, Johnson, & Siegel, 1978). Negative life events are the series of recent events experienced negatively (Tesser & Beach, 1998). Sarason et al. (1978) suggest that it is more negative life changes than positive or total changes which most accurately conceptualize life stress. Additionally, couples' perceptions of life events as negative or stressful may be linked more closely to marital quality than to their objective experiences (Williams, 1995).

In the literature, the effects of life events on marriage have shown widely. Research has demonstrated that spouses who report more negative and stressful life events tend to evaluate their marriages less satisfactory (e.g., Bird, Schuham, Benson, & Gans, 1981; Li & Wickrama, 2014; Neff & Karney, 2009; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a). Besides, wives and husbands who perceive more negative impact of life events determine their spouses' lower marital adjustment, in addition to their own (Neff & Karney, 2007). Moreover, experience of stressful life events lead to higher

frequencies of marital aggression (Cano & Vivian, 2001, 2003; Frye & Karney, 2006), more hostile and less supportive behaviors and less warmth (Conger et al., 1990; Matthews, Conger, & Wickrama, 1996) in marriage. Furthermore, negative impact of life events seen in marriage has an influence on spouses' capacity for adaptation such as perceived social support and conflict resolution styles; that is, perceiving less support (Norris & Kaniasty, 1996; Keinan, 1997) and using less constructive conflict resolution (Conger et al., 1990; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a). Consequently, negative life events are significant factors affecting marital relationship negatively.

Apart from the stable characteristics people bring into marriage and the stressful events they experience, a couple's interactions or behaviors they exchange, that are adaptive processes, can also influence marital quality (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Behaviors spouses express while solving a marital problem or conflict, their appraisals of marital interaction and their perception of support are the examples of adaptive processes. Based on the VSA, enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events apply their effect on marriage through adaptive processes. Additionally, the model suggests that adaptive processes have the most direct effect on marital quality, which would, in turn, lead a marriage to stability. Therefore, adaptive processes play a critical role in the marriage.

Perceived social support represents adaptive processes and it is the individual's beliefs about the accessibility of varied types of support from social networks or the significant others (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). The significant others may include the possible support sources such as family members, spouses, close friends, neighbors, relatives, and coworkers (Thoits, 1986). In fact, social support in marriage can be satisfied by individuals who become within and outside the marriage. The literature has shown that both perceived spousal support and support acquired from outside the marriage may have a positive influence on how the spouse behaves within marriage

(e.g., Fincham, 2003; Julien & Markman, 1991; Pasch & Bradbury, 1998; Scheidler, 2008; Tuncay-Senlet, 2012).

In addition to perceived social support, marital conflict resolution style is also part of adaptive processes. Marital conflict is described as a state of reported dissonance in marital relationships that arise from differences between spouses (Mackey, Diemer, & O'Brien, 2000). While conflict may be generated by any one or a combination of matters, such as the control of finances, designation of how the roles of each other are defined, personality discrepancy, difficulties in clarifying needs and so on (Mackey et al., 2000), what couples argue about or how often they experience conflicts seems to be less substantial compared to how they argue and disagree about issues (Cohan & Bradbury, 1994; Stanley, Markman, & Whitton, 2002). Conflict resolution is associated with how couples manage conflict (Mackey et al., 2000) and Batool and Khalid (2012) state that “the secret of healthy marriage is not the absence of conflict, but the ways of resolving the conflict” (p. 66).

Although conflict resolution styles have been clarified in different ways, basically, constructive and destructive styles come forward. Destructive management is defined as increasing spirals of manipulation, avoidance spirals, threat and coercion, retaliation, a competitive pattern of dominance and subordination, inflexibility and rigidity, and demeaning and degrading verbal and nonverbal communication (Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). Constructive management, conversely, is described as flexibility, cooperation, enhancement of self-esteem, interaction with the intent to learn instead of intent to protect, a relationship focus instead of an individual focus (Wilmot & Hocker, 2011). It is suggested that if dealing with conflict occurs in a constructive way, marital adjustment and stability will increase, whereas if dealing with conflict occurs in a destructive way, the couples have a tendency to state unsatisfactory marriage (Fincham, 2003; Gottman, 1993; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). Conflict resolution styles have an affiliation with not only poor marital

quality, but also with the risk of divorce (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998).

Based on the VSA, adaptive processes (e.g., perceived social support and conflict resolution style) can intervene the relationship both between enduring vulnerabilities and marital outcome and between stressful events and marital outcome for the longitudinal link (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). For example, Fincham (2003) suggests that external stressors may affect marriage directly, and problem solving skills and conflict may have little influence on marriage in the absence of external stressors. Also, Hanzal and Segrin (2009) indicate partial support that conflict styles (i.e., positive problem solving, conflict engagement and withdrawal) mediate the association between negative affect and marital quality. Moreover, Woszidlo and Segrin (2013b) have found the link that there is a significant indirect relationship between negative affect and marital quality through mutual problem solving for husbands, not for wives.

In conclusion, while various factors determine marital adjustment, VSA gives an opportunity to understand the association among these variables in a comprehensive framework (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). According to VSA, enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events apply their effect on marriage through adaptive processes. Although the literature findings show the association among affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles, and marital adjustment (e.g., Berry & Willingham, 1997; Donnellan et al., 2004; Li & Wickrama, 2014; Greeff & Bruyne, 2000), the current research investigates them comprehensively in a dyadic manner. Therefore, in the current research, affect (i.e., positive and negative) represents enduring vulnerability, negative impact of life events represents stressful events, perceived social support and conflict resolution styles (i.e., positive and negative) represent adaptive process, and marital adjustment represents marital quality.

1.2. Aims of the Study

As presented in the literature above, many studies pointed to the relationships among affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles, and marital adjustment. Nonetheless, some of them examined variables independently, while others examined them using VSA included limited variables. On the other hand, Karney and Bradbury (1995) suggested VSA to be a theoretical framework which explains the relationships between enduring vulnerabilities, stressful life events, adaptive processes, marital quality, and stability. The model gave an opportunity to understand these relationships comprehensively. Karney and Bradbury (1995) also suggest that the relationship between any two of VSA dimensions will give deficient information without any knowledge on the other dimension. In the light of these information, the main aim of this study is to identify comprehensive model of VSA on the basis of associations among affect (i.e., positive and negative), negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles (i.e., positive and negative), and marital adjustment of couples. The variables were defined via VSA; affect was an enduring vulnerability, negative life events were stressful events, perceived social support and conflict resolution styles were adaptive processes, and marital adjustment was an indicator of marital quality. Although it was suggested whatever affects marriages' nature and quality should affect both spouses (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009), much of what we know about marriage is based on studies that have collected individual data in Turkey. Thus, the current study aims to include both partners' affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles, and marital adjustment into analyses. For this purpose, it was planned to investigate not only the association among person's own dimensions (actor effect) but also the association between person's own and partner's dimensions (partner effect). Additionally, it was mentioned that due to some studies have focused on maximizing the likelihood of conflict and minimizing the likelihood of supportive behavior, they may have overestimated the importance of conflict and underestimated the role of social support in marriage (Cutrona, 1996). Considering the probability of

suppression effect of conflict resolution style on perceived social support, the current study aims to examine the role of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles, respectively, as potential mediators of the relationships between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment.

1.3. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are proposed in this study on the basis of theoretical associations summarized above. Specifically, the current study examined the hypotheses (H) below;

H1: Affect dimensions and negative life events of wives and husbands would predict marital adjustment of couples.

H1a: Positive affect of wives and husbands would predict marital adjustment of couples positively.

H1b: Negative affect of wives and husbands would predict marital adjustment of couples negatively.

H1c: Negative life events of wives and husbands would predict marital adjustment of couples negatively.

H2: Perceived social support would mediate the relationship between affect dimensions, negative life events and marital adjustment of couples (See Figure 1).

H2a: Perceived social support would mediate the relationship between positive affect and marital adjustment of couples.

H2b: Perceived social support would mediate the relationship between negative affect and marital adjustment of couples.

H2c: Perceived social support would mediate the relationship between negative life events and marital adjustment of couples.

H3: Conflict resolution style would mediate the relationship between affect dimensions, negative life events and marital adjustment of couples (See Figure 2).

H3a: Conflict resolution style would mediate the relationship between positive affect and marital adjustment of couples.

H3b: Conflict resolution style would mediate the relationship between negative affect and marital adjustment of couples.

H3c: Conflict resolution style would mediate the relationship between negative life events and marital adjustment of couples.

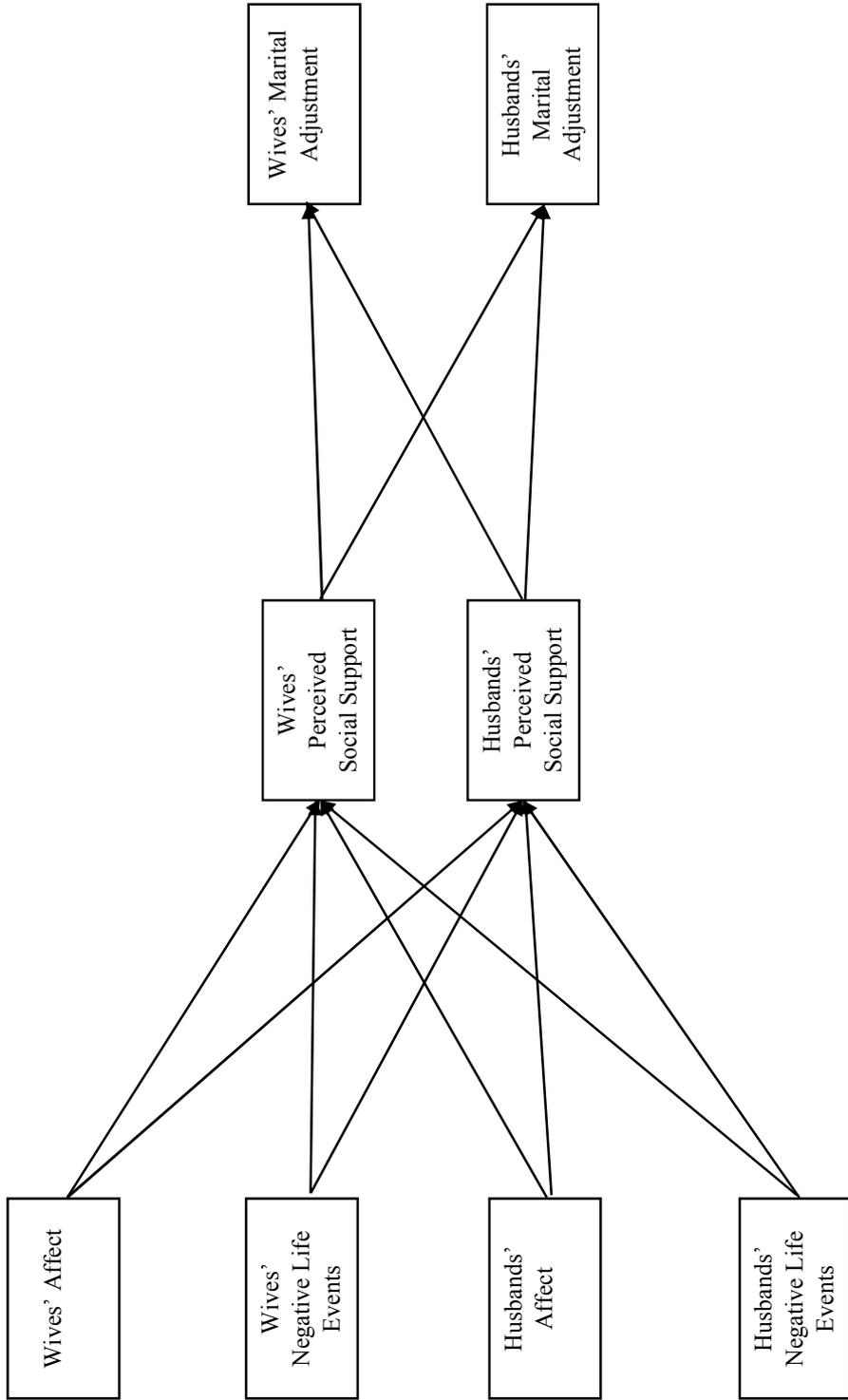


Figure 1. The Conceptual Model for Mediating Effects of Perceived Social Support

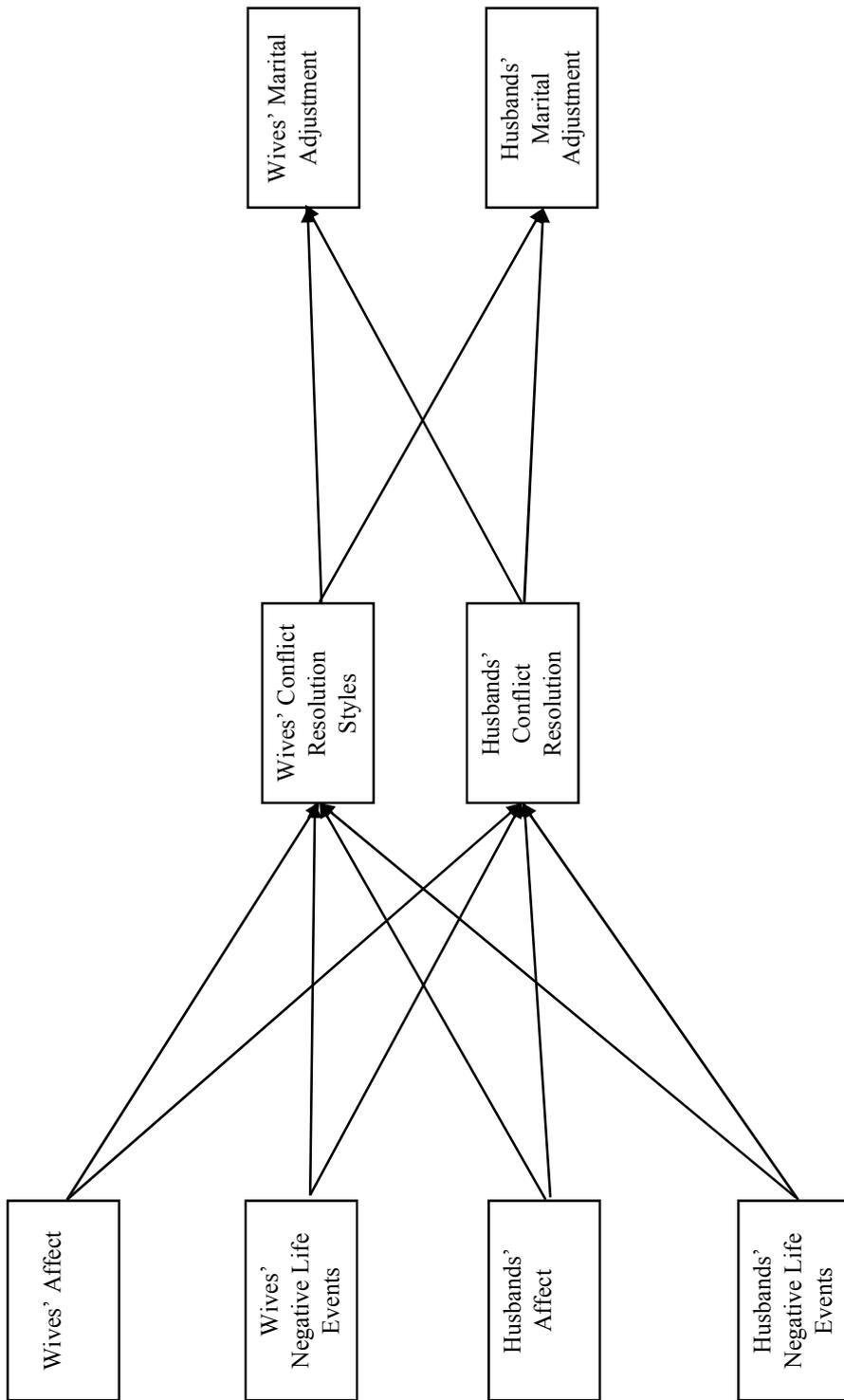


Figure 2. The Conceptual Model for Mediating Effects of Conflict Resolution Styles

1.4. Significance and Implications of the Study

A review of the marriage literature demonstrates that affect, negative life events, perceived social support, and conflict resolution styles are associated with marital quality (e.g., Berry & Willingham, 1997; Donnellan et al., 2004; Li & Wickrama, 2014; Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). Nonetheless, some of these studies examined these variables independently, while other leaned upon VSA including limited variables. Generally, investigations in the literature have focused on three of five components that make up the VSA model: enduring vulnerabilities or stressful events, adaptive processes, and marital quality (e.g. Hanzal & Segrin, 2009). However, Karney and Bradbury (1995) propose that the association between any two of VSA dimensions (which are enduring vulnerability, stressful events and adaptive processes) will give deficient information without any knowledge on the other dimension. Therefore, the current study covered enduring vulnerability (i.e. affect), stressful events (i.e. negative life events), adaptive processes (i.e. perceived social support and conflict resolution styles) and marital quality (i.e. marital adjustment) dimensions.

Although marriages contain two individuals, much of what we know about marriage is based on the studies that have collected individual data in Turkey. Because marital interaction is a jointly constructed and experienced effort, it stands to reason that whatever affects its nature and quality should affect both spouses (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009). The links between one partner's activities or qualities and the other partner's outcomes (i.e., partner effect) are, to some degree, what describes a close relationship (Campbell & Kashy, 2002). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct the researches that reveal the interdependent nature of close relationships in order to fully understand relationship processes. The actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) is a beneficial heuristic for investigating dyads within the social sciences, permitting researchers to better understand both intrapersonal and interpersonal influences simultaneously (Kenny & Ledermann, 2010). Consequently, in the present study,

both actor and partner effects were examined to understand the marital relationship in its detail.

Although marriage and marital quality have been investigated via different variables in the literature, Karney and Bradbury (1995) suggest that presence of theoretical framework to guide the selection of variable is crucial. Lack of a common theoretical framework might consequently result in the lack of advancement in the field toward a more deep explanation of marriage. That is to say, it is important to examine the variables not only in their relation to marriage, but also based on a framework like the one presented in this study. In the light of these information, the present research was conducted within the framework the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model of marriage.

The VSA proposes that adaptive processes have the most direct effect on marital quality, which would, in turn, lead a marriage to stability or instability. Perceived social support and conflict resolution style are two of adaptive processes. However, Cutrona (1996) suggests that since some studies have focused on maximizing the likelihood of conflict and minimizing the likelihood of supportive behavior, they may have overestimated the importance of conflict and underestimated the role of social support in marriage. Consequently, this research examined perceived social support and conflict resolution style separately, due to the probability of suppression effect of conflict resolution style on perceived social support. Therefore, the current research may be helpful to understand their poor effects on marriage.

Most studies about relevant literature have commonly conducted among newlyweds (e.g. Hanzal & Segrin, 2009; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a, 2013b). However, some variables impact on marriage such as positive and negative affect may differ in longer duration (Berry & Willingham, 1997). In other words, it is unclear whether newlyweds' results would stand for the marriages with durations. Therefore, the current study contains wide range of marital durations. Moreover, by controlling the duration effect, the aim was to have more generalized findings from married couples.

Marriages cannot be thought independent from cultural context. As Hünler and Gençöz (2003) indicate all marriages are affected by the culture in which they are experienced. Kağıtçıbaşı (1996) states that Turkey is a country in alteration, where the value of individualism go together with the value of interdependence. In other words, Turkish culture consists of both traditional and modern values and properties (Dirilen-Gümüş & Büyükşahin-Sunal, 2012). Nevertheless, generally related literature was conducted in Western or modern cultures. This study differs from the literature in its use of different samples; therefore, it could be useful to understand how VSA model differs in the Turkish sample.

Many researchers examine the influence of negative affect on marital relationship (e.g., Fisher & McNulty, 2008). On the other hand, Watson et al. (2000) suggest that marital adjustment is essentially a function of individual differences in both positive and negative affect. The current study has aimed to examine positive individual characteristic, which is positive affect, as relevant to marital adjustment and to help clarify how this characteristic is associated with adjustment. Clarifying the role of positive affect in determining adjustment is an essential step toward forming a foundation for future interventions planned to enhance “adjusted” marriages. In consequence, the aim remains to figure out an understanding of positive affect in marriage that will help inform interventions better equipped to support couples through a focus on the improvement of strengths in their marriage.

The literature has shown that marital adjustment is related to marital stability (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Karney & Bradbury, 1995), and the quality and stability of marital relationships have extremely important implications for psychological health and well-being (Watson et al., 2000). Increasing satisfaction and stability in marriages would mean to understand how dissatisfaction occurs and how marital dysfunction is prevented. Therefore, the present study could be helpful in developing protective precautions for marital stability via understanding marital adjustment.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, a review of the related literature is summarized. Marital adjustment, affect, negative life events, perceived social support and conflict resolutions styles are defined. In addition, their effects on marriage are mentioned.

2.1. Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model of Marriage

Karney and Bradbury (1995) promoted a vulnerability-stress-adaptation (VSA) model of marriage that was used as an organizing framework to enlighten relationships among affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles and marital adjustment in the current study. The model was embodied by the features of social exchange theory, behavioral theory, attachment theory and crisis theory. Therefore, each of these theories was briefly stated and followed by a more in-depth statement of the VSA model.

2.1.1. Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory drew from Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) theory of interdependence which focuses on the relative dependence of each partner on the relationship, and the extent to which individual needs are met within the relationship. The theory was applied to marriage by Levinger (1965) and suggested that the formation, development and outcome of relationships were based on an ongoing evaluation of the rewards and costs of the relationship. That is to say, the success or failure of the marriage depends on each spouses' assessment of the attractiveness of the relationship (e.g., emotional security), barriers to abandoning it (e.g., financial or

religious constraints), and the presence of potential alternatives (e.g., other possible partners, independence). According to this perspective, marriages which consist of few attractions, few barriers, and attractive alternatives are more likely to end. Lewis and Spanier (1982, as cited in Karney & Bradbury, 1995) categorized marital relationships as satisfying and stable, satisfying but unstable, unsatisfying but stable, or unsatisfying and unstable by leaning upon the assumptions of social exchange theory. For instance, an unsatisfying but stable marriage would include few attractions, but some barriers to leaving the relationship and/or lack of attractive alternatives. Karney and Bradbury (1995) has discussed that social exchange theory allows for the incorporation of a wide range of variables, distinguishes between marital satisfaction and marital stability and can account for a variety of marital outcomes. However, they have pointed towards some limitations such as not addressing how perceptions of attractions and barriers develop or change, and no explanation of how marriages change over time.

2.1.2. Behavioral Theory

Behavioral theories of marriage were also derived from the theory of interdependence (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). However, Karney and Bradbury (1995) state that although social exchange theory has an intrapersonal focus, behavioral theory has an interpersonal focus. The behavioral theory is based on the exchange of specific behaviors between spouses; the exchange of rewarding, positive behaviors contributes to marital satisfaction, while punishing, negative behaviors damage marital satisfaction (Kelly, Fincham, & Beach, 2003; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). These behavioral exchanges may influence satisfaction through the attributions that partners make for one another's behavior instead of a direct effect on marital satisfaction. Behavioral theory suggests specific mechanisms that clarify how marriages and each spouse's evaluation of the marriage, change over time. It focuses on micro-level interactions such as marital intervention and distress prevention programs. However, Karney and Bradbury (1995) argue that this limits the theory by

not acknowledging the role of macro-level and contextual variables in marital interaction and quality. Moreover, they suggested that the range of marital outcomes clarified by behavioral theory is limited.

2.1.3. Attachment Theory

Attachment theory, originally developed by Bowlby (1969), is based on the association between the infant and his/her primary caregiver. Bowlby stated that this first close relationship creates a mental model of close relationships, which enlightens the nature and development of the people's subsequent relationships. Specific attachment styles were determined by Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978), and the theory was applied to adult romantic relationships by Hazan and Shaver (1987, 1994). One of the main principles of attachment theory is that relationship satisfaction depends primarily on the fulfillment of basic relational needs and individual's confidence in the responsiveness and availability of the spouse to fulfill those needs (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). Karney and Bradbury (1995) has discussed that the limitation of the theory is the explanation of how this personal history contributes to variability and changes in marriage over time.

2.1.4. Crisis Theory

Crisis theory is grounded on Hill's (1949; cited in Karney & Bradbury, 1995) investigation of how families respond to stressful events. Hill's ABCX model involves stressful events (A), the family's resources for managing the stressor (B) and the family's definition or meaning of the events (C) which combine to determine the nature and outcome of the crisis (X). McCubbin and Patterson (1983) extended Hill's model in which stressors, resources, definitions and responses develop over time and the implications for the way families respond to future stressful events. According to these models, stressful events have an impact on marital satisfaction and outcomes, and this association is moderated by the spouse's resources and definition of events (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). However, Karney and Bradbury (1995) has suggested

that the limitation of crisis theory is that it does not suggest specific explanations of how marriages change over time.

2.1.5. Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model

The vulnerability–stress–adaptation model (VSA) for understanding the process how marriages are sustained or damaged was developed by reviewing findings of 115 longitudinal studies (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). The model is a comprehensive framework that explains the relationships between enduring vulnerabilities, stressful life events, adaptive processes, marital quality and stability. Based on the model, enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events apply their effect on marriage through adaptive processes.

Enduring vulnerabilities or individual factors are the stable characteristics which people bring into marriage such as demographic, personality traits, attachment styles, family history, and psychopathology. Stressful events are the daily incidents, including transitions, situations, incidents and chronic or acute circumstances that spouses confront. Adaptive processes are the ways spouses use to solve differences, difficulties and transitions, and their appraisals of marital interaction. Karney and Bradbury (1995) claim that enduring vulnerabilities, stressful events and adaptive processes are consistent with attachment theory, crisis theory and behavioral theory, respectively.

Relations among vulnerabilities, stressors, and behaviors, both adaptive and maladaptive, are expected to lead to changes in marital adjustment and maladjustment and, ultimately, in marital stability and instability. For marital stability, Karney and Bradbury (1995) have suggested a longitudinal research as it is conceptualized as a product of marital quality. Figure 3 demonstrates how enduring vulnerabilities, stressful events, and adaptive processes might be linked to account for variations in marital quality and stability with time and each path shows a hypothesis of the model.

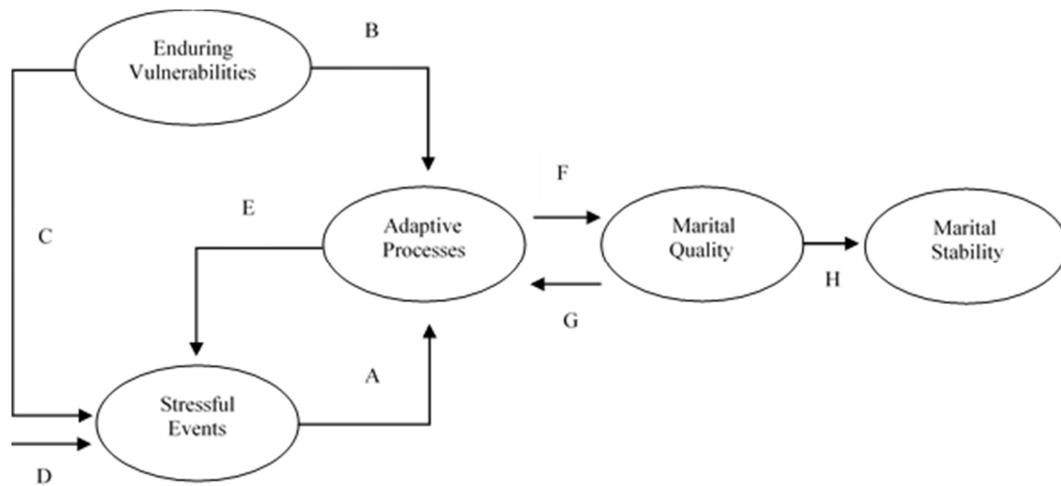


Figure 3. *The Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model for Marriages (Reprinted from Karney & Bradbury, 1995)*

Path A: Stressful events to adaptive processes. Variation in the nature and degree of stress may have an influence on spouses' capacity for adaptation. These adaptations include not only marital interaction, but also the capacity of spouses to provide social support and the attributions that spouses make for partners' behaviors. Additionally, according to VSA model, these adaptations can be a mediator for the longitudinal link between stress and marital outcome.

Path B: Enduring vulnerabilities to adaptive processes. Enduring vulnerabilities that individuals hold may have an effect on spouses' capacity for adaptation. In other words, some backgrounds and traits such as family history, personality traits, and attachment styles, also affect adaptive processes. Similar to the relationship between stressful events and adaptive processes, these adaptations can be a mediator for the longitudinal link between enduring vulnerabilities and marital outcome.

Path C: Enduring vulnerabilities to stressful events. Enduring vulnerabilities may also affect stressful events and circumstances. In other words, individual

characteristics such as parental divorce, childhood personality, and negative affectivity, may be associated with experiencing life events as more or less stressful.

Path D: Chance variables to stressful events. Many stressful events may be the consequences of chance variables that cannot be explained with other factors in the VSA model.

Path E: Adaptive processes to stressful events. Adaptive processes may also relate to stressful events and circumstances. Some effective adaptation may allow perceiving stressful events reduced whereas some ineffective adaptation may allow perceiving stressful events worsened. Together Path A and E suggest circularity that stressful events dare a couple's capacity for adaptation, which lead to perception of those events worsen, and this in turn, continues to overwhelm the couple's adaptive abilities.

Path F: Adaptive processes to marital quality. A spouse's capacity of adaptation has an influence on marital quality. The ways couples' to engage in effective marital problem solving, to provide emotional support for each other and to adapt stressful events are related to spouses' judgments about marital quality. According to the VSA, adaptive processes have the most direct effect on marital quality, which would, in turn, influence a marriage in the way of stability or instability.

Path G: Marital quality to adaptive processes. Although the research has been limited, this hypothesis suggests that spouses' judgments of marital quality may predict change in couples' adaptive behaviors. In other words, spouses' judgments and attitudes about marital relationship may decrease or alleviate couples' capacities and willingness to use effective problem solving strategies, support and coping. Another potential circularity exists between Path F and G. It is possible that adaptive behaviors lead to changes in marital quality and marital quality leads to changes in using adaptive behaviors.

Path H: Marital quality to marital stability. A moderate connection between quality of marriage and how stable it is.

In summary, VSA is a model which gives an opportunity to understand the process how marriages are sustained or damaged. The model explains the possible relations between enduring vulnerabilities, stressful life events, adaptive processes, marital quality, and stability. It was embodied by components of social exchange theory, behavioral theory, attachment theory and crisis theory.

2.1.5.1. Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model in Literature

The VSA has been examined in various studies in the literature. Studies in this area have paid great attention to understand and clarify the role of different variables on marriage. In this part, some recent researches were conducted via VSA are summarized.

Cohan and Bradbury (1997) conducted a study to investigate the effects of negative life events (i.e. major and interpersonal life events) and problem solving (i.e. verbal content including positive and negative behavior, and affective expressions including anger, sadness and humor) on change in depressive symptoms and marital adjustment over 18 months among newlywed couples. The authors examined that the relationship between life events, problem-solving behavior, and spouses' adjustment could be characterized as moderated and mediated relationships. The results revealed that problem-solving behavior moderated, but not mediated, the effect of life events. Specifically, it was indicated that while the relationship between the effect of life events and change in depressive symptoms and marital satisfaction varied with wives' problem solving behavior, the relationship between the effect of life events and marital status varied with husbands' problem solving behavior.

Langer, Lawrence, and Barry (2008) conducted a research to investigate personality traits and chronic stress as predictors of the developmental course of physical aggression among newlywed couples. Personality traits were conceptualized as

enduring vulnerabilities, chronic stress was conceptualized as stressful events, and physical aggression was conceptualized as (mal)adaptive process. The results showed that both wives and husbands higher in trait impulsivity and trait aggressiveness were more physically aggressive and experienced more stress. However, these traits predict changes in stress and physical aggression over time. On the other hand, both wives' and husbands' changes in stress predicted changes in physical aggression over time. Besides, it was found that husbands' trait aggressive was related to their wives being more physically aggressive and reporting more chronic stress.

Hanzal and Segrin (2009) tested the role of negative affectivity and conflict styles on newlywed couples' marital satisfaction. The authors found that wives' negative affectivity was significantly related to their own and husbands' lower marital satisfaction. On the other hand, husbands' negative affectivity was related to only their own lower marital satisfaction. Meanwhile, negative affectivity was related to a tendency to engage in more dysfunctional conflict styles for both wives and husbands. Furthermore, it was shown that although husbands' conflict resolution styles (i.e., husbands' positive problem solving, conflict engagement and withdrawal) mediated the relationship between negative affectivity and marital adjustment, positive problem solving was the only variable that partially mediated the relationship between negative affect and marital adjustment for wives. Additionally, the authors claimed that one spouse's use of conflict engagement and withdrawal explained the relationship between the other spouse's negative affect and marital adjustment.

Cutrona, Russell, Burzette, Wesner, and Bryant (2011) conducted a study to demonstrate the predictors of relationship stability in African American couples with an elementary-school-age child. Couples lacked education and financial resources which in turn influenced family structure, stress, and relationship quality and stability. The results revealed that higher levels of education were related to higher income, lower financial strain, and family structures, which in turn, would higher levels of relationship quality and more stable in relationship. Besides, the authors suggested

that religiosity was an important resource in the lives of African Americans. In detailed, religiosity promoted relationship stability through its relationship with marriage, biological-family status, and women's relationship quality.

Woszidlo and Segrin (2013a) examined the role of neuroticism, stressful experiences, and mutual problem solving in marital satisfaction among newlywed couples. Neuroticism was conceptualized as enduring vulnerabilities, stressful experiences was conceptualized as stressful events, mutual problem solving was conceptualized as adaptive process, and marital satisfaction was conceptualized as marital quality. The findings demonstrated that both wives' and husbands' work, job-home interference, and family stress were related to their own lower marital satisfaction. Additionally, both wives' and husbands' family stress was negatively related to their partners' marital satisfaction. Besides, it was found that both wives and husbands who reported higher stressful events tended to use lower levels of mutual problem solving, and this in turn, decreased their marital satisfaction. In addition, both wives and husbands who reported higher levels of neuroticism tended to use lower levels of mutual problem solving, and this in turn, increased their stress.

Woszidlo and Segrin (2013b) conducted a study to investigate the role of negative affectivity and educational attainment in newlywed couples' mutual problem solving and marital quality (i.e., personal commitment and divorce proneness). The results revealed that spouses' negative affectivity and educational attainment were significantly related to their own and partner's mutual problem solving, personal commitment, and propensity to divorce. Additionally, the findings indicated the association that is a significant indirect relationship between negative affect and both indicators of marital quality (i.e., personal commitment and divorce proneness) through mutual problem solving for husbands, not for wives. In other words, husbands with high levels of negative affectivity and low levels of education reported lower levels of mutual problem solving and commitment and higher levels of divorce proneness.

Trillingsgaard, Sommer, Lasgaard, and Elklit (2014) examined the relationship between new mothers' attachment orientation and the perceived cost of sole responsibility in housework and child care. Attachment was conceptualized as enduring vulnerabilities, new parenthood was conceptualized as stressful events, co-parenting and division of labour were conceptualized as adaptive process, and relationship satisfaction was conceptualized as marital quality. The findings indicated that high lone responsibility of child care and of housework responsibility, and both high levels of attachment anxiety and high levels of attachment avoidance were related to low levels of relationship satisfaction at six months postpartum. Besides, the link between high lone responsibility of child care and low relationship satisfaction was particularly strong for mothers with high levels of avoidant attachment.

2.2. Marital Adjustment

In this part, definition of marital adjustment is given firstly. Then, variables related to marital adjustment are discussed.

2.2.1. Definition of Marital Adjustment

Marriage is a relatively stable union between two individuals, who may be, but are not necessarily, coresidential, sexually involved and procreative with each other, and co-residential (Miller, 2011). The institution of marriage is characterized as an official and durable sexual union conducted within a set of designated rights and duties (Lantz & Snyder, 1969). These rights and duties are taken both by the individual and through social structure. Marriage is perhaps one of the most intimate relationship for many people living in society. It affects many fields in people's life such as quality of life, well-being and life satisfaction (e.g. Be et al., 2013; Chiu, 1998; Watson et al., 2000; Young et al., 1998). Researchers have shown that married individuals are happier and healthier both psychologically and physically compared unmarried individuals (Horwitz, White, & Howell-White, 1996). A supportive marital partner is seen to have a role like a barrier or buffer between individuals and the problems of life (Bird &

Melville, 1994). Therefore, not only being married but also being adjusted in marriage is crucial factors in people's life.

Although marital adjustment is widely used in the literature, there is no consensus about its conceptualization. "Adjustment", "quality", "happiness", "success", "satisfaction", "distress" and "stability" are the most commonly used terms in investigation on marital relationship. Some researchers use these different terms in the same meaning. For instance, according to Timm (1999), terms such as happiness, adjustment, stability and quality are used as synonyms of satisfaction. Similarly, Kluwer (2000) labels marital adjustment as marital satisfaction, marital success, marital happiness and marital quality. Spanier and Cole (1976) also conceptualizes marital adjustment as a general concept that encapsulated both the terms satisfaction and happiness. Moreover, Vangelisti (2004) defines marital quality as overall quality of life within a marital relationship, measured in terms of adjustment, stability and satisfaction. In the current study, marital adjustment and other terms were used interchangeably.

Many other researchers defined marital adjustment in various ways. Locke and Wallace (1959) defined marital adjustment as "accommodation of a husband and wife to each other at a given time" (p. 251). Hoult (1969; cited in Fıfılođlu & Demir, 2000, p. 214) state that marital adjustment is a complex issue depending on the amount of conflict and shared activities, and these factors related to happiness or success of marriage. Pill (1990, p. 188) described it as "how content a person is with his/her marital interaction". Kurdek and Schmitt (1986) argue that satisfaction of a relationship consists of agreement between spouses on matters of importance to dyadic functioning, satisfaction with revealed affection and sexual relations, the degree of tension in the relationship as well as the frequency with which each spouse has considered ending the relationship, the amount of activity shared by the spouses, and the favorability of attitude toward one's relationship. Rho (1989) has emphasized subjective evaluation of marital adjustment that includes the degree of happiness,

pleasure or fulfillment experienced within the marital relationship between spouse and self. Furthermore, Karlsson (1963) describes marital adjustment as the correlation between what spouses expect from the marriage and what they get from it.

In conclusion, the conceptualization of marital adjustment is diverse in the literature. Although some researchers used different terms in the same meaning (e.g. Kluwer, 2000; Timm, 1999), others assumed that these terms are diverse and different from each other (Lively, 1969; White, 2003; as cited in Koçak, 2009). However, White (2003; cited in Koçak, 2009) suggests that marital happiness is more emotional- and marital satisfaction is more cognitive-based. Additionally, both marital adjustment and marital quality include happiness and satisfaction, and it is possible that these two terms are either individual or dyadic-based. Still, White (2003; cited in Koçak, 2009) claims that the interchangeable use of these terms is not a serious mistake because they are highly related to each other.

2.2.2. Variables Related to Marital Adjustment

In this part, variables related to marital adjustment are mentioned. First, demographic variables are examined. Secondly, intrapersonal variables and thirdly, interpersonal variables are discussed. Lastly, cognitive variables are given.

2.2.2.1. Demographic Variables

Previous studies have stressed the association between marital adjustment and several demographic variables such as gender, the level of education, age, existence of children, and length of marriage. The association between gender and marital adjustment has been investigated by some researchers, with contrary findings. In general, researchers, such as Basat (2004), Jose and Alfons (2007), Chi et al. (2011), Guo and Huang (2005), and Knabb and Vogt (2011), demonstrate that women report more marital problems than men, meaning that women tend to report lower marital adjustments than men. On the other hand, some researchers, such as Demir and Fıfılođlu (1999), Gordon and Baucom (2009), Hamamcı (2005) and Işinsu-Halat and

Hovardaoğlu (2011) state that men and women do not differ in their marital adjustment.

The relationship between the level of education and marital adjustment remains unclear due to inconsistent results. Jose and Alfons (2007), and Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça (2002) indicate that education has no significant impact on marital adjustment. On the other hand, some researchers, such as Akbalık-Doğan and Büyüksahin-Sunal (2011), Chi et al. (2011), and Guo and Huang (2005), argue that the higher level of education, the greater marital adjustment is. However, Colebrook Seymour III (1998) shows that increased levels of education have connection with the decrement in marital adjustment.

Age is also found to be related marital adjustment. Some researchers, such as Argyle and Furnham (1983), presented that age had a positive impact on marital adjustment. The authors indicated that older individuals tended to report greater adjustment to their marriage. However, while Jose and Alfons (2007) state that the older age, the less marital adjustment is, Hill (2009) and Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça (2002) indicate that there is no relationship between age and marital adjustment. In age specific studies, for example, Edwards (2009) showed that people older than 45 years old had lower satisfaction compared to people under 45. On the other hand, Chi et al. (2011) reported that younger and older people were more likely to be satisfied with their marriages compared to middle aged people.

Relationship between relationship status and marital adjustment is investigated by some researchers. Investigation of the relationship quality studies, Kurdek and Schmitt (1986) demonstrated that married couples showed higher satisfaction with their relationships as opposed to cohabitants. Similarly, Moore, McCabe, and Brink (2001) indicated that married couples reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction than couples who were dating without living together. The results revealed that whereas married couples did not differ from the cohabitants, they reported the highest relationship satisfaction scores. Furthermore, type of marriage is

related to marital adjustment. According to studies conducted by Jose and Alfons (2007) and Orathinkal and Vansteenwegen (2007), re-married people tended to show higher levels of marital satisfaction compared to first-time married people (Jose & Alfons, 2007; Orathinkal & Vansteenwegen, 2007).

As for the relation to the number of children, different results also were shown in the literature. Some studies, such as Jose and Alfons (2007), and White and Edwards (1990) showed that nonexistence of children had a positive effect on marital happiness and satisfaction. Likewise, Colebrook Seymour III (1998), and Jose and Alfons (2007) suggested that an increment in the number of children was associated with an increment in marital problems and a decrease in marital adjustment. Additionally, Belsky, Lang, and Rovine (1985) showed that couples, who defined themselves as happy in their relationships, felt a decline in their marital adjustment following the birth of the first child. In contrast, Guo and Huang (2005) suggested that there was a positive association between number of children and relationship satisfaction; however, Hamamcı (2005), Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça (2002), and Witting et al. (2008) indicated that the number of children was not statistically related to marital adjustment. Besides, Chi et al. (2011) reported that individuals who had children under 18 had even higher marital satisfaction than those having children over 18 years old.

Contrary findings were also at hand in the connection between length of marriage and marital adjustment. In the studies of Bir Aktürk (2006) and Moore et al. (2001), it was demonstrated that increment in length of marriage was associated with higher level of marital adjustment. However, Jose and Alfons (2007), and Kurdek (1992; 2005) revealed that increase in length of marriage was related to decrease in marital adjustment. On the other hand, Guo and Huang (2005), Hassan (2015), and Tutarel-Kışlak and Çabukça (2002) claimed that length of marriage is irrelevant in the matter of marital adjustment.

2.2.2.2. Intrapersonal Variables

Marital adjustment is associated with a number of individual variables. Attachment is one of them and the existing literature suggest that securely attached people tend to be more satisfied with their relationships and have greater stability than insecurely attached people (Clymer, 2009; Egeci & Gençöz, 2006; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007a; as cited in Clymer, 2009). On the other hand, it was revealed that insecurely attached people tend to have lower levels of stability, length and satisfaction in relationships (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). In deeper analysis, Butzer and Campbell (2008) and Clymer, Ray, Trepper, and Pierce (2006) mentioned that a higher level of anxious/ambivalent or avoidant attachment led to lower levels of marital adjustment. Romantic attachment is demonstrated as another predictor of marital adjustment. Cowan and Cowan (2001) mentioned that individuals with secure romantic attachments tended to report higher marital adjustment as opposed to individuals with insecure romantic attachments. Moreover, Lowyck, Luyten, Demyttenaere, and Corveleyn (2008) presented that secure romantic attachment was positively and insecure romantic attachment is negatively associated with satisfaction of relationship.

Research shows that psychological problems have an influence on marital adjustment. Shek (1995) suggested that relationship quality among married people was positively related to positive mental health and negatively related to psychiatric symptoms. Additionally, the relationship between psychopathology and the level of marital adjustment was found generally similar for husbands and wives (Whisman, Uebelacker, & Weinstock, 2004). McLeod (1994) revealed that married individuals with anxiety disorders, such as phobias, panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder, perceived their relationships to be less satisfactory. Similarly, Lemmens et al. (2007) indicated that depressed patients tended to report lower levels of marital adjustment than their partners, and nonclinical individuals. Besides, by using MMPI, Whisman et al. (2004) revealed in their study that higher level of individuals' own

depression and anxiety, and spouses' depression led only to lower level of marital satisfaction. Additionally, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is also associated with less satisfaction and success in relationships (Canu, Tabor, Michael, Bazzini, & Elmore, 2014).

Personality traits, such as neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, perfectionism, and assertiveness, are other predictors of marital adjustment. Gattis et al. (2004) state that higher neuroticism, lower agreeableness, lower conscientiousness, and less positive expressivity elicit a decrement in marital adjustment. Tuncay (2006) shows that individuals with higher socially prescribed perfectionism tend to show lower levels of marital adjustment, whereas there is no association among self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and marital adjustment. Moreover, Hafner and Spence (1988) found that marital adjustment in long marriages (those lasting at least 16 years) was related to assertiveness; however, marital adjustment in intermediate marriages (those lasting for 7 to 16 years) was related to hostility. Contrary, Reath et al. (1980) found no association between assertiveness and marital adjustment.

2.2.2.3. Interpersonal Variables

Marital adjustment is associated with a number of relationship variables. Communication elicits marital adjustment (Christensen, Eldridge, Catta-Preta, Lim, & Santagata, 2006; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Malkoç, 2001). In the literature, it is mentioned that constructive communication results in the improvement of marital satisfaction (Christensen et al., 2006; Litzenger & Gordon, 2005). Destructive communication, on the other hand, results in decrement in marital satisfaction (Bodenmann, Kaiser, Hahlweg, & Fehm-Wolfsdorf, 1998). Bodenmann et al. (1998) reported that high avoidance of and withdrawal from communication was correlated with low levels of marital adjustment. Furthermore, Gill, Christensen, and Fincham (1999) showed that both husbands' and wives' negative communication, including blame, pressure, and negative judgments, predicted decrement in wives' marital

satisfaction, and both husbands' and wives' positive communication predicted increment in wives' marital satisfaction.

People who describe themselves as being understanding and supportive in relationships tend to exhibit greater satisfaction of relationship (Barker & Lemle, 1984). Hill (2010) indicated that love factors, including passion, intimacy and commitment, were significant predictors of adjustment in relationships. Specifically, Volsky (1998) mention that sexual and emotional intimacy lead to marital satisfaction for men; while recreational and emotional intimacy lead to marital satisfaction for women. Besides, Hill (2009) claims that there is a positive association between compassionate love and satisfaction of relationship.

Studies illustrate that greater satisfaction in sexuality is related to higher marital adjustment (Litzenger & Gordon, 2005; Purnine & Carey, 1997; Renaud et al., 1997; Sprecher, 2002) and higher overall quality of marriage (Schenk, Pfrang, & Rausche, 1983; Young, Denny, Young, & Luquis, 2000). Similarly, Yeh, Lorenz, Wickrama, Conger, and Elder (2006) state that higher sexual satisfaction results in improved marital quality in terms of happiness and satisfaction. Moreover, Byers (2005) indicates that changes in sexual satisfaction are related to changes in relationship satisfaction in long-term relationships. Frequency of sexual relations is also a predictor of marital adjustment. Higher levels of frequency of sexual relations led to higher levels of marital adjustment (Colebrook Seymour III, 1998) and higher levels of marital adjustment were related to higher frequency of sexual behavior and fewer sexual concerns (Renaud et al., 1997).

Aggression is another interpersonal variable related to marital adjustment. Lawrence and Bradbury (2001) suggest that aggression appears to increase the probability of marital discord and instability severely. The authors mention that marital dysfunction is more common among aggressive than nonaggressive couples, and among severely aggressive than moderately aggressive couples. Moreover, Schumacher and Leonard (2005) found that both wives' and husbands' verbal aggression at the time of marriage

were related to self-reported declines in marital adjustment for their partner in early marriage. Furthermore, husbands' physical aggression leads to marital discord, though wives' aggression leads to marital dissolution (Lawrence & Bradbury, 2007).

Emotional expressiveness also plays a role in marital adjustment. Ingolds, Horlacher, Schvaneveldt, Matthews (2005) reveal that there is a strong association between emotional expressiveness and marital adjustment including the importance of sharing positive emotions while suppressing negative ones. On the other hand, Özen and Sümer (2013) emphasize the styles of negative emotional expression. Specifically, constructive expressions of anger, sadness and guilt emotions are positively linked with marital adjustment, whereas destructive expressions of these negative emotions are negatively linked with marital adjustment of couples. In other words, the higher constructive expressions of negative emotions, the higher marital adjustment is, while the higher destructive expressions of negative emotions, the lower marital adjustment is.

2.2.2.4. Cognitive Variables

Cognitive variables such as marital attributions, relationship beliefs, expectancies and assumptions are also examined in terms of marital adjustment. Karney, Bradbury, Fincham, and Sullivan (1994) indicated that maladaptive attributions were positively associated with marital problems. It was suggested that increment of maladaptive attributions led to increment marital problems. Similarly, Fincham and Bradbury (1987) mentioned the strong association among attributions for marital difficulties (i.e. responsibility and causal attributions), unrealistic relationship expectations, and concurrent marital satisfaction. On the other hand, the authors draw attention to the relationship between both responsibility and causal attributions and later marital satisfaction only for wives, not for husbands. Hamamcı (2005) also shows that married individuals with lower levels of marital adjustment had significantly more dysfunctional relationship beliefs than those with greater levels of marital adjustment do. Additionally, the results indicated that dysfunctional relationship beliefs,

especially with respect to misperceptions of closeness to one's partner, and with prediction of negative consequences, were negatively correlated with the marital satisfaction of men, whereas, belief in the ability to know what the partner would think was positively correlated with the marital satisfaction of women. Besides, Karney and Bradbury (2000) suggested that attributions change linearly, and changes in attributions were strongly related to changes in marital satisfaction within each spouse.

2.3. Affect

In this part, firstly, definition of affect is given. Then, the effects of affect on marital adjustment are mentioned.

2.3.1. Definition of Affect

In general sense, affect identifies the phenomenological experience of feeling. It is dichotomizing into state affect, which is transient moods and emotions, and trait affect, which is more like a stable and enduring personality characteristics (Watson & Clark, 1984). Generally, trait affect is investigated through two constructs; positive affect and negative affect. Positive affect or trait positive affect is defined as a "trait that reflects stable individual differences in positive emotional experience" (Watson, 2002, p. 106). Individuals with this trait tend to "experience frequent and intense episodes of pleasant, pleasurable mood; generally speaking, they are cheerful, enthusiastic, energetic, confident, and alert" (Watson, 2002, p. 106). Moreover, such individuals generally participate in social activities more, report higher life satisfaction and successfully cope with stressful situations (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). On the contrary, individuals who are low in positive affect have a tendency to report substantially decreased levels of happiness, excitement, vigor, and confidence (Watson et al., 1988).

Negative affect or trait negative affect is often used interchangeably with neuroticism, the personality trait, because they are thought to be conceptually synonymous (Hanzal

& Segrin, 2009). Individuals with this trait tend to be distressed, upset and have a negative view of self (Watson & Clark, 1984). Additionally, such individuals are generally emotionally reactive, responding to adverse situations by expressing feelings of anger, anxiety, disgust, scorn, embarrassment, guilt, helplessness, and/or sadness (Borkenau, Mauer, Riemann, Spinath, & Angleitner, 2004; Watson & Clark, 1984). Moreover, negative affect is comprised of subjective feelings of nervousness, tension, worry, self-dissatisfaction, and a sense of rejection (Watson & Clark, 1984). Also, individuals with this trait are prone to perceive and experience the world as threatening, problematic, and distressing (Watson, Clark, & Chmielewski, 2008). Furthermore, negative affect has an impact on how people perceive the quality of and satisfaction with their interpersonal relationships as well as how they report their psychological and physiological well-being (McCrae, 1990; Tolpin, Cohen, Gunthert, & Ferrehi, 2006). In the current study, negative affect and neuroticism are used interchangeably, because they are thought to be conceptually synonymous (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009).

2.3.2. The Effect of Affect on Marriage

Because trait affect is more like a stable and enduring personality characteristics (Watson & Clark, 1984), it is suitable for enduring vulnerabilities via VSA. In the literature, many studies examined the association between trait affects and marital adjustment, and found significant connections. Both positive (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009; Watson et al., 2000) and negative affect (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Donnellan et al., 2004; Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Renshaw et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2000) are the predictors of marital adjustment. In other words, individuals who are active, cheerful and enthusiastic have a tendency to report close and satisfying relationships; however, individuals who are emotionally reactive, nervous and worried have a tendency to report dissatisfying relationships. Besides, the investigations stated that positive affect makes contribution to satisfaction above and beyond negative affect (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009).

However, some studies such as Thomsen and Gilbert's (1998) demonstrate that negative affect is related to marital satisfaction, while positive affect is not; therefore, they claim that negative affect is a better predictor to understand marital satisfaction. Similarly, Karney and Bradbury (1995) suggest that negative affect shows greater effects on marital outcome than the other personality factors.

Individual's affect is not only related to their own marital adjustment, but also to their partner's marital adjustment. Gordon and Baucom (2009) showed that both one's own and perceived partner's positive affectivity were associated with marital adjustment. Watson et al. (2000) indicated that partner's affect is related to marital satisfaction. However, the results showed that although partner's negative affectivity is related to marital dissatisfaction for both husbands and wives, partner's positive affectivity is related only to wives' marital satisfaction. On the other hand, Hanzal and Segrin (2009) reveal that wives' negative affectivity is significantly related to both own and husbands' lower marital satisfaction, whereas husbands' negative affectivity is only related to their own lower marital satisfaction. Fisher and McNulty (2008) also found that partner neuroticism was tied to lower marital adjustment for both husbands and wives, while it led to declines in marital adjustment among wives. Renshaw et al. (2010) investigated the actor and partner effects of different facets of neuroticism such as anxiety, angry hostility and depression on marital adjustment for husbands and wives. The results showed that individuals who reported higher depression and angry hostility tended to report lower marital adjustment, whereas individuals who reported higher anxiety tended to report higher marital adjustment. On the other hand, for both husbands and wives, only angry hostility facet was negatively related to partners' marital adjustment.

Finch (1998) mentioned that satisfaction with perceived social support was associated with positive affect, and social conflict was related to negative affect. On the other hand, no significant link were found between satisfaction with perceived social support and negative affect, and between social conflict and positive affect. Lakey

and Scoboria (2005) investigated the relation among trait and social influence components of perceived support, affect and self-esteem, and among social conflict, affect and self-esteem. The results suggested that higher levels of perceived support were related to higher positive and lower negative affect in both trait and social influence level. However, although similar results were drawn from between social conflict and affect on the level of social influence, the only relation between social conflict and negative affect were found in trait level.

Perceived social support is an important indicator in marriage and affect is also related to how individuals perceive availability of social support in marriage. Steptoe et al. (2009) state that positive affect is associated with greater perceived social support and social connectedness. Moreover, Swickert and Owens (2010) searched the four types of perceived support that were appraisal (having someone to talk with about their problems), belonging (having people to do things with), self-esteem (having a positive comparison when comparing oneself to others), and tangible (having someone to provide material aid). The conclusion was that females at low levels of neuroticism stated greater overall support, and greater appraisal support compared to males. However, as neuroticism levels increase, measures of perceived social support are similar for females and males; such that at the highest levels of neuroticism, there is no gender differences in general perceived social support or appraisal support. Furthermore, Swickert et al. (2010) examined how the Big Five traits interacted to predict perceived support. The indication is that neuroticism is negatively, extraversion is positively associated with perceived availability of social support. Moreover, the findings showed that low levels of extraversion, low levels of neuroticism was related to greater perceived support regardless of level of openness. However, as extraversion increased, the combination of low neuroticism and low openness was associated with the greatest level of perceived support. At high levels of extraversion, high neuroticism and low openness was related to the lowest level of perceived support.

Many studies showed the connection between negative affect and marital communication. Negative affect is positively related to negative interactions (Donnellan et al., 2004). Montes et al. (2012) investigated the affective aspects underlying the choice of the different conflict management styles such as integrating, compromising, avoiding, dominating and obliging. Based on their mood, individuals were separated into four groups, which were the surprised (high in positive affect and high in negative affect), the happy (high in positive affect and low in negative affect), the sad (low in positive affect and high in negative affect) and the inactive (low in positive affect and low in negative affect). The results stated that happy individuals had a higher tendency to use cooperative conflict resolution strategies (integrating and compromising) than sad individuals; and, surprised individuals had a higher tendency to use integrating than sad individuals. However, there were no significant differences in avoiding, dominating and obliging style. Watson and Hubbard (1996) also showed that individuals who reported high positive affect tended to engage in active, positive responses, while individuals with high negative affect tended to exhibit negative, emotion-based responses. Consistent with this, Berry and Willingham (1997) indicated that positive affect predicted engagement in voice and was negatively related to use of neglect, whereas negative affect predicted engagement in exit and neglect.

Moreover, negative affect is related to a tendency to engage in more dysfunctional conflict styles (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009). The authors reported that both spouses' higher rates of negative affect was associated with more conflict engagement (i.e., negativity, belligerence, verbal aggressiveness), compliance (i.e., not sticking up for the self) and withdrawal (i.e., shutting down and refusing to talk) and less positive problem solving (e.g., focusing on the problem at hand, trying to find mutually beneficial solutions) than those who scored low on this trait, but not partner effect. On the other hand, Woszidlo and Segrin (2013b) showed that spouses' negative affect

is significantly related to both their own and partner's mutual problem solving, personal commitment, and propensity to divorce.

Negative affect has a connection with poor marital quality and risk for divorce (Kelly & Conley, 1987). The results showed an association between individuals' affect and divorce time. Gottmann and Levenson (2000) conducted a study to investigate the predictability of divorce time with 14-year period. The finding revealed that 27.8% of the sample had divorced at the end of study and average length of marriage was 16.4 years. Moreover, it was shown that negative affect during conflict was associated with early divorcing, not with later divorcing. On the other hand, positive affect during conflict was associated with later divorcing, not with early divorcing.

2.4. Negative Life Events

In this part, firstly, definition of negative life events is given. Then, the effects of negative life events on marital adjustment are mentioned.

2.4.1. Definition of Negative Life Events

Over the life time, individuals experience life changes that include various life transitions and several unexpected life events. Most individuals get engaged, married, live pregnancy, become parents, change job, live changes in financial status, move, get sick, divorce, suffer from loss and retire in the lifetime. When the incident of people getting married is considered, most life events are lived during the marital life. Life events are conceptualized "as specific undesirable occurrences or changes" (Norris & Muller, 1984, p. 424). Desirable events are perceived to have positive values, while undesirable events are perceived to have negative values (Scully, Tosi, Banning, 2000). In fact, undesirable events may have a diverse and possibly more harmful influence on people than positive events (Sarason et al., 1978).

Life events may not present a common sense for all individuals. The effect of life events may vary according to individuals' subjective feelings of impacts as positive or negative in different circumstances (Sarason et al., 1978). Moreover, normal life

events can be negative and stressful for individuals, because of limited social, psychological, and economic resources and poor management skills (Pearlin, 2010). Therefore, negative life events are the series of recent events experienced negatively (Tesser & Beach, 1998). Sarason et al. (1978) suggest that rather than positive or total changes it is the negative life changes which most accurately conceptualize life stress. Furthermore, Karney and Bradbury (1995) stated that these life events which include transitions, situations, incidents and chronic or acute circumstances that spouses confront are titled as stressful events. Therefore, negative and stressful life events were used interchangeably in current study.

2.4.2. The Effect of Negative Life Events on Marriage

Negative and unpleasant experiences can lead to severe personal distress. When negative life events occur, individuals are demanded to alternate their way of thinking, acting and feeling to meet a new situation, and for putting the whole family in a challenge of coping with hardships (Chi et al., 2011). Couples' perceptions of life events as stressful or negative may be connected more closely to marital quality than their objective experiences (Williams, 1995). Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer and Vohs (2001) stated that “Bad is stronger than good”.

Spouses who report more negative and stressful life events tend to evaluate their marriages less satisfactory (e.g., Bird et al., 1981; Li & Wickrama, 2014; Neff & Karney, 2009; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a). The association between negative life events and marital quality were shown to be negatively related with a variety of stressful events, like loss of important individuals (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006), the transition to parenthood (Lawrence, Rothman, Cobb, Rothman, & Bradbury, 2008), economic strains (Conger, Rueter, & Elder, Jr., 1999; Conger et al., 2002), work place problems (Schulz, Cowan, Cowan, & Brennan, 2004), disabilities of children (Florian & Findler, 2001), unemployment (Ström, 2003), discord with spouses' parents (Bryant, Conger, & Meehan, 2001), and general major life events (Tesser & Beach, 1998). Also different types of life events predict

marital satisfaction in a different way. Chi et al. (2011) examined life events as life crises and life transitions and the results indicated that although crises events were negatively correlated with marital satisfaction, life transitions did not determine the marital satisfaction.

In addition to their own, wives' and husbands' perception of negative life events are related to their spouses' lower marital adjustment. Neff and Karney's (2007) study on newlyweds' shows that wives', not husbands', stressful life circumstances predict their husbands' marital satisfaction. In other words, when wives are exposed to higher stressful life circumstances, husbands report lower marital satisfaction. On the other hand, Woszidlo and Segrin (2013a) investigated stressful events in terms of work, family, and job-home interference stress. They revealed that wives' and husbands' perception of family stress is related to their spouse's lower marital satisfaction.

Negative life events do not only predict marital quality, but also some other marital issues. Cano and Vivian (2001, 2003) indicated that experience of stressful life events led to higher frequencies of marital aggression. Besides, Frye and Karney (2006) showed that newlywed spouses who experienced higher negative life events (i.e., acute stress) tended to show more psychologically aggressive behaviors within the marriage. On the other hand, they found no direct relationship between experiencing higher negative life events and showing more physical aggression, controlling for the effects of acute stress on psychological aggression. Moreover, some researchers such as Conger et al. (1990) and Matthews et al. (1996) demonstrated that negative life events predicted more hostile and less supportive behaviors and warmth.

Negative life events are seen to have a direct effect on spouses' capacity for adaptation like perceived social support and conflict resolution styles. Keinan (1997) suggests that stressful life events are situational variables that can affect the appraisal of support. In other words, individuals' perception of social support may change due to negative life events. Norris and Kaniasty (1996) showed also that perceived social

support was sensitive to post-event deterioration, and some events could damage the sense of being supported.

Although stressors are often viewed as detrimental to marital functioning, it is important to identify that challenging events and circumstances can provide couples with opportunities to learn about untapped potential in their marriage and to deepen their commitment and intimacy (Story & Bradbury, 2004). Some studies claimed that negative life events such as the death of a child (Lehman, Lang, Wortman, & Sorenson, 1989), experiencing a natural disaster (Cohan & Cole, 2002), and cancer (Gritz, Wellisch, Siau, & Wang, 1990) predict marital improvements among some couples. They suggested that some personal or relationship features might protect them against the disruptive influence of negative life events (e.g., Conger et al., 1990; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). For instance, Conger et al. (1999) indicate that economic pressure escalates risk for emotional distress, which, in turn, escalates the risk for marital conflict and subsequent marital distress. However, regarding resilience to economic stress, high marital support diminishes the association between economic pressure and emotional distress, and also, effective couple problem solving diminishes the adverse effect of marital conflict on marital distress. Since these studies were conducted after the occurrence of these stressors, the reported improvements may reflect a retrospective bias and await replication in studies that assess pre-stressor functioning (Story & Bradbury, 2004).

2.5. Perceived Social Support

In this part, definition of perceived social support is given. Then, the effects of perceived social support on marital adjustment are mentioned.

2.5.1. Definition of Perceived Social Support

Social support is a concept that is defined as “help that would be available to an individual in difficult or stress-arousing situations” (Sarason & Sarason, 1982, p. 331). It includes the person’s belief that one is cared for and loved, esteemed and

valued, and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligations (Cobb, 1976). It is believed that social support is an important resource to prevent stressful and negative life events (Cobb, 1976; Gottlieb, 1994). In other words, individuals who believe that they receive social support, have lower risk for physical and/or psychological difficulties than individuals who believe that they do not (e.g., Cobb, 1976; Gottlieb, 1994).

Gottlieb and Bergen (2010) state that social support contains the social resources that individuals perceive to be obtainable or that are actually provided to them by nonprofessionals in the context of both formal helping groups and informal support relations. Therefore, it is important to emphasize received and perceived social supports are different concepts. Received social support is giving information about the types of support received (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). It includes some specific supportive behaviors that are provided to recipients by their own social networks. On the other hand, perceived social support is the individual's beliefs about the accessibility of varied types of support from social networks or the significant others (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). Additionally, it is designated as the cognitive appraisal of being reliably connected to others (Barrera, 1986). The significant others may mean to all of the possible support sources such as family members, spouses, close friends, neighbors, relatives and coworkers (Thoits, 1986).

House (1981) categorized social support into four types of supportive behaviors: emotional, appraisal, informational and instrumental (cited in Heaney & Israel, 2008). Emotional support contains a sense of acceptance and self-worth including empathy, love, trust, and caring. Appraisal support involves transmission of information that is useful for self-evaluation purposes including constructive feedback and affirmation. Informational support contains information useful in addressing problems including advice and suggestions. Instrumental support is the most direct form of social support including concrete aid, material resources, and financial assistance.

2.5.2. The Effect of Perceived Social Support on Marriage

Findings summarized in part 2.3.2 and 2.4.2 of this dissertation highlights the association between affect, negative life events and perceived social support. In other words, the results show the significant association between affect and perceived social support (e.g., Finch, 1998; Lakey & Scoboria, 2005; Swickert & Owens, 2010; Swickert et al., 2010) and between negative life events and perceived social support (e.g., Donnellan et al., 2004; Montes et al., 2012; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a). Further, Gracia and Herrero (2004) argue that both personal characteristics of the perceiver such as self-esteem, perceived stress, depression, and situational factors such as undesirable life events are negatively linked to perceived social support from specific significant relationships.

In the natural environment, social support is derived from the behavior of personal relationships. Actually, the relationship itself gives supportive sense to conduct and, conversely, supportive conducts can bring to relationship a sense of interactions. Social network is one of the sources of support (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). It has been suggested that social networks have an influence on marital relationships (Bryant et al., 2001). After marriage, wives' and husbands' friend and family networks become more and more interdependent (Kearns & Leonard, 2004) and it was shown that wives' and husbands' interactions with family and friends influenced marital satisfaction (Burger & Milardo, 1995). Moreover, perceived spousal support (Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013; Julien & Markman, 1991; Pasch & Bradbury, 1998; Scheidler, 2008; Sutor & Pillemer, 1994) and supportive spousal behavior (Fincham, 2003) improve marital satisfaction, and decrease the risk that poor skills in handling conflict will lead to later marital deterioration (Fincham, 2003).

Social support in marriage can be satisfied by individuals who become within and outside marriage such as friends, and family-relatives. Fincham (2003) suggests that support gathered from outside the marriage may have a positive influence on how the spouse behaves within marriage. Tuncay-Senlet (2012) argues that social support

from different support groups such as husband, family-relatives, husband's family-relatives, and friends-neighbors are related to women's marital adjustment and psychological well-being. The findings indicated that married women who were more likely to perceive social support from their husbands reported higher levels of adjustment in their marriages. Similarly, social support from women's own family and relatives, and friends-neighbors are significantly associated with their marital adjustment. Bryant and Conger (1999) examined perceived social support from family, friends and in-laws in term of support related specifically to the relationship, affective overlap and general personal support in long-term marital relationship. The results indicated that only relationship specific support was associated with marital success for both husbands and wives.

The type of social support may also have an important role on marriage. Taylor, Brown, Chatters, and Lincoln (2012) found that emotional support from extended family is positively linked with relationship satisfaction for married and cohabiting African Americans and Black Caribbeans, whereas negative interaction from extended family is negatively linked with relationship satisfaction. Similarly, Vil (2015) revealed that emotional support received from family was related to higher levels of marital adjustment for both husbands and wives, though practical support received from family and friends had no impact on husbands' and wives' marital adjustment. Moreover, Erickson (1993) studied women participants and found similar results with regards to women's perception of spousal support. The results showed that regardless of whether women were employed or not, emotional support from the husbands was a stronger predictor of marital quality than instrumental spousal support such as housework and childcare. Furthermore, Suitor and Pillemer (1994) conducted a study with women who cared for an elderly parent for dementia. They also indicated that husbands' emotional support and hindrance of care-giving effort lead to change wives' marital adjustment, though husbands' instrumental support did not.

As mentioned earlier, family members, spouses, close friends, neighbors, relatives, and coworkers are possible support sources (Thoits, 1986). Julien and Markman (1991) stated that levels of marital distress are negatively associated with the extent to which individuals rely on friends and family members for companionship and support. Once married individuals perceive poor spousal support, extramarital support from extended family and friends are suggested to be significant (Meyers & Landsberger, 2002). However, Phillipson (1997) argues that wives' source of support often consists of close friends and relatives as confidantes, though husbands typically name their wives as their core source of support and the only person in whom they confide personal problems or difficulties (cited in Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001).

The findings show that the association between perceived social support and marital adjustment is stronger for wives than it is for husbands (Acitelli & Antonucci, 1994; Julien & Markman, 1991). In other words, they suggest that wives' marital adjustment is more predicted by social support from husbands than husbands' marital adjustment is predicted by social support from wives. Moreover, the empirical evidence revealed that wife's perception of spousal support was associated with higher levels of positive interaction, closeness, and affirmation in their marriages; and lower levels of negative sentiment and conflict (Pina & Bengston, 1993). On the other hand, some researchers suggested that examination of spousal support only between genders, rather than differences within gender may give limited information. For example, Mickelson, Claffey, and Williams (2006) conducted a research to examine the association among the role of gender, gender role attitudes, spousal support, and marital conflict and quality. The results indicated that both instrumental and emotional spousal support predicted better marital satisfaction for egalitarian women and traditional men, while emotional spousal support predicted better marital satisfaction and less conflict for traditional women and egalitarian men.

2.6. Conflict Resolution Styles

In this part, firstly, definition of conflict resolution styles is given. Then, the effects of perceived social support on marital adjustment are mentioned.

2.6.1. Definition of Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict is described as “tension between two or more social entities (individuals, groups, or larger organizations) which arises from incompatibility of actual or desired responses” (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970, p. 70). Marital conflict is also defined as a state of reported dissonance in marital relationships that occurred from differences between spouses (Mackey, et al., 2000). Fincham (2003) mentioned that marital conflict may thrive about nearly anything, such as verbal and physical abusive behaviors, spending money, perceived injustice in a couple's division of labor and power.

Although conflict may be generated by any one or a combination of matters, such as the control of finances, designated how the roles of each other to be defined, personality discrepancy, difficulties in clarifying needs and so on (Mackey et al., 2000), what couples argue about or how often they experience conflicts seems to be less substantial compared to how they argue and disagree about issues (Cohan & Bradbury, 1994; Stanley et al., 2002). It is discussed that conflicts between spouses are unescapable, arising from competing needs in a variety of domains such as sex, home life, outside activities (Lewin, 1958). If conflict is an unavoidable part of marital relationships, behavior of spouses in collisional situations becomes explicitly important since their behavior will affect their marital adjustment (Özen, 2006). Therefore, how spouses handle conflict gain importance in order to enhance marital adjustment.

Conflict resolution is related to how couples manage conflict (Mackey et al., 2000). Batool and Khalid (2012) stated that “The secret of healthy marriage is not the absence of conflict, but the ways of resolving the conflict” (p. 66). Conflict resolution

styles have been clarified in different ways. Although Follet (1942) defined conflict-handling styles as domination, compromise, integration, avoidance and suppression, the first theoretical pattern for categorizing conflict styles was offered by Blake and Mouton (1964). They identified five modes of handling conflict (i.e., forcing, withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and problem solving) depending on whether the people, specifically managers, have high or low concern for people and high or low concern for production.

This two-dimensional typology was redesigned by some researches like Thomas (1976) whose typology was one of the famed. He stated two independent dimensions of behavior in situations causing conflict (i.e., assertiveness and cooperativeness) and identified five conflict management styles according to these two dimensions (i.e., competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating). Although assertiveness includes the attempts to satisfy one's own concerns, cooperativeness contains the attempts to satisfy the concerns of others. Competing style is characterized with a high degree of concern for one's own goals and a very low concern for other, whereas accommodating style is defined by a high concern for other and a very low concern for self. On the other hand, collaborating style is described by a high degree of concern for goals and outcomes for both one's own and others, while avoiding style is characterized by low degree of concern for goals and outcomes for both one's own and others. Additionally, compromising style is categorized by a moderate degree in both dimensions. While collaborating and compromising styles are seen as constructive conflict resolution styles, competing, accommodating and avoiding styles are seen as destructive conflict resolution styles. As distinct from Thomas (1976), Rahim (1983) referred to the dimensions as "concern for self" versus "concern for others" in classifying the styles of managing conflicts into five types; integrating (high concern for self and others), dominating (high concern for self and a low concern for the others), obliging (low concern for self and high concern for others), avoiding (low concern for self and others), and

compromising (a moderate concern for self and others). This taxonomy is similar to Thomas's (1976) taxonomy despite conceptualization.

Although Thomas (1976) and Rahim (1983) suggested some categories of conflict resolution styles, industrial organizations were starting point for both of them instead of marital relationship. Rusbult and Zembrodt (1983) argued four possible responses to dissatisfaction in relationships in two dimensions. These dimensions are constructiveness vs. destructiveness and activity vs. passivity. Additionally, these categories are exit (i.e., ending or actively abusing the relationship), voice (i.e., actively attempting to improve conditions), loyalty (i.e., passively waiting for conditions to improve), and neglect (passively allowing the relationship to deteriorate). Voice and loyalty are considered as a constructive manner, while exit and neglect are considered relatively more destructive. Moreover, exit and voice are judged to be active, while loyalty and neglect are judged to be relatively passive.

Kurdek (1994) also identified four conflict resolution styles based on behavioral observations of Gottman and Krokoff (1989). These are positive problem solving (e.g. compromise and negotiation), conflict engagement (e.g. personal attacks and losing control), withdrawal (e.g. refusing to discuss the issue further and tuning the other partner out), and compliance (e.g. giving in and not defending one's position). Besides, Özen (2006) defined conflict resolution styles based on Kurdek's four conflict resolution styles that includes positive, negative, subordination, and retreat conflict resolution style. Positive conflict resolution style is associated with coping conflict in a constructive way like discussing the conflict issue and finding reasonable solutions for both spouses. However, negative conflict resolution style is associated with coping conflict destructively, including verbal and physical aggression. Subordination means accept and compliance to the partner's requests without defending the one's position. Retreat means avoiding and refusing to argue the conflict matter, staying silent and to delay the discussion of the issue to a later time.

2.6.2. The Effect of Conflict Resolution Styles on Marriage

The empirical evidence reveals that marital adjustment is associated with conflict (Tuncay-Senlet, 2012) and conflict behaviors like engaging in serious quarrels or frequent disagreement (Leggett, Roberts-Pittman, Byczek, & Morse, 2012) negatively. Marital conflict is also related to important family outcomes, consisting of poor adjustment of children, poor parenting, increased likelihood of parent child conflict, and conflict between siblings conflict; and some conflicts such as about problematic drinking, drug use, or extramarital sex, predicts divorce and severity of conflict increases the likelihood of divorce (Fincham, 2003). Cramer (2000) suggests that although conflict, negative conflict style and unresolved conflict are negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction in romantic relationships, unresolved conflict and negative conflict style are related to relationship satisfaction stronger than conflict. Moreover, though resolving conflicts through mutual adaptation is estimated crucial to marital success, Lewin (1958) argue that unless balance can be obtained which give enough satisfaction to both spouses, it would be difficult to keep the marriage intact. Therefore, “conflict management is the key to successful marriage” (Fincham, 2003, p. 26).

All couples have to cope with conflict. Gottman (1993) claimed that since managing conflict is one of the main tasks of maintaining a marriage, distinguishing what specific conflict resolution styles are connected to change in marital satisfaction is essential. It was shown that if conflict is coped with in a constructive way, marital adjustment and stability will increase, whereas if conflict is coped with in a destructive way, the couples have a tendency to state unsatisfactory marriage (Fincham, 2003; Gottman, 1993; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). Destructive conflict resolution style is described as increasing spirals of manipulation, avoidance spirals (covert expression of the conflict), threat and coercion (overt expression of the conflict), a retaliation, a competitive pattern of dominance and subordination, inflexibility and rigidity, and demeaning and degrading verbal and

nonverbal communication (Greeff & Bruyne, 2000). On the other hand, constructive conflict resolution style, conversely, is defined as flexibility, cooperation, enhancement of self-esteem, interaction with the intent to learn instead of an intent to protect, a relationship focus instead of an individual focus (Wilmot & Hocker, 2011).

Specifically, Smith, Ciarrochi, and Heaven (2008) indicated that female who use avoidance and withholding in their conflict communication style tended to decrease both their own and their husbands' relationship adjustment; however, males' avoidant conflict communication style had no effect on relationship adjustment in cohabiting couples. Berry and Willingham (1997) conducted a study to understand the association among affective trait, responses to conflict (i.e., exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect behaviors) and relationship quality. The findings indicated that more voice behaviors led to higher relationship quality and more exit and neglect behaviors led to lower relationship quality, whereas no significant association was found between loyalty behaviors and relationship quality. Additionally, a significant indirect association was found between positive affect and relationship quality through both exit and voice behaviors. Furthermore, Cheng (2010) conducted an inter-cultural study with 201 Taiwanese husbands and their foreign spouses to examine the relationship between conflict management strategies, which were integrating, obliging, compromising, avoiding, and competing styles, and marital satisfaction. It was shown that wives' and husbands' use of integrating, obliging, and compromising styles of conflict management strategies were positively correlated with their own marital satisfaction. However, using avoiding style was only positively related to wives' marital satisfaction.

Many factors such as the particular personal history, social support, coping resources, cognitive appraisal, event properties, and psychological disorders of the individual mediate the impact of stressful life events (e.g., Conger et al., 1990; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Vitaliano, Russo, Weber, & Celum, 1993). Fincham (2003) suggests that the environments in which marriages are placed

are essential to understand marital conflict deeply. He claimed that external stressors may affect marriage directly, and problem-solving skills and conflict may have little influence on marriage in the absence of external stressors. Conger et al. (1990) mentioned that negative life events related to economic conditions predicted men's more hostile, less warmth and supportive interactions to their wives. Moreover, because of men's these behaviors, women perceived less marital adjustment. Woszidlo and Segrin (2013a) showed that for both wives and husbands, own stressful events in terms of work, family, and job-home interference stress were related to lower own mutual problem solving that was, in turn, related to lower levels of own marital satisfaction. On the other hand, indirect relationships were also seen; husbands' mutual problem solving mediated the effect of wives' job-home and family (separately) on wives' marital satisfaction.

According to VSA, affect and negative life events apply their effect on marriage through conflict resolution style. Hanzal and Segrin (2009) found partial support that conflict styles (i.e., positive problem solving, conflict engagement and withdrawal) mediated the association between negative affect and marital quality. The results revealed that husbands' conflict resolution styles (i.e., husbands' positive problem solving, conflict engagement and withdrawal) partially mediated the relationship between negative affectivity and marital adjustment. However, it was shown that positive problem solving was the only variable that partially mediated the relationship between negative affect and marital adjustment for wives. Additionally, they claimed that one spouse's use of conflict engagement and withdrawal partially explained the relationship between the other spouse's negative affect and marital adjustment. Woszidlo and Segrin (2013b) also indicated the association that was a significant indirect relationship between negative affect and both indicators of marital quality (i.e., personal commitment and divorce proneness) through mutual problem solving for husbands, not for wives.

Conflict resolution style has an association not only with poor marital quality, but also risk for divorce. Gottman and Levenson (1992) studied the precursors of divorce in 4-year period and divided couples into regulated and non-regulated marital types based on whether their interaction positive or negative. They mentioned that non-regulated couples tended to show lower marital satisfaction, more stubbornness and withdrawal from interaction, greater defensiveness, more negative ratings for interactions, more negative emotional expression, less positive emotional expression, marital problems reported as more severe, and greater risk for marital dissolution compared with regulated couples. Moreover, Gottman et al.'s (1998) study with newlywed couple over a 6-year period demonstrated that divorce was predicted by husband's denying his wife's influence, negative start-up by the wife, nonexistence of de-escalation of low intensity negative wife affect by the husband, nonexistence of de-escalation of high intensity husband negative affect by the wife, and a lack of physiological soothing of the male.

2.7. Connection between the Literature Review and Aims of the Study

A detailed review of the literature showed that marital adjustment is associated with multiple variables for both wives and husbands. Specifically, the literature up to date highlighted significant relations among affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution style, and marital adjustment. Nevertheless, some researchers investigated these variables independently, some of them investigated using with VSA including limited number of variables. In addition, marital literature includes much scientific information based on the individual data. Furthermore, there is a risk that conflict resolution may hinder to realize social support effect, due to suppression effect of conflict resolution. As a result, the main aim of the current study is to test the role of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles, respectively, as potential mediators of the relationships between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment in a dyadic manner.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In this section, firstly, characteristics of participants are given. Secondly, information about the scales and forms that were used in the current study are mentioned. Thirdly, procedures of data collection are mentioned. Lastly, general outline of data analysis is stated with including general overview of actor-partner interdependence model.

3.1. Participants

The sample of the current study included 165 Turkish married couples (165 wives, 165 husbands). Respecting to sample of the current research, purposive sampling procedure (Kerlinger, 1986) was employed in order to select the participants who are in their first marriage, have at least primary school education, live in big cities, are living with their spouses, get official marriage. The age of the total sample ranged between 22 and 66 with the mean of 41.82 ($SD = 10.33$). Specifically, the age of wives ranged between 22 and 64 with the mean of 40.01 ($sd = 9.94$) and the age of husbands ranged between 24 and 66 with the mean of 43.63 ($sd = 10.43$). Moreover, the length of marriages of couples ranged from 1 month to 44 years 11 months (539 months) with the average of 204.12 months ($SD = 131.25$). With the respect to their children, 14.5% of couples ($N = 24$) had no child, 22.4% of couples ($N = 37$) had one children, 46.7% of couples ($N = 77$) had two children, 13.3% of couples ($N = 22$) had three children, 1.8% of couples ($N = 3$) had four children, 0.6% of couples ($N = 1$) had five children, and 0.6% of couples ($N = 1$) had six children. When education level were considered, 26.7% of wives ($n = 44$) and 14% of husbands ($n = 23$) had primary-

secondary school education (5-8 year education), 25.5% of wives ($n = 42$) and 26.7% of husbands ($n = 44$) had high school education (11-year education), 38.2% of wives ($n = 63$) and 45.5% of husbands ($n = 75$) had university degree (15-year education), and 9.7% of wives ($n = 16$) and 13.9% of husbands ($n = 23$) had graduate/doctorate degree (17-21 year education).

Table 3. 1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

	Wives ($n = 165$)	Husbands ($n = 165$)	Total ($N = 330$)
Mean Age (Range)	40.01 (22-64)	43.63 (24-66)	41.82 (22-66)
Number of Child(ren)			
No child	24 (14.5%)	24 (14.5%)	–
1	37 (22.4%)	37 (22.4%)	–
2	77 (46.7%)	77 (46.7%)	–
3 or more	27 (16.3%)	27 (16.3%)	–
Education			
Primary-secondary school	44 (26.7%)	23 (14%)	67 (20.3%)
High school	42 (25.5%)	44 (26.7%)	86 (26.1%)
University	63 (38.2%)	75 (45.5%)	138 (41.8%)
Graduate/Doctorate	16 (9.7%)	23 (13.9%)	39 (11.8%)

3.2. Instruments

The instruments included a demographic information form and five scales. The five scales chosen for current study were Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) for measuring marital adjustment, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988) for measuring affect, Life Experiences Survey (Sarason et al., 1978) for

measuring negative life events, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988) for measuring perceived social support, and Conflict Resolution Styles Scale (Özen, 2006) for measuring conflict resolution style were administered.

3.2.1. Demographic Information Form

Demographic information form was developed by the researcher. It was used in order to get information about gender, age, education level, marital duration and number of children to control their effects on main variables.

3.2.2. Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) was developed by Spanier (1976) to assess the quality of relationship of cohabiting and married couples. The scale is a 32-item self-report scale and contains Likert-type responses varying from 5 to 7 point and dichotomous items that are answered either “yes” or “no”. The total score of the scale is calculated by summing up items after necessary items are converted and it changes in range from 0-151. Higher scores of the scale demonstrate a higher perception of relationship quality. The scale measures four relational aspects which are dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus and affectional expression. Dyadic satisfaction is related to the happiness and the frequency of conflicts experienced in the relationship. Dyadic cohesion is associated with the how often spouses engage in activities jointly. Dyadic consensus is related to the consensus that spouses hold on issues of importance such as making decisions or handling family finances. Affectional expression is associated with the how often spouses declare love to each other.

In Spanier’s (1976) study, Cronbach’s alphas were reported .96 for overall scale. Moreover, reliabilities of the subscales were calculated as .90, .94, .86, and .73 for dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and affectional expression, respectively. Content, criterion-related and construct validity were also assessed. For

content validity, items in the scale were evaluated by three judges. Criterion-related validity of the scale was obtained through applying the scale to both married and divorced sample to demonstrate the scale distinguished those groups. Construct validity was examined by assessing the correlation between the scores of DAS and the scores of Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale ($r = .86$). Therefore, it was shown that DAS is both valid and reliable scale.

DAS was translated into Turkish by Fıfılođlu and Demir (2000). In their study, Cronbach's alphas were reported .83 for dyadic satisfaction, .80 for affectional expression, .75 for dyadic cohesion, and .75 for dyadic consensus, and .92 for overall scale. The split half reliability coefficient was .86. Additionally, criterion validity was obtained by the correlation between adapted DAS and adapted Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test ($r = .82$) and construct validity was assessed showing the original four factors in the Turkish version.

3.2.3. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) is a self-report scale to measure subjectively experienced moods was developed by Watson et al. (1988). It contains two 10-item mood scales derived positive and negative ratings from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely). Positive affect scale consists of the adjectives which are attentive, interested, alert, excited, enthusiastic, inspired, proud, determined, strong and active. Negative affect scale contains of the adjectives which are distressed, upset, hostile, irritable, scared, afraid, ashamed, guilty, and nervous, jittery. Score of scales are calculated by summing up items and total scores range from 10 to 50 for each scale. In the study of Watson et al. (1988), the alpha reliabilities calculated for different time instructions as moment, today, past few days, past few weeks, year and general. Cronbach's alpha levels were ranging from .86 to .90 for positive affect and from .84 to .87 for negative affect. Also, the correlations between positive and negative affect were low.

PANAS was translated and adapted into Turkish by Gençöz (2000). Participants were 199 university students. In this study, internal consistency coefficients were found to be .83 for the positive affect scale and .86 for the negative affect scale. Test-retest reliability coefficients for positive and negative affect were .40 and .54, respectively. Moreover, internal consistency coefficients were .81 for positive affect scale and .83 for negative affect scale. Furthermore, criterion-related validity was investigated by assessing the correlation between the scores of PANAS and the scores of both with Beck Depression Inventory and with Beck Anxiety Inventory. Findings indicated that positive affect presented correlations of -.48 and -.22, and negative affect correlations were .51 and .47, with these inventories, respectively.

3.2.4. Life Experiences Survey

Life Experiences Survey (LES) is a self-reported scale to measure the number of and to appraise both positive and negative life events experienced during the past 6 months and 1 year developed by Sarason et al. (1978). It includes 2 sections and 57 items totally. Section one contains items related to specific life events for all individuals. However, section two is specifically for students. Item scores range on a 7-point scale from extremely negative (-3) to extremely positive (+3). The respondents are questioned to evaluate the changes in their life during the past year stating the occurrence of those events within two 6-month-interval options (0-6 months and/or 7 months-1 year), and to evaluate how perceived impact of that particular event on their life as being positive and negative. Score of scales are calculated by summing up items and called “positive change score”, “negative change score” and “total change score”, and lower scores mean higher negative life experiences. Reported test-retest reliabilities were .53, .88 and .64 for positive, negative and total change scores, respectively. Convergent validity was investigated by assessing the correlation between the scores of LES and the scores of Beck Depression Inventory ($r = .24, p < .05$).

The first section of LES was translated into Turkish by Aslanoğlu (1978). The translated items were given to a judge group. Some additional items which were proposed by the majority of this judge group as pertinent to Turkish culture were embedded in the scale. Similarly, some other items agreed as nonpertinent to Turkish culture were either revised or excluded from the scale. In this study, only Cronbach's alpha was reported that was .68. Because of limited psychometric data on the Turkish version of the scale, Yılmaz (2007) evaluated the psychometrics of it. It was found that the internal consistency as .74 for total change score, .79 for negative change score, and .61 for positive change score, while the retest correlation for the total change score reported as .64 ($p < .01$), .67 for the negative change score, and .62 ($p < .01$) for the positive change score scores. In addition total change score, negative change score, and positive change score possess a satisfactory convergent validity. Additionally, Yarış (2010) conducted a study in which subjects filled in just section one and just negative change score was calculated showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .77 for negative change score.

3.2.5. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) is a self-report measurement to assess the level of perceived social support obtained from family, friends, and significant other domains developed by Zimet et al. (1988). It consists of 7-point-Likert type 12 items ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree). Each domains contains four items and scores are calculated by summing up items for significant others, family, friend, and total. Higher scores on this scale means higher levels of perceived social support.

The Cronbach's alpha levels for significant others, family, friend, and total score were .91, .87, .85, and .88 respectively. The reliability values indicated that good internal consistency. The test-retest reliability for significant others, family, friend, and total score were .72, .85, .75, and .85, respectively. Moreover, construct validity was examined by assessing the correlation between the scores of MSPSS and the scores

of depression and anxiety subscales of the Hopkins Symptom Checklist. Perceived support from family was correlated with depression ($r = -.24$) and anxiety ($r = -.18$). On the other hand, perceived support from friends, significant others, and total were correlated with depression ($r = -.24$, $r = -.13$, and $r = -.25$, respectively). Therefore, moderate construct validity was shown.

The scale was translated into Turkish by Eker and Arkar (1995). The Cronbach's alpha levels of the Turkish version were .85 for family, .88 for friends, .92 for the significant other, and .89 for the whole scale. Reported test-retest reliability was .65 and split half coefficient for students was .78. The correlational analyses between Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and Beck Depression Inventory, and Spielberger State Trait Anxiety Scale revealed that Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support is significantly and negatively correlated with BDI and Spielberger State Trait Anxiety Scale, suggesting that Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support is a valid scale.

3.2.6. Conflict Resolution Styles Scale

Conflict Resolution Styles Scale (CRSS) is a self-reported scale to determine the conflict resolution styles of couples developed by Özen (2006). It contains 25 items ratings from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree). The scale consists of 4 subscales that are positive conflict resolution style (6-item), negative conflict resolution style (7-item), subordination (6-item), and retreat (6-item). The CRSS depends on the scores of these subscales and do not has total score. The scores of the scale are calculated by summing up items, and the maximum score for negative conflict resolution style is 42 and for other subscales are 36, respectively.

Cronbach's Alpha for the positive, negative, retreat, and subordination conflict resolution style were .80, .82, .74, and .73 respectively. The results indicated very high internal consistencies. Moreover, items' item total correlations were between .47 and .67 for positive conflict resolution style, between .37 and .68 for negative conflict

resolution style, between .39 and .59 for retreat conflict resolution styles, between .38 and .57 for subordination conflict resolution style. It has also high and moderate levels of split half reliability for subscales. High construct validity with high factor loadings (minimum .54) and high criterion validity with significant correlations were conducted. The correlational analyses between Conflict Resolution Styles Scale and Kurdek's Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI) revealed that Conflict Resolution Styles Scale is significantly and positively correlated with Kurdek's Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory. Specifically, it was shown that the correlations between conflict engagement (CRSI) and negative conflict resolution style, positive problem solving (CRSI) and positive conflict resolution style, withdrawal (CRSI) and retreat, compliance (CRSI) and subordination are .75, .61, .45, .39 (for all of them $p < .01$), respectively. In the current study, only positive and negative conflict resolution styles were used.

3.3. Procedure

At the beginning of the study, all necessary permissions was obtained from The Applied Ethics Research Center of Middle East Technical University for research with human participants. After the necessary permission received from the committee, the data collection process started. Respecting to sample of the current study, purposive sampling procedure (Kerlinger, 1986) was employed in order to select the participants who are in their first marriage, have at least primary school education, live in big cities, are living with their spouses, get official marriage. Regarding data collection, snowball sampling method (Kumar, 1996) was used in an effort to reach potential participants. The announcements for participants were made in selective psychology courses at Middle East Technical University and İstanbul 29 Mayıs University. Students were instructed that married couples were required for a doctoral dissertation and they would receive one point bonus to use for their course grade if they could get the information of married couples. The data gathered from both partners of couples on a voluntary basis. The instruments were given and

returned in closed envelopes via students. The instrument packages for wives and husbands were placed in envelopes including an Informed Consent, which provided necessary information regarding the purpose of the study, important points in filling the scales, participants' confidentiality, and contact information of the researcher, and all measurements included their own instructions. The order of the scales was randomized to control for order effect. However, both husbands and wives completed all measurements in the same order.

3.4. Data Analysis

For the evaluation of the research questions, several statistical techniques were used. Firstly, descriptive statistics and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted to get information about the characteristics of the data and gender differences by using a computer program for the multivariate statistics, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20 for Windows. Secondly, the model was formed via VSA including affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution styles, and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. In order to test the mediating effects of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles (respectively) in the association between affect, negative life events, and marital adjustment, a series of path analyses using actor-partner interdependence model (APIM; Ledermann, Macho, & Kenny, 2011) were conducted by using a computer program for structural equation modeling, AMOS.

3.4.1. Overview of Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM)

Actor-partner interdependence model is a conceptual framework for collecting and analyzing dyadic data, mainly by emphasizing the significance of considering the interdependence that exists between dyad members (Kenny, 1996). Members of dyads can be husband and wife, boss and employee, older and younger siblings, parent and child, teacher and student, coworkers, best friends etc. Therefore, data of

married couples are evaluated as interdependent accepting each spouse of the couple influences the functioning and outcomes for both spouses of the dyad.

A dyadic approach was developed based on the assumption that each member of the dyad influences the functioning and outcomes for both members of the dyad (Kenny, 1996). In other words, APIM gives an opportunity to understand “the impact of a person’s causal variable on his or her own outcome variable (actor effect) and on the outcome variable of the partner (partner effect)” (Ledermann et al., 2011). Therefore, it is conceivable to appraise the effects for both dyads at the same time with this model controlling for the statistical interdependence between dyad members. Moreover, this technique allows testing whether the actor and partner effects differ significantly between dyad members (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006).

To sum up, APIM is a method of estimating interdependence that exists between dyad members. It gives a chance to understand how each member of the dyad influences the functioning and outcomes for both members of the dyad. In marital literature, it helps to get deeper information about the relationships.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this section, the results of the statistical analysis of the study are presented. First, the descriptive statistics of the variables and bivariate analysis are mentioned. Second, the results of testing hypothesis are given.

4.1. Data Screening Prior to Analysis

In the current study, prior to conducting the analyses, all variables were examined for accuracy of data entry, missing values, and fit between their distributions and the assumptions of multivariate statistics, namely normality, linearity, homogeneity of variance, and homogeneity of regression (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Before the analysis, if cases included too many missing values such as not filling a full scale, those were not included to analysis. Because missing values were less than 5%, they were replaced with the item means. Then, the data were analyzed for univariate and multivariate outliers. Due to high Mahalanobis distance values, 5 participants were found as multivariate outliers. Therefore, they and their spouses were omitted from the data set, leaving 165 couples for the analyses. The skewness and kurtosis values were examined and all variables in acceptable ranges except negative life events score, suggesting the normality of the distributions. Negative life events score was found to be negatively skewed. However, because the statistical transformation of negative life events into a more normal distribution is not theoretically sound and harder to interpret due to structure of the scale, no statistical procedure was applied for this variable.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Analyses

Descriptive statistics, which are means, standard deviations, and ranges, for the main variables of the study were presented in Table 4.1. The mean scores of positive affect were 3.52 for wives ($sd = .66$) and 3.59 for husbands ($sd = .68$). The mean scores of negative affect were 2.00 for wives ($sd = .61$) and 1.94 for husbands ($sd = .60$). Spouses in the current study had a higher tendency to show positive affect rather than negative affect. The mean scores of negative life events were $-.09$ for wives ($sd = .10$) and $-.08$ for husbands ($sd = .09$) (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences). The mean scores of perceived social support were 5.47 for wives ($sd = 1.25$) and 5.28 for husbands ($sd = 1.28$); perceiving high social support. For conflict resolution styles, the mean scores of positive conflict resolution style were 4.39 for wives ($sd = .88$) and 4.22 for husbands ($sd = .83$), and the mean scores of negative conflict resolution style were 2.39 for wives ($sd = .90$) and 2.30 for husbands ($sd = .84$). Spouses in the current study had a higher tendency to use positive conflict style compare to negative conflict resolution style. The mean scores of marital adjustment were 110.85 for wives ($sd = 17.37$) and 112.92 for husbands ($sd = 16.82$). The means for marital adjustment were relatively higher for both partners.

Before testing the hypotheses, a series of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were performed in order to investigate potential gender differences. Affect, negative life events, perceived social support, conflict resolution style, and marital adjustment were used as dependent variables, separately. Covariates were length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. After adjustment by covariates, positive affect [$F(1, 325) = .86, p = .35$], negative affect [$F(1, 325) = .23, p = .63$], negative life events [$F(1, 325) = 1.27, p = .26$], perceived social support [$F(1, 325) = 3.03, p = .08$], positive conflict resolution style [$F(1, 325) = 3.57, p = .06$], negative conflict resolution style [$F(1, 325) = .54, p = .46$], and marital adjustment [$F(1, 325) = .62, p = .43$] did not varied significantly with gender.

Table 4. 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges, for the Main Variables of the Study

Variable	Wives (<i>n</i> = 165)		Husbands (<i>n</i> = 165)		Range
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
PA	3.52	.66	3.59	.68	1 – 5
NA	2.00	.61	1.94	.60	1 – 5
NLE	-.09	.10	-.08	.09	-3 – 3
PSS	5.47	1.25	5.28	1.28	1 – 7
PCRS	4.39	.88	4.22	.83	1 – 6
NCRS	2.39	.90	2.30	.84	1 – 6
MA	110.85	17.37	112.92	16.82	0 – 151

Note. PA = Positive Affect; NA = Negative Affect; NLE = Negative Life Events; PSS = Perceived Social Support; PCRS = Positive Conflict Resolution Style; NCRS = Negative Conflict Resolution Style; MA = Marital Adjustment

Prior to conducting tests of research questions, both intrapersonal and interpersonal correlations were calculated for all variables (see Table 4.2). For both wives and husbands, marital adjustment was significantly and positively correlated with positive affect ($r = .24, p < .01$; $r = .28, p < .01$, respectively), negative life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) ($r = .23, p < .01$; $r = .32, p < .01$, respectively), perceived social support ($r = .22, p < .01$; $r = .34, p < .01$, respectively), and positive conflict resolution style ($r = .28, p < .01$; $r = .26, p < .01$, respectively); negatively correlated with negative affect ($r = -.43, p < .01$; $r = -.39, p < .01$, respectively) and negative conflict resolution style ($r = -.34, p < .01$; $r = -.45, p < .01$, respectively). Moreover, positive conflict resolution style was significantly and positively correlated with positive affect ($r = .20, p < .01$; $r = .32, p < .01$, respectively), and negative conflict resolution style was significantly and positively

correlated with negative affect ($r = .33, p < .01$; $r = .42, p < .01$, respectively) and negatively correlated with negative life events ($r = -.22, p < .01$; $r = -.23, p < .01$, respectively) for both wives and husbands. Furthermore, negative affect was negatively correlated with negative life events ($r = -.36, p < .01$; $r = -.28, p < .01$, respectively) and perceived social support ($r = -.20, p < .05$; $r = -.20, p < .01$, respectively), while positive affect was positively correlated with perceived social support ($r = .26, p < .01$; $r = .36, p < .01$, respectively) for both wives and husbands.

Interpersonal correlations were dyad associations for spouses'. Wives' marital adjustment was positively correlated with husbands' positive affect ($r = .25, p < .01$), negative life events ($r = .19, p < .05$), positive conflict resolution style ($r = .24, p < .01$) and marital adjustment ($r = .70, p < .01$); negatively correlated with husbands' negative affect ($r = -.35, p < .01$) and negative conflict resolution styles ($r = -.40, p < .01$). Husbands' marital adjustment was positively correlated with wives' positive conflict resolution style ($r = .25, p < .01$) and negatively correlated with wives' negative affect ($r = -.28, p < .01$) and negative conflict resolution style ($r = -.28, p < .01$).

Table 4. 2. Bivariate Correlations among Affect, Negative Life Events, Perceived Social Support, Conflict Resolution Styles, and Marital Adjustment

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.PA_W	1													
2.NA_W	-.05	1												
3.NLE_W	-.06	-.36**	1											
4.PSS_W	.26**	-.20*	.08	1										
5.PCRS_W	.20**	-.04	-.09	.06	1									
6.NCRS_W	-.01	.33**	-.22**	.05	-.05	1								
7.MA_W	.24**	-.43**	.23**	.22**	.28**	-.34**	1							
8.PA_H	.45**	-.12	-.01	.11	.08	-.02	.25**	1						
9.NA_H	-.10	.36**	-.19*	-.07	-.04	.19*	-.35**	-.13	1					
10.NLE_H	-.05	-.14	.51**	.07	-.13	-.06	.19*	.00	-.28**	1				
11.PSS_H	.19*	-.19*	.14	.34**	.08	.08	.15	.36**	-.20**	.16*	1			
12.PCRS_H	.11	-.10	.03	.05	.35**	.00	.24**	.32**	-.05	.01	.21**	1		
13.NCRS_H	-.11	.20**	.01	-.12	-.15	.27**	-.40**	.00	.42**	-.23**	-.08	-.07	1	
14.MA_H	.15	-.28**	.15	.11	.25**	-.28**	.70**	.28**	-.39**	.32**	.34**	.26**	-.45**	1

Note 1. PA_W = Wives' Positive Affect; NA_W = Wives' Negative Affect; NLE_W = Wives' Negative Life Events; PSS_W = Wives' Perceived Social Support; PCSRS_W = Wives' Positive Conflict Resolution Style; NCRS_W = Wives' Negative Conflict Resolution Style; MA_W = Wives' Marital Adjustment; PA_H = Husbands' Positive Affect; NA_H = Husbands' Negative Affect; NLE_H = Husbands' Negative Life Events; PSS_H = Husbands' Perceived Social Support; PCSRS_H = Husbands' Positive Conflict Resolution Style; NCRS_H = Husbands' Negative Conflict Resolution Style; MA_H = Husbands' Marital Adjustment

Note 2. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

4.3. Testing the Hypothesis

The mediating effects of perceived social support and conflict resolution style in the association between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment were tested by a series of path analysis using APIM framework. In all analysis, length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses were added as control variables. In the first path analysis, the effects of affect and negative life events on marital adjustment were tested by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. Then, the mediation role of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles on the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses were performed separately. In the analysis, affect and negative life events of wives and husbands were used as predictor variables, perceived social support and conflict resolution styles were used as mediating variables (separately), marital adjustment was used as outcome variable, and length of marriage, number of children, and education level of spouses were used as control variables.

4.3.1. Actor-Partner Effects of Affect and Negative Life Events in Predicting Marital Adjustment (H1)

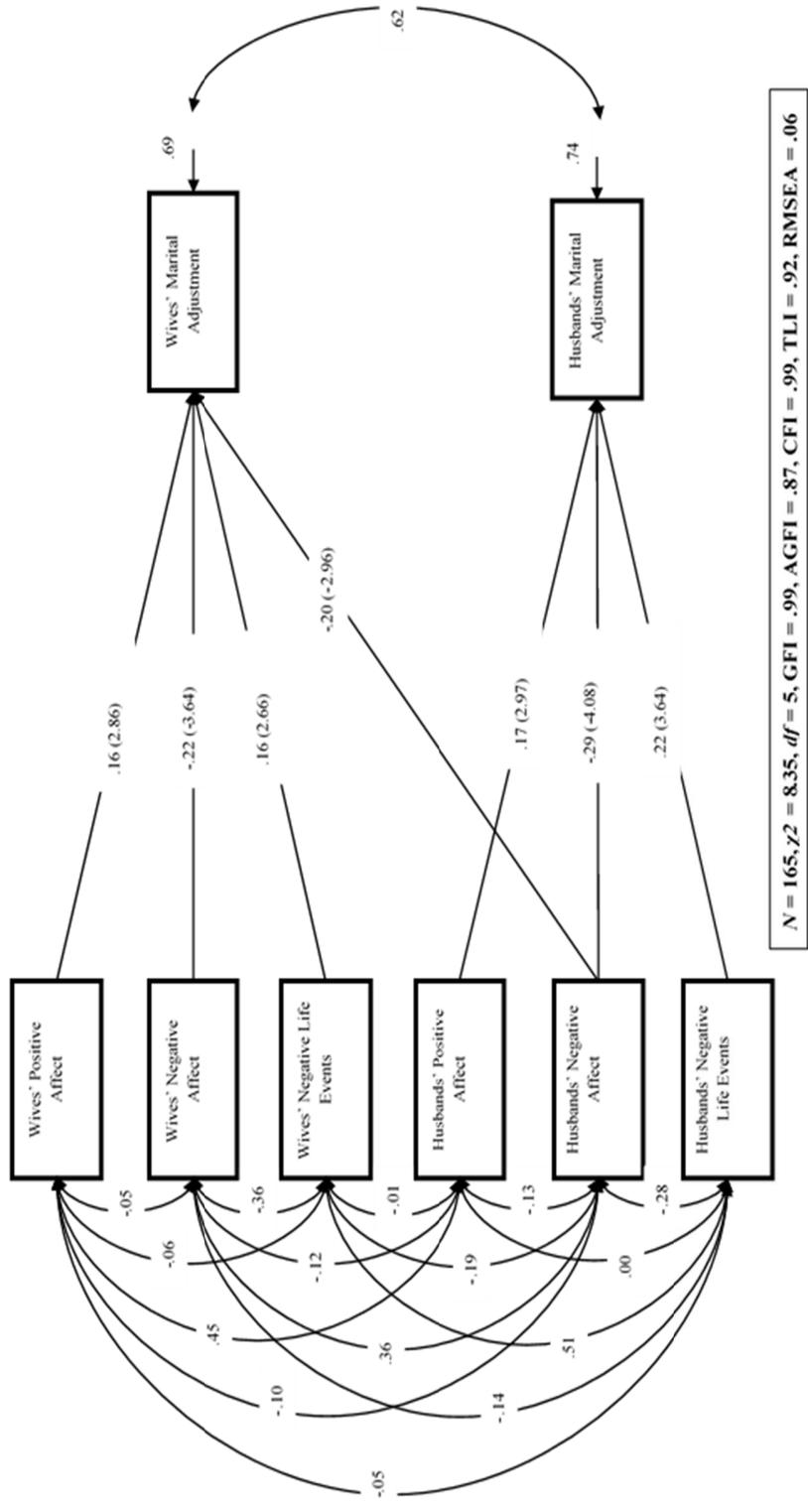
The conceptual model was determined as positive affect, negative affect, and negative life events would have direct effects on marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. In this manner, the model was saturated indicating observed and implied covariance matrices fitted exactly. The saturated model demonstrated that the associations between spouses' own positive affect and their partners' marital adjustment, and between spouses' own negative life events and their partners' marital adjustment were insignificant. Additionally, wives' negative affect also did not predict marital adjustment of husbands. Therefore, the five insignificant links were dropped from the model.

Eventually, the final model fit the data very well [$\chi^2(5, N = 165) = 8.35, p = .14, GFI = .99, AGFI = .87, CFI = .99, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .06$].

As seen in Figure 4, the APIM analysis showed significant associations about both actor and partner effects. Specifically, both wives' and husbands' own positive affect predicted their own marital adjustment positively ($\beta = .16, p < .01; \beta = .17, p < .01$, respectively). In other words, both wives and husbands high in positive affect reported high marital adjustment. On the other hand, husbands' negative affect predicted their own and wives' marital adjustment negatively ($\beta = -.29, p < .01; \beta = -.20, p < .01$, respectively), indicating that husbands high in negative affect lead to low own and wives' marital adjustment. However, wives' negative affect was related to only their own marital adjustment negatively ($\beta = -.22, p < .01$). That is to say, wives high in negative affect predicted only low their own marital adjustment. For negative life events, both wives and husbands experienced higher negative impact of life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) tend to report lower marital adjustment ($\beta = .16, p < .01; \beta = .22, p < .01$, respectively). The only significant path from control variables to marital adjustment was the one from length of marriage to wives' marital adjustment. This indicates that the higher length of marriage, the higher wives' marital adjustment is ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$). Overall, affect and negative life events explained 31% and 26% of the total variances in wives' and husbands' marital adjustment.

Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether one's own positive and negative affect are equal to one's marital adjustment. Results revealed that the paths from positive affect to marital adjustment and from negative affect to marital adjustment did not differ for both husbands and wives. Additionally, analyses were conducted to examine whether actor and partner effects on the outcome variables are equal. Specifically, a series of nested models were tested in which the corresponding paths for husbands and wives were set equal, one pair at a time and the chi-square test was used to test the model significance. Findings demonstrated that the paths for

husbands and wives were comparable and there was no significant gender difference.
Actor and partner effects did not differ from each other.



Note: Error terms represent percent of unexplained variance. For ease of interpretation, control variables, and correlation among IVs and control variables are not shown. t values are presented in the parentheses.

Figure 4. Actor and Partner Effects in Predicting Marital Adjustment

4.3.2. The Mediating Role of Perceived Social Support in the association among Affect, Negative Life Events, and Marital Adjustment (H2)

The conceptual model proposed that affect and negative life events would predict marital adjustment both directly and indirectly through perceived social support by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. The saturated model, which contained all the paths from affect, negative life events, and control variables to perceived social support and marital adjustment as well as the paths from perceived social support to marital adjustment, was tested. Then, the insignificant paths were trimmed except paths from control variables. The final model with standardized parameter estimates was given in Figure 5. The goodness-of-fit statistics indicated that this model fit the data very well [$\chi^2(17, N = 165) = 21.14, p = .22, GFI = .98, AGFI = .89, CFI = .99, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .04$].

4.3.2.1. Actor Effects

As seen in Figure 5, there were a number of actor effects between an individual's affect and negative life events and his/her own perceived social support and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. Specifically, both wives and husbands high in positive affect reported high perceived social support ($\beta = .23, p < .01; \beta = .34, p < .01$, respectively). However, only husbands experienced higher negative impact of life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) perceived less social support ($\beta = .16, p < .02$). Additionally, wives reported high positive affect ($\beta = .11, p < .05$) and low negative affect ($\beta = -.20, p < .01$), and perceived high social support ($\beta = .10, p < .05$) predicted high marital adjustment. On the other hand, husbands reported low negative affect ($\beta = -.27, p < .01$) and perceived high social support ($\beta = .28, p < .01$) predicted high marital adjustment. Both wives and husbands experienced higher negative impact of life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) reported low marital adjustment ($\beta = .16, p < .01; \beta = .17, p < .01$, respectively). The only significant path from control variables to marital adjustment was the one from length

of marriage to wives' marital adjustment. This indicates that the higher length of marriage, the higher wives' marital adjustment is ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$).

Moreover, actor effects revealed two significant mediations. First, husbands' perceived social support fully mediated the effect of husbands' positive affect on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .09, $p < .01$), indicating that husbands reported higher positive affect perceived higher social support, and this in turn, increased marital adjustment. Second, husbands' perceived social support partially mediated the effect of husbands' negative life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .05, $p < .01$) both directly and indirectly. In other words, husbands experienced higher negative life events perceived less social support, and this in turn, decreased their marital adjustment. However, wives' perceived social support did not mediate the effect of wives' positive affect on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .02, $p = .10$) indirectly.

4.3.2.2. Partner Effects

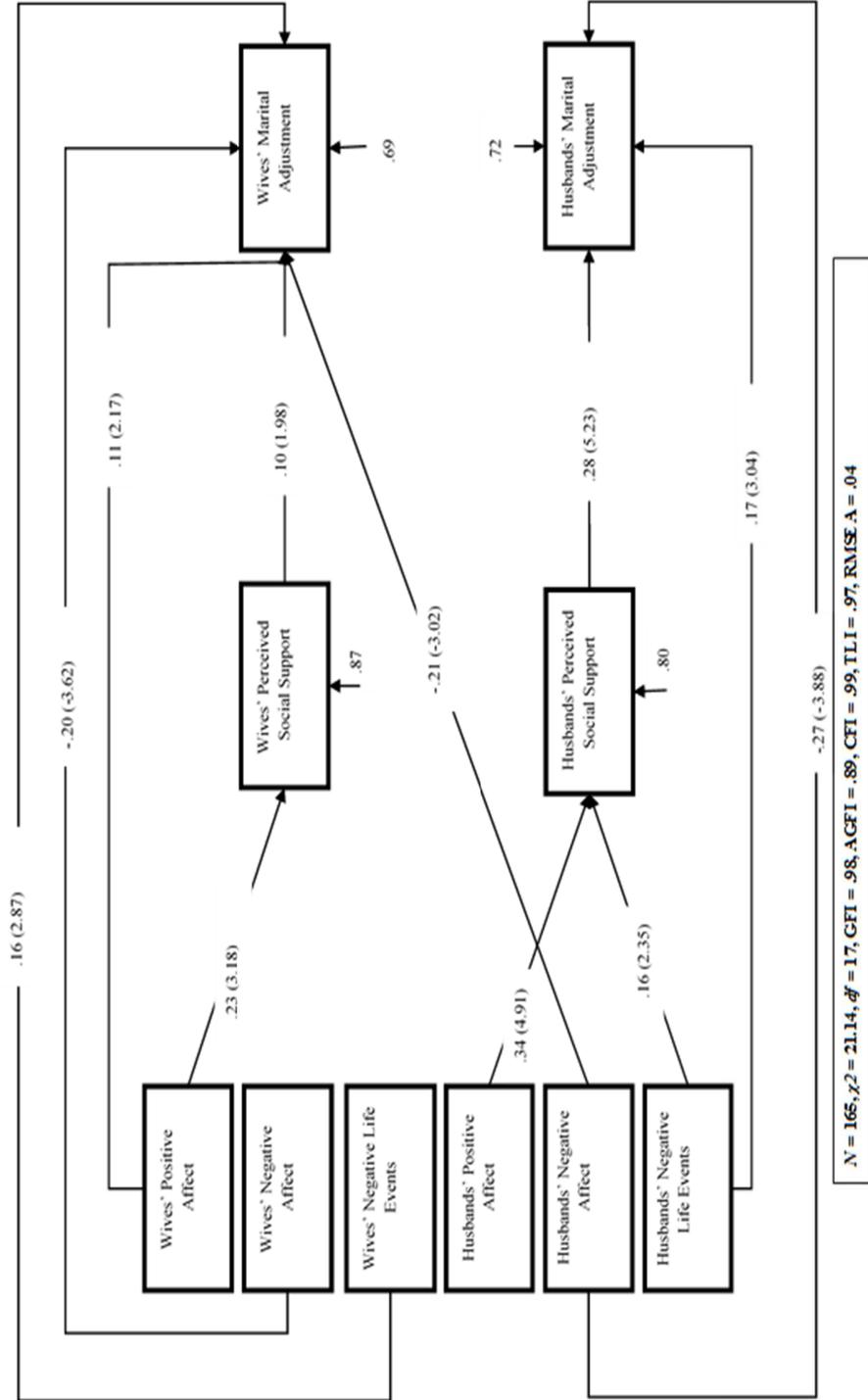
There was only one partner effect between affect, and marital adjustment. Specifically, husbands' negative affect was related to wives' marital adjustment ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$). This result showed that husbands reported high negative affect predicted low wives' marital adjustment. However, there was no mediation effect regarding the partner effect.

Overall, positive affect, negative affect and negative life events explained 13% and 20% of the total variance in wives' perceived social support and husbands' perceived social support, respectively. 31% and 28% of the total variances in wives' and husbands' marital adjustment were explained by the full model.

4.3.2.3. Gender Effects

Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether actor and partner effects on the outcome variables are equal. Specifically, a series of nested models were tested

in which the corresponding paths for husbands and wives were set equal, one pair at a time and the chi-square test was used to test the model significance. Findings demonstrated that the paths for husbands and wives were comparable and there was a gender difference only in the association between own perceived social support and own marital adjustment. The association between own perceived social support and own marital adjustment was stronger for husbands than for wives. In other words, husbands perceived high social support reported higher marital adjustment than wives perceived high social support.



Note: Error terms represent percent of unexplained variance. For ease of interpretation, control variables, correlation among IVs and correlated errors within mediating variables and within outcome variables are not shown. *t* values are presented in the parentheses.

Figure 5. Structural Model Using Perceived Social Support as a Mediator

4.3.3. The Mediating Role of Conflict Resolution Styles in the association among Affect, Negative Life Events, and Marital Adjustment (H3)

The conceptual model suggested that affect and negative life events would predict marital adjustment both directly and indirectly through conflict resolution styles that is positive and negative by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. The saturated model, which contained all the paths from affect, negative life events, and control variables to conflict resolution styles and marital adjustment as well as the paths from conflict resolution styles to marital adjustment, was tested. Then, the insignificant paths were trimmed except paths from control variables. The final model with standardized parameter estimates was given in Figure 6. The goodness-of-fit statistics indicated that this model fit the data very well [$\chi^2(27, N = 165) = 29.49, p = .34, GFI = .98, AGFI = .89, CFI = 1.00, TLI = .99, RMSEA = .02$].

4.3.3.1. Actor Effects

As seen in Figure 6, there were a number of actor effects between an individual's affect and negative life events and his/her own conflict resolution styles and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. Specifically, wives' positive affect predicted their own positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .18, p < .01$) and marital adjustment ($\beta = .15, p < .01$) positively, while wives' negative affect predicted their own negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = .27, p < .01$) positively, and marital adjustment negatively ($\beta = -.20, p < .01$). On the other hand, when husbands' positive affect was high they also reported higher positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .31, p < .01$) and higher marital adjustment ($\beta = .19, p < .01$), whereas when husbands' negative affect was high they reported higher negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = .36, p < .01$). For both wives and husbands, they experienced more negative life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) reported lower marital adjustment ($\beta = .17, p < .01; \beta = .23, p < .01$, respectively). Additionally, husbands experienced more negative life events

(lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) used higher negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$). Moreover, husbands' marital adjustment was predicted by negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.32, p < .01$) negatively, though wives' marital adjustment was predicted by positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .17, p < .01$) positively, and negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.15, p < .02$) negatively.

Furthermore, actor effects revealed four mediations. First, wives' positive conflict resolution style partially mediated the effect of wives' positive affect on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .30, $p < .05$) both directly and indirectly. In other words, wives reported higher positive affect tended to use more positive conflict resolution style, and this in turn, increased their marital adjustment. Second, wives' negative conflict resolution style partially mediated the effect of wives' negative affect on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = -.04, $p < .05$) both directly and indirectly. Third, husbands' negative conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of husbands' negative affect on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = -.12, $p < .01$). The result suggested that both wives and husbands reported higher negative affect tended to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased marital adjustment. Last, husbands' negative conflict resolution style partially mediated the effect of husbands' negative life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences) on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .08, $p < .01$) both directly and indirectly. The result indicated that husbands experienced higher negative life events reported using higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased marital adjustment.

4.3.3.2. Partner Effects

There were also some partner effect between affect and negative life events and partner's conflict resolution style and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. Specifically, when wives reported higher negative life events (lower scores mean higher negative life experiences), husbands tended to report lower negative conflict resolution style ($\beta =$

.23, $p < .01$). On the other hand, wives reported higher marital adjustment when husbands showed lower negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$), while husbands reported higher marital adjustment when wives showed higher positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .19, p < .01$), and lower negative conflict resolution style ($\beta = -.15, p < .02$). The two significant paths were found from control variables to marital adjustment. First, the one from length of marriage to wives' marital adjustment. This indicates that the higher length of marriage, the higher wives' marital adjustment is ($\beta = -.21, p < .05$). Second, in the event that wives reported higher level of education, husbands tended to show higher positive conflict resolution style ($\beta = .23, p < .05$).

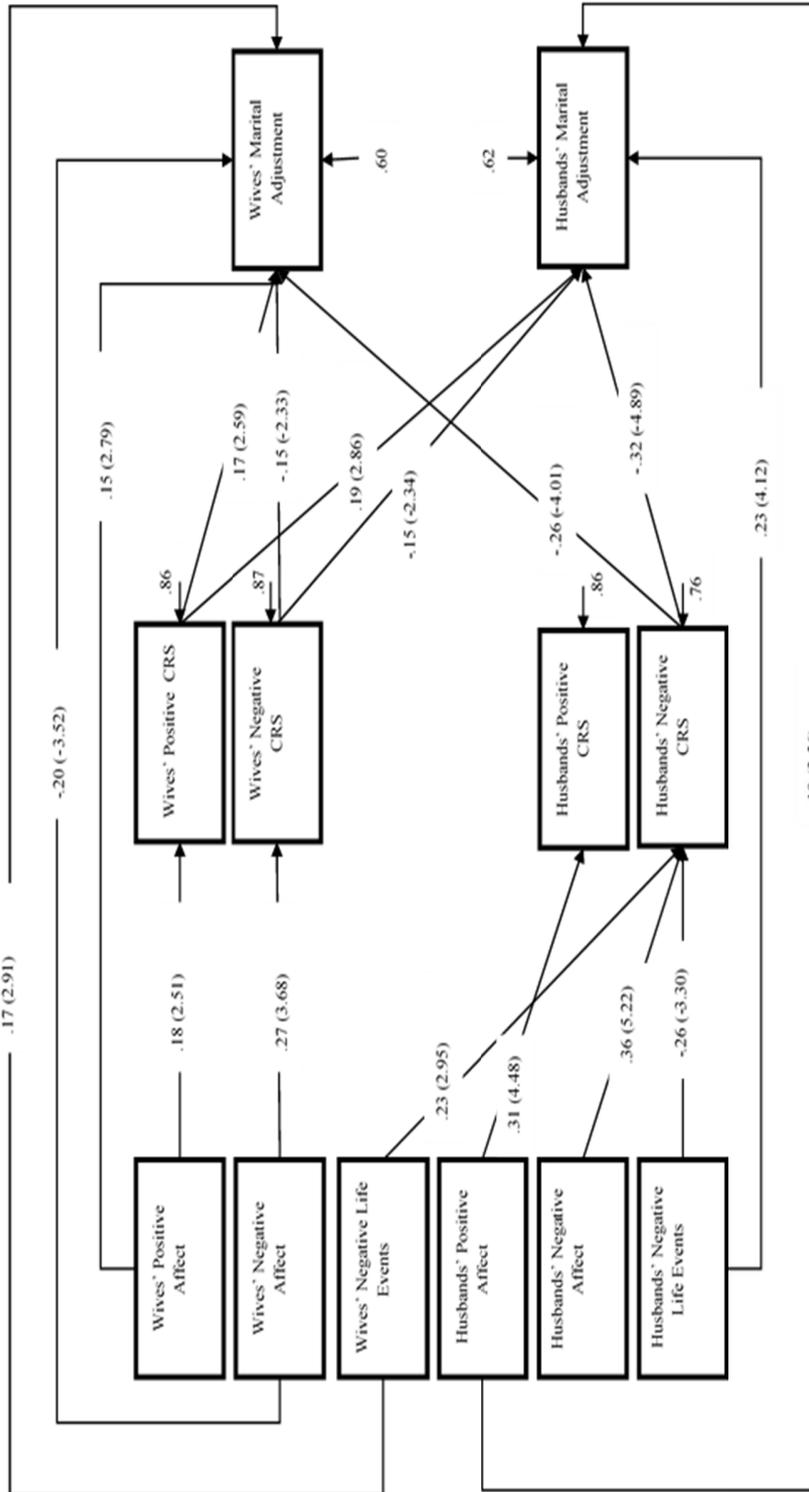
Moreover, partner effects revealed six mediations. First, wives' positive conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of wives' positive affect on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .03, $p < .01$). That is to say, when wives' positive affect was high, they tended to use positive conflict resolution style highly, and this in turn, increased husbands' marital adjustment indirectly. Second, wives' negative conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of wives' negative affect on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .04, $p < .05$). Third, husbands' negative conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of husbands' negative affect on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = -.09, $p < .01$). The results indicated that both husbands and wives reported higher negative affect tended to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased their spouses' marital adjustment. Forth, husbands' negative conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of wives' negative life events on husbands' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = -.08, $p < .01$). Fifth, husbands' negative conflict resolution style partially mediated the effect of wives' negative life events on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = -.06, $p < .01$) both directly and indirectly. The results suggested that when wives experienced higher negative life events, husbands used less negative conflict resolution style and this in turn, increased both wives' and husbands' marital

adjustment. And last, husbands' negative conflict resolution style fully mediated the effect of husbands' negative life events on wives' marital adjustment (*indirect effect* = .07, $p < .01$), indicating that husbands experienced higher negative life events tended to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decrement in wives' marital adjustment.

Overall, positive affect, negative affect and negative life events explained 14%, 13%, 16%, and 24% of the total variance in wives' positive and negative conflict resolution styles, and husbands' positive and negative conflict resolution styles, respectively. 40% and 38% of the total variances in wives' and husbands' marital adjustment were explained by the full model.

4.3.3.3. Gender Effects

Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether actor and partner effects on the outcome variables are equal. Specifically, a series of nested models were tested in which the corresponding paths for husbands and wives were set equal, one pair at a time and the chi-square test was used to test the model significance. Findings demonstrated that the paths for husbands and wives were comparable and there was no significant gender difference. Actor and partner effects did not differ from each other.



$N = 165, \chi^2 = 29.49, df = 27, CFI = .98, AGFI = .89, GFI = 1.00, TLI = .99, RMSEA = .02$

Note: Error terms represent percent of unexplained variance. For ease of interpretation, control variables, correlation among IVs and correlated errors within mediating variables and within outcome variables are not shown. t values are presented in the parentheses.

Figure 6. Structural Model Using Conflict Resolution Style as a Mediator

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this section, first, evaluation of the results is mentioned. Second, implications of results are presented. Third, limitations of the current research and recommendations for future researches are listed. Finally, conclusion is given.

5.1. Evaluation of the Results

In this part, first, gender differences related to the study variables are discussed. Second, the results of actor-partner effects of affect and negative life events in predicting marital adjustment are mentioned. Third, the mediating role of perceived social support in the dyadic model is argued. Last, the mediating role of conflict resolution style in the dyadic model is discussed.

5.1.1. Gender Differences related to the Study Variables

Although some studies in the related literature indicate that men are more adjusted with their marriages than women (Jose & Alfons, 2007; Basat, 2004; Chi et al., 2011; Guo & Huang, 2005; Knabb & Vogt, 2011), in the current study gender difference was not found. This result is consistent with the findings of the studies conducted in Turkey (e.g., Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013; Demir & Fıfılođlu, 1999; Hamamcı, 2005; Işınsu-Halat & Hovardaođlu, 2011; Tulum, 2014; Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça, 2002) and abroad (e.g., Batool & Khalid, 2012; Gordon & Baucom, 2009; Renaud et al., 1997; Tucker & Horowitz, 1981). The gender difference may be clarified that marriage can be more valuable for men than for women due to unequal returns in a sexist society for women (White, 1979; as cited in Bir Aktürk, 2006), for instance,

due to women are more involved and performing with the household responsibilities and taking care of child compared to men are (Rhyne, 1981; Tichenor, 2005). However, it was suggested that some changes have been occurring in perception of marital relationship in Turkey (Wendorf, Lucas, İmamoğlu, Weisfeld, & Weisfeld, 2011). Wendorf et al. (2011) argued that with growths in modernism, the Turkish wives' power increases in the family, though their husbands' power decreases. For instance, husbands' roles in rearing of children and household tasks have increased over the decades. Therefore, the level of marital adjustment of husbands and wives may get close to each other.

The findings of the current study showed that there is no gender difference in terms of negative life events, similar with Chi et al. (2011), Cropley and Steptoe (2005), and Sarason et al. (1978). However, in the literature, some studies showed gender differences about experiences negative impact of life events. For example, Scarinci, Ames, and Brantley (1999) showed gender differences in reporting of life events and physical health symptoms which women have a tendency to report more stressful life experiences and more symptoms of physical illness than men in low-income. Similarly, Caballo and Cardena (1997) found that women report perception of stressful life events as more distressing than men among university students. The diversity of the results may be because of the participants varied different SES, relationship status in the current study, Chi et al.'s, Cropley and Steptoe's, and Sarason et al.'s studies. Moreover, in the current study, participants were married couples rather than individual participants like other studies. Therefore, shared experiences of wives and husbands may be effective on similarity of negative life events.

The finding of the present study demonstrated no gender difference in perceived social support. This is consistent with Acitelli and Antonucci's (1994), Chi et al.'s (2011), and Scheidler (2008) findings that men and women do not differ in term of perceived social support. After marriage, wives' and husbands' friend and family

networks become more and more interdependent (Kearns & Leonard, 2004). Possible support sources may include family members, spouses, close friends, neighbors, relatives, and coworkers. Most of these sources and their benefits are shared by wives and husbands. Therefore, it can be understandable to have similar perception of social support.

The results of the current study showed that wives and husbands did not differ on conflict resolution style. It is inconsistent with the studies of Özen (2006) and Tulum (2014) conducted in Turkey. In the literature, it was shown that men and women may differ in their conflict styles. For example, Lundgren and Rudawsky (2000) found that women tend to be more conforming in their interactions with others and to be more positive in their individual reactions. Additionally, Christensen and Heavey (1990) demonstrated that males tend to show more avoidance and withdrawal conflict styles than females. The features of the sample that are different from other studies may be related to this result. Current study included both spouses with the age ranged between 22 and 66, and with the average of length of marriage was nearly 17 years. Moreover, more than half of sample was graduated at least university.

5.1.2. Actor-Partner Effects of Affect and Negative Life Events in Predicting Marital Adjustment

The first aim of the study was to identify the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment by controlling length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses. The current research found that both wives and husbands who showed higher positive affect tended to perceive higher marital adjustment, however, when they showed higher negative affect, they tended to perceive lower marital adjustment. This is consistent with the literature findings. In the literature, many studies showed the association between trait affects and marital adjustment is significant. The results revealed that both positive (e.g., Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009; Watson et al., 2000) and negative affect (e.g., Berry & Willingham, 1997; Donnellan et al., 2004; Fisher & McNulty, 2008;

Renshaw et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2000) are the predictors of satisfaction in marital relationship. It is suggested that personality traits, for instance trait affect, would influence adjustment by affecting what the partners think, what they feel, what they say, and what they do (Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Thomsen & Gilbert, 1998). In addition, Gordon and Baucom (2009) suggested that individuals' marital experience may perform to be consistent with their experience of the world more broadly, be it positive or negative; indicating that persons who are characteristically very happy, have more adjusted marriages.

On the other hand, partner effects were shown only between husbands' own negative affect and wives' marital adjustment in the current research. In other words, when husbands showed higher negative affect, their wives' reported less marital adjustment (e.g., Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Watson et al., 2000). However, both husbands' and wives' positive affect, and wives' negative affect were not related to their spouses' marital adjustment. Karney and Bradbury (1995) stated that negative affect shows greater effects on marital outcome than the other personality factors. Similarly, Thomsen and Gilbert (1998) suggested that negative affect is better predictor to understand marital adjustment. Therefore, it is not surprising result to find both actor and partner effect. Nevertheless, this effect was seen only for husbands' negative affect. Lavee and Ben-Ari (2004) suggested that the only partner effect of husbands' negative affect on wives' marital adjustment may be explained through gender differences, especially in the experience of negative emotions, such as distress, frustration, anxiety, and guilt. Therefore, husbands' negative affect may be a better predictor to apprehend marital adjustment. Moreover, husbands' marital adjustment was explained with only their own affective features. Thus, the results strongly suggest that husbands' level of marital adjustment is primarily a function of their own factors, as opposed to their wives. This gender difference may be due, in part, to women's greater tendency to have an interdependent self-concept, to report greater relationship commitment, and to engage in more relationship maintenance behaviors

(Impett & Peplau, 2006). On the other hand, men tend to be more autonomous, independent, and self-focused in their relationships than women (Gilligan, 1982; Kirsch & Kuiper, 2002). Therefore, the results of the current study indicates that husbands' negative affect may be better predictor to understand couples' marital adjustment and it may have more damaging influence in marriages.

As expected, the results demonstrated that both husbands and wives who perceived higher negative impact of life events tend to evaluate their marriage less adjusted. This is consistent with the literature findings (e.g., Bird et al., 1981; Li & Wickrama, 2014; Neff & Karney, 2009; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a) that spouses who perceive more negative and stressful impact of life events tend to evaluate their marriages less satisfactory. Tesser and Beach (1998) discussed that with escalation of negative life events, negative mood escalates. As a result of this, spouses may tend to judge their marriage more negatively. On the other hand, partner effects were not significant for own perception of negative life events and spouses' marital adjustment. In other words, both wives and husbands perceived high negative life events did not lead to change their partners' marital adjustment. This result is inconsistent with Woszidlo and Segrin's (2013a) study. They found that wives' and husbands' perceived family stress (but not work and job-home stress) is related to their spouse's lower marital satisfaction. Additionally, Neff and Karney (2007) found that wives', but not husbands', perception of life circumstances as stressful lead to lower marital adjustment for husbands. These studies generally conducted with newlyweds; however, current study included both newlyweds and older couples. Therefore, couples may be more sensitive to their spouses' negative life experiences at the beginning of the marriage. Nevertheless, with increment in responsibilities, such as having children, economics, getting age, they may have a tendency to focus on their own experiences.

5.1.3. The Mediating Role of Perceived Social Support in the Dyadic Model

The second aim of the current study was to examine the mediating role of perceived social support in the relationship between affect, negative life events, and marital adjustment of spouses. Length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses were controlled in the analysis. The dyadic analysis testing the mediating role of perceived social support showed that most of the actor effects and some of the partner effects were associated with affect and negative life events. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

In the current study, the results showed that higher level of perceived social support for both wives and husbands was associated with higher degree of own positive affect. However, it was shown that own negative affect was not related to own perceived social support. In other words, both wives and husbands negative affect did not predict their perception of marital adjustment. Empirical evidence yielded that affect has an influence on individuals' perception of availability of social support in marriage (e.g., Steptoe et al., 2009; Swickert et al., 2010; Swickert & Owens, 2010). Additionally, these findings may be explained with the findings of Finch (1998), who suggested that satisfaction with perceived social support is related to positive affect, but not negative affect; however, negative affect, but not positive affect, is associated with conflict. Similarly, Steptoe et al. (2009) mentioned that positive affect is associated with greater perceived social support and social connectedness. In addition, positive affect is associated with the quality of the interaction rather than the quantity of interpersonal interactions (Berry & Hansen, 1996). Therefore, it could be considered that high level of positive affect may influence the quality of social relations, and perception of higher quality of social relations may lead to perception of higher social support.

In the current research, just for husbands, it was found an association between the negative impact of life events and perceived social support for actor effects. This indicated that husbands experienced higher negative impact of life events perceived

less social support. On the other hand, for wives, it was found no association between the negative impact of life events and perceived social support neither for actor or partner effect; indicating that wives experienced negative life events did not predict neither their own or husbands' perceived social support. Stressful life events are seen as a situational variable that can affect the appraisal of support (Keinan, 1997). In other words, individuals' perception of social support may differ because of the negative impact of life events. Norris and Kaniasty (1996) argued that perceived social support is sensitive to postevent deterioration, and some events can impair the sense of being supported. However, in the current study, just for husbands, it was found an association between the negative impact of life events and perceived social support for actor effects. On the other hand, for wives, it was found no association between the negative impact of life events and perceived social support neither for actor or partner effect. In Turkey, the ties with family members, relatives and neighbors generally tend to be quite close and interdependent (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2007), and these groups were seen as possible support sources (Thoits, 1986) especially for wives (Phillipson, 1997; cited in Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). Many events, that have positive or negative impact, have been sharing and living all together with these groups by wives. On the other hand, husbands tend to share their problems or difficulties with their wives (Phillipson, 1997; cited in Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001) and many life events are shared experiences between wives and husbands. Therefore, change in impact of life events or situational factors may not cause change in sharing and getting support for wives, so not changing in perception of social support. On the other hand, since husbands see only their wives as confidante and experience similar events together with them, they may have be prone to be easily effected by negative life events. Additionally, negative life events may have more direct effect on marital adjustment, and perceived social support may be explained by individual factors rather than situational factors for wives.

Mediating role of perceived social support in the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment was also found for husbands in the current study. The analysis showed that husbands' perceived social support were significant mediators just for actor effect. Two significant mediations were found. Specifically, in terms of actor effects, husbands (1) who showed higher positive affect perceived higher social support, and this in turn, predicted their own high levels of marital adjustment. In addition, husbands experienced higher negative life events (2) perceived less social support, and this in turn, decreased their marital adjustment. The results indicated that no such interpersonal indirect effects were evident, and, on balance, the results of this study showed that the paths from positive affect and negative life events to perceived social support to marital adjustment were much more of an intrapersonal than an interpersonal phenomenon.

The results were found similar to the results of actor-partner effects of affect and negative life events in predicting marital adjustment. That is, the results of mediating role of perceived social support in the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment showed that husbands' level of marital adjustment is primarily a function of his own factors, as opposed to their wives. This difference may be explained with the gender tendencies in marital relationship, similar to part 5.1.2. of this dissertation. Moreover, in the current study, except husbands' positive affect, all direct effects were steady even after mediating role of perceived social support. Especially, both wives' and husbands' negative affect had continued to their direct effects. These results strengthened the suggestion of Karney and Bradbury (1995) and Thomsen and Gilbert (1998) that was negative affect shows greater effects on marital outcome and it is better predictor to understand marital adjustment. Moreover, these direct effects also demonstrated that perceived social support may not be a good predictor in the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment especially for wives. For wives, there was no mediating effect of perceived social support though husbands' had. As mentioned in literature part of this

dissertation, social support in marriage may be satisfied by individuals who become within and outside marriage such as spouse, friends, and family-relatives. Phillipson (1997; cited in Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001) stated that wives' source of support often consists of close friends and relatives as confidantes, similar to Tuncay-Senlet (2012), although husbands typically name their wives as their core source of support and the only person in whom they confide personal problems or difficulties. Besides, in the present study, it was contained that perceived social support obtained from family, friends, and significant other. To sum up, if wives accept not only their husbands but also close friends, neighbors and relatives as a source of support, their perceived support may not be related to marital relationship so much. Nevertheless, husbands admit only their wives as source of support; their perceived support may be more related to marital relationship.

5.1.4. The Mediating Role of Conflict Resolution Styles in the Dyadic Model

The third aim of the current study was to examine the mediating role of conflict resolution style in the relationship between affect, negative life events, and marital adjustment of spouses. Length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses were controlled in the analysis. The dyadic analysis testing the mediating role of conflict resolution style showed that some of the actor effects and most of the partner effects were associated with affect and negative life events. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

In the current study, the results showed that the association between affect and conflict resolution styles is only based on intrapersonal, not interpersonal phenomenon. The findings revealed that for both wives and husbands, high levels of positive affect was related to reporting high levels of positive conflict resolution style. In addition, wives and husbands who showed higher negative affect tended to report higher negative conflict resolution style. In the literature, Watson and Hubbard (1996) claimed that people who report high positive affect tend to engage in active, positive responses, while people who report high negative affect tend to exhibit negative,

emotion-based responses. Consistent with this, Berry and Willingham (1997) indicated that though positive affect leads to engagement in voice and it is negatively related to use of neglect, negative affect leads to engagement in exit and neglect. On the other hand, inconsistent with the current results of partner effects, Hanzal and Segrin (2009) showed that one spouse's use of conflict engagement and withdrawal partially explained the relationship between the other spouse's negative affect and marital adjustment. However, Wozidlo and Segrin (2013b) demonstrated that the partner effect was seen only for husbands. Karney and Bradbury (1997) suggested that the impact of personality on marriage proceeds at all time; nevertheless it may not have independent relations with the changes in satisfaction. Besides, Barelds (2005) proposes that from a personality-relationship transaction approach, relationship experiences are more in accordance with an individual's own personality than with their spouse's personality. In the light of these information, inasmuch as the length of marriage was shown to be 17 years on average in the current study, it may be possible to see these changes firstly in the effects of spouses' personality and; then in the effects of own personality.

The research showed that both wives' and husbands' experiences of negative life events were related to husbands' negative conflict resolution style. Specifically, it was found that when husbands experienced higher level of negative life events, they tended to use more negative conflict resolution style, as expected. In the literature, it was shown that stressful life events lead to higher frequencies of marital aggression (Cano & Vivian, 2001, 2003), more psychologically aggressive behaviors within the marriage (Frye & Karney, 2006), and more hostile and less supportive behaviors and warmth (Conger et al., 1990; Matthews et al., 1996). However, when wives experienced higher level of negative life events, husbands tended to use less negative conflict style. In Turkey, although a trend has seen from traditional to more modern marriages in Turkey (İmamoğlu & Yasak, 1997), some social judgments and attitudes do not change as easily as others (Doğan, Tugut, & Gölbaşı, 2013). Traditional gender

roles emphasize that men are more decisive and acting as a leader (Erden-İmamoğlu, 2013). Therefore, it is understandable when their family or specifically wives experience undesirable events, husbands should be powerful and support his family or wives, and should find solutions. For this reason, it is possible that when husbands realize that their wives feel negative impact of life events, they try to handle it and strive to use less negative conflict resolution style. The results also indicated that there is no relationship between negative life events and wives' conflict resolution style. It may be argued that personality trait is better predictor for conflict management than life events or situational factors for wives.

Thomsen and Gilbert (1998) suggest that negative affect is better predictor to understand marital satisfaction, and Karney and Bradbury (1995) mention that negative affect shows greater effects on marital outcome than the other personality factors. It was accepted that negative affect has ill effects within persons (actor effects) and between spouses (partner effects) (Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013b). Current study indicated that husbands' negative affect lead to decrement both their and their wives' marital adjustment. The only variable removed the direct effect of negative affect was husbands negative conflict resolution style. Similar results were seen for wives' negative life events. Although perceived social support did not influence its effect on marital adjustment, husbands' negative conflict resolution style intervened this relationship. Therefore, it is seen that husbands' negative conflict resolution style has a critical role in marriage as mentioned before.

Mediating role of conflict resolution style in the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment was also found in the current study. The analysis showed that both wives' and husbands' conflict resolution style were significant mediators. Ten significant mediations were found. Specifically, in terms of actor effects, wives reported higher positive affect (1) had a tendency to use more positive conflict resolution style, and this in turn, increased their marital adjustment; however, wives reported higher negative affect (2) had a tendency to use more negative conflict

resolution style, and this in turn, decreased their marital adjustment. Moreover, husbands reported higher negative affect (3) and experienced higher negative life events (4) tended to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased marital adjustment. In terms of partner effects, when wives' positive affect (5) was high, they tended to use positive conflict resolution style highly, and this in turn, increased husbands' marital adjustment. On the other hand, when wives' negative affect (6) was high, they tended to use negative conflict resolution style highly, and this in turn, decreased husbands' marital adjustment. Similarly, when husbands reported higher negative affect (7), they tended to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased in wives' marital adjustment. Furthermore, when wives experienced higher negative life events, husbands used less negative conflict resolution style and this is turn, increased both wives' (8) and husbands' (9) marital adjustment. Lastly, when husbands experienced higher negative life events (10), they had a tendency to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased in wives' marital adjustment.

In the literature, it was shown that different conflict resolution styles mediate the intra- and inter-personal relationships between affect and marital adjustment for wives and husbands. In other words, both wives' and husbands' conflict resolution styles intervene the associations between both their own and partners' affect and marital adjustment. For example, Hanzal and Segrin (2009) mentioned that husbands' positive problem solving, conflict engagement and withdrawal, on the other hand, wives' positive problem solving mediate the association between their own affect and marital adjustment. They also claimed that one spouse's use of conflict engagement and withdrawal partially explained the relationship between the other spouse's negative affect and marital adjustment. In addition, Wosidlo and Segrin (2013b) indicated the association that is a significant indirect relationship between negative affect and both indicators of marital quality (i.e., personal commitment and divorce proneness) through mutual problem solving for husbands, not for wives. The

empirical evidence also showed that many elements such as the particular personal history, social support, coping resources, cognitive appraisal, conflict management, event properties, and psychological disorders of the people mediate the influence of stressful life events (e.g., Conger et al., 1990; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Vitaliano et al., 1993). For instance, Conger et al. (1990) argued that negative life events related to economic conditions predict men's more hostile, less warmth and supportive interactions to their wives, and this in turn, decrease in wives' marital adjustment. Woszidlo and Segrin (2013a) revealed that both wives' and husbands' own stressful events were related to lower own mutual problem solving, and this in turn, lower levels of own marital satisfaction. On the other hand, for partner effect, husbands' mutual problem solving mediated the effect of wives' job-home and family stress on wives' marital satisfaction. The results of the current study showed that both wives' and husbands' negative conflict resolution style have an important role to understand the relation between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment. Although direct effects continue to exist from affect and negative life events to marital adjustment, indirect effects were seen more than perceived social support. Therefore, it can be indicated that conflict resolution style is a key contributor to explaining the relationship between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment.

The results also showed that when conflict resolution style took into consideration, wives' dimensions started to affect their husbands' dimensions (partner effect). This highlights the interdependent nature of conflict resolution in marriage. Not only do positively or negatively resolve conflict predict wives' and husbands' own marital satisfaction, they are sometimes associated with their partners' satisfaction as well. These results underlined how affect and negative life events may be enacted through conflict styles that are constructive or destructive to marriage. Moreover, husbands' negative affect lost its direct effect when negative conflict resolution was considered. In other words, it was shown that the association between husbands' negative affect

and their own and wives' marital adjustment enacts through husbands' negative conflict resolution. This showed that husbands who were exposed to negative affect were more likely to report lower levels of adjustment and also their wives were more likely to report lower levels of adjustment. This is in part because individuals with high negative affect resolve conflict situations negatively. On the other hand, all direct effects were conserved even after mediating role of conflict resolution style. It can be seen that except husbands' negative affect, trait affect and negative life events did not give up their direct effects. In other words, although conflict resolution style mediated some of these relationships, they saved their impact. These findings suggested that affect and negative life events play a substantial role in marital quality.

5.2. Implications of the Results

The results of the current study contribute to a discussion of practical implications for clinical practice with couples. In the research, it was seen that trait affect usually sustained its direct effect on marital adjustment, although perceived social support and conflict resolution style were considered. Similar results were seen for negative life events. These results showed that affect and negative life events are how critical in marriage. On the other hand, affect is a stable characteristic and negative life events are usually not controllable. However, the VSA places a large emphasis on adaptive processes, as they have the most direct effect on marital quality (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). The findings of this study support the important role of perceived social support and conflict resolution styles as just such a process. Based on the findings of the current study, especially conflict resolution styles that can be teachable have a substantial role in marriage. In marital therapy, being aware of these dynamics may be influential while getting information or observation and planning intervention.

The results showed different patterns on marital adjustment for wives and husbands. For example, perceived social support was not a good indicator for wives. On the other hand, it clarified the association between husbands' negative life events and marital adjustment partially, and the association between husbands' positive affect

and marital adjustment fully. In addition, conflict resolution style showed similar patterns for the relationship between positive affect and marital adjustment for wives and husbands; however, it was indicated different patterns for the association between negative affect, negative life events and marital adjustment. This means that, husbands and wives may have a tendency to evaluate their marriage in a different way. Clinicians should take this difference into consideration during the therapy. Furthermore, clinicians must help couple to realize their differences in evaluation of events in order to prevent the misinterpretations about each other's behaviors.

In particular, therapeutic interventions that might eventually arise from this line of research would likely attempt to enhance the couple's relationship by targeting each spouses' conflict resolution styles. The current results propose that some therapeutic effort might focus on helping to ensure optimal functioning of each spouses' conflict resolution style as well. For clinicians, it is difficult to regulate any broad affective trait directly, whether it is positive or negative affect (Gordon & Baucom, 2009) and both are seen strongly stable traits. Instead, therapists typically may find it more effective to shape specific conflict resolution style in the pursuit of achieving broader affective control or change among couples, as conflict resolution or any kind of communication style is a teachable phenomenon. Thus, the results of the current research demonstrating significant mediational effect of conflict resolution style on the associations between affect and marital adjustment. For instance, enhancing wives' positive conflict resolution style and minimize both wives' and husbands' negative conflict resolution styles may help to manipulate the effect of affect on marital adjustment.

Marital conflict resolution is of particular interest to clinicians and researchers because of its long-established strong relation to marital satisfaction (Heavey, Christensen, & Malamuth, 1995; Roberts, 2000). Therefore, while practice or work on conflict resolution, to use the results of current study may support psychotherapy process. For example, it may be beneficial for therapy interventions to encourage

husbands to decrease their use of negative conflict resolution style and to encourage wives both to increase positive conflict resolution style and to decrease conflict resolution style. The results showed that husbands' positive conflict style did not intervene any association to marital adjustment. In other words, the findings revealed that the lack of husbands' negative conflict resolution, not the presence of husbands' positive conflict resolution style, appears to explain the relationship between husbands' negative affect, both wives' and husbands' negative life events, and both wives' and husbands' marital adjustment. Therefore, trying to minimize negative conflict resolution style rather than to enhance positive conflict resolution style may be more beneficial for marriage. Moreover, the results showed the importance of social support for husbands. This information may be shared in psychotherapy interventions, and individuals may courage to find different support sources. Furthermore, it can be argued how their personality and experience of their life events affect their perception of social support. Therefore, awareness of their own perception may facilitate their marriage in different situations.

The results also indicated that although husbands' dimensions had an influence on wives' marital adjustment in different situations, only wives' conflict resolution style affected husbands' marital adjustment. This finding gives important information about husbands' role in marriage. Conflict resolution style has an interdependent and bidirectional structure. The findings showed that if wives' dimensions are not shared by husbands or not related to husbands directly, they do not influence husbands. On the other hand, if wives dimensions have reciprocal structure such as conflict resolution style (or may be any type of communication), they affect husbands. Clinicians may help couple to realize these tendencies in evaluation of events in order to understand their spouses' behaviors and prevent the misinterpretations about each other's behaviors. Moreover, this finding may help spouses, especially husbands, to pay more attention their partners' dimensions or expectations.

The findings of this dissertation provide support for some of the key elements of the VSA model and offer an explanation for why these associations occur. For example, tests of indirect effects showed that conflict resolution style explained why negative affect had such deleterious effects on marital adjustment and why negative life events had negative relationships with spouses' marital adjustment. Conflict resolution style, be it positive or negative is a marital communication phenomenon that was associated with both affect and negative life events, and also marital adjustment. Consequently, conflict resolution style is one instance of an adaptive process that may have considerable predictive value in understanding the development and course of marital dysfunction or adjustment.

Although marriages include two individuals, the relationship between them is interdependent. Most of things occurring in marriage are the concerns of and have an impact on both individuals. The recent study showed how interpersonal phenomenon, which was conflict resolution style, is more important than intrapersonal phenomenon in marriage. The results related to conflict resolution style showed how it had an important role to compensate the effects of personality (i.e. affect) and life events in marriage. Therefore, it can be claimed that for their adjustment to marriage, marital therapy is important for couples instead of individual therapy.

5.3. Limitations of the Research and Recommendations for the Future Research

The current research has made some important contributions to the available literature by investigating the mediating role of perceived social support and conflict resolution style in marital relationships between affect, negative life events and marital adjustment of both partners via VSA as mentioned in the implications of the results part of this dissertation. Besides, to handle the effect of length of marriage, number of children, and education levels of spouses strengthened the study. Nevertheless, the study has some limitations that should be pointed out, which would be followed by recommendations for future research that may be pursued.

One of the limitations is education level of the participants. In Turkey, the distribution of education level for people is 52% of population has primary-secondary school education, 18% of them have high school education, and 11% of them have at least university degree. On the other hand, in the current study, 20.3% of sample has primary-secondary school education, 26.1% of them have high school education, and 53.6% of them have at least university degree. Consequently, sample may not represent whole population. On account of this, future studies would determine a quota for each education level, due to more generalizability to population.

Second, snowball sampling method was used for data collection. This may limit the external validity of the findings. Though this method is beneficial to reach potential participants with specific properties, there is little control over the sampling method. Therefore, with this sampling method, representativeness of the sample is questioned. However, married couples who are in their first marriage, have at least primary school education, live in big cities, live with their spouses, get official marriage. These were necessary in the current research; snowball sampling method was considered as a suitable tool for data collection by reaching out more participants.

Last, adjustment level of couples was high in the current study. Both wives and husbands were highly adjusted to their marriages. This may limit the generalization of the results to moderately and lowly adjusted marriages. Especially negative effects of negative affect and negative conflict resolution style may be more damaging on moderately and lowly adjusted marriages.

In the current study, to test the models perceived social support and conflict resolution styles were preferred to conduct separately. Although both of them are adaptive processes and both of them could be in analysis simultaneously, Cutrona (1996) mentioned that some studies may have overestimated the importance of conflict and underestimated the role of social support in marriage. Therefore, due to the probability of suppression effect of conflict on social support, it was preferred to add them analysis separately to understand independent effects. On the other hand, it can

be recommended that a repetition of the study that takes perceived social support and conflict resolution style together in the analysis would be valuable to understand the interdependent nature of variables.

In the current study, negative life events were limited to some events which occurred recently at the time, which was the last one-year time span. On the other hand, some traumatic events, such as child lost, important disease of family members, natural disasters, may have happened longer one year ago and would have an ongoing significant impact on marriage. In the present study, there is no information about how such events occurred before one year effect marriage. Therefore, it can be recommended that future research would focus on how these kind of traumatic events influence marriage.

5.4. Summary

The present study extends the previous studies and contributes to it by providing a detailed analysis of affect, negative life events, perceived social support, and conflict resolution styles in marital context within the framework of the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model of marriage. First, the effects of affect and negative life events on marital adjustment were examined. Second, the role of perceived social support in the relationships among affect, negative life events, and marital adjustment was investigated. Last, the role of conflict resolution styles in the associations among affect, negative life events, and marital adjustment was demonstrated. For these purposes, APIM was conducted to investigate not only the association among person's own dimensions, but also the association between person's own and partner's dimensions. Taken together, the current study supported the important roles of affect, negative life events, perceived social support, and conflict resolution style on marital functioning in a dyadic context. The results of the study showed that husbands who showed higher positive affect and experienced higher negative life events perceived higher social support, and this in turn, predicted their own high levels of marital adjustment. It was also indicated that wives reported higher positive

affect had a tendency to use more positive conflict resolution style, and this in turn, increased both their own and husbands' marital adjustment. However, wives reported higher negative affect tended to use more negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased both their own and husbands' marital adjustment. Besides, husbands reported higher negative affect and experienced higher negative life events had a tendency to use higher negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, decreased both their own and wives' marital adjustment. Furthermore, when wives experienced higher negative life events, husbands used less negative conflict resolution style, and this in turn, increased both wives' and husbands' marital adjustment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. The Inform Consent

Gönüllü Katılım Formu

Değerli Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü Klinik Psikoloji Doktora Programı öğrencisi Elçin Sakmar tarafından Prof. Dr. Hürol Fışiloğlu danışmanlığında yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır. Çalışmanın amacı, evli çiftlerin evlilik uyumunu etkileyen çeşitli değişkenleri incelemektir. Çalışmaya katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır ve sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacı tarafından toplu olarak değerlendirilecek; elde edilecek bulgular sadece bilimsel çalışmada kullanılacaktır. Sorulara samimi cevaplar vermeniz ve boş bırakmamanız araştırmada elde edilen sonuçların geçerli ve güvenilir olmasını sağlayacaktır. Her bölümdeki ölçeğin nasıl cevaplanacağı konusunda ilgili bölümün başında bilgi verilmiştir. Anketin cevaplanması yaklaşık 15 dakika sürmekte olup herhangi bir süre kısıtlaması bulunmamaktadır.

Anket, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz anketi doldurmayı yarıda bırakabilirsiniz. Anket sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili oluşabilecek olası sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Çalışma hakkında oluşabilecek sorularınızla ilgili olarak Uzm. Psk. Elçin Sakmar (E-posta: elcinsakmar@gmail.com) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden çok teşekkür ederiz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda bırakabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum. (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyisim

Tarih

İmza

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APPENDIX B. Demographic Information Form

Değerli katılımcılar,

“Evlilik Uyumu” ile ilgili bu araştırma için size verilen zarfta iki ayrı ölçek bulunmaktadır. Bu ölçeklerin ikisi birbirinin aynısıdır ve birini sizin, diğerini ise eşinizin doldurması gerekmektedir. Ölçekleri eşinizle beraber doldurmak sizin ve eşinizin vereceği cevapları etkileyebileceğinden ölçekleri tek başımıza, eşinize göstermeden doldurunuz ve doldurulmuş olan ölçeklerin her ikisini de zarfa koyup, zarfın ağzını yapıştırarak araştırmacıya geri dönmesini sağlayınız.

Çalışmamıza katıldığınız için teşekkür ederiz...

1. Cinsiyetiniz:

Kadın

Erkek

2. Yaşınız: _____

3. Mesleğiniz: _____

4. Yaşadığınız şehir neresidir? _____

5. Ne kadar zamandır evlisiniz? Lütfen, yıl ve ay olarak yazın.

(_____) Yıl

(_____) Ay

6. Şu anki evliliğiniz kaçınıcı evliliğiniz? _____

7. Çocuğunuz var mı?

Evet (*Sayısını yazınız.....*) Hayır

8. Eğitim düzeyiniz nedir?

İlkokul

Ortaokul

Lise

Yüksekokul

Üniversite

Y. Lisans

Doktora

APPENDIX C. Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Sample Items:

23. Eşinizi öper misiniz?

Her gün Hemen hemen Ara sıra Nadiren Hiçbir zaman
her gün

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24. Siz ve eşiniz ev dışı etkinliklerinizin ne kadarına birlikte katılırsınız?

Hepsine Çoğuna Bazılarına Çok azına Hiçbirine

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Yazışma Adresi: Prof. Dr. Hürol Fışiloğlu, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikoloji Bölümü, Ankara/Türkiye.

APPENDIX D. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

Bu ölçek farklı duyguları tanımlayan bir takım sözcükler içermektedir. Genel olarak nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünüp her maddeyi okuyun. Uygun cevabı her maddenin yanında ayrılan yere (puanları daire içine alarak) işaretleyin. Cevaplarınızı verirken aşağıdaki puanları kullanın.

1. Çok az veya hiç
2. Biraz
3. Ortalama
4. Oldukça
5. Çok fazla

1. İlgili	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sıkıntılı	1	2	3	4	5
3. Heyecanlı	1	2	3	4	5
4. Mutsuz	1	2	3	4	5
5. Güçlü	1	2	3	4	5
6. Suçlu	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ürkmüş	1	2	3	4	5
8. Düşmanca	1	2	3	4	5
9. Hevesli	1	2	3	4	5
10. Gururlu	1	2	3	4	5
11. Asabi	1	2	3	4	5
12. Uyanık	1	2	3	4	5
(dikkati açık)					
13. Utanmış	1	2	3	4	5
14. İlhamlı	1	2	3	4	5
(yaratıcı düşüncelerle dolu)					
15. Sınırlı	1	2	3	4	5
16. Kararlı	1	2	3	4	5
17. Dikkatli	1	2	3	4	5
18. Tedirgin	1	2	3	4	5
19. Aktif	1	2	3	4	5
20. Korkmuş	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E. Life Experiences Survey

Aşağıdaki listede kişilerin hayatına değişiklik getiren ve yeniden sosyal uyum sağlamayı gerektiren bazı olaylar bulunmaktadır. Lütfen son bir yıl içerisinde başınızdan geçen her olay için bu olayın başınızdan hangi zaman dilimi içinde geçtiğini (son 0-6 ay veya 7 ay-1 yıl) işaretleyiniz. Eğer bu olay son bir yıl içinde başınızdan geçmediyse olmadı seçeneğine bir işaret koyunuz.

Ayrıca, başınızdan geçen her olayın, meydana geldiği sırada hayatınıza ne derece olumlu veya olumsuz bir etki yaptığını düşündüğünüzü ilgili rakamı daire içine alarak belirleyiniz. (-3) değerinde bir derecelendirme olayın çok olumsuz bir etkisi olduğu, (0) değerinde bir derecelendirme olayın olumlu veya olumsuz hiçbir etkisi olmadığı, (+3) değerinde bir dereceleme ise olayın çok olumlu bir etkisi olduğu anlamına gelmektedir.

Sample Items:

	SON 1 YILDA BU OLAY:			OLAYIN, MEYDANA GELDİĞİ SIRADA HAYATINIZA ETKİSİ						
	OLMADI	OLDU		Çok olumsuz	Orduka olumsuz	Az olumsuz	Etkisiz	Az olumlu	Orduka olumlu	Çok olumlu
		0-6 ay	7 ay - 1 yıl							
2. Hapishanede tutuklu kalma				-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
4. Uyku alışkanlığında önemli değişimler (daha fazla veya daha az uyuma)				-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
8. Yakın bir arkadaşın ölümü				-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
9. Önemli bir kişisel başarı				-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

APPENDIX F. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support

Aşağıda 12 cümle ve her bir cümle altında da cevaplarınızı işaretlemeniz için 1’den 7’ye kadar rakamlar verilmiştir. Her cümlede söylenenin sizin için ne kadar çok doğru olduğunu veya olmadığını belirtmek için o cümle altındaki rakamlardan yalnız bir tanesini daire içine alarak işaretleyiniz. Bu şekilde 12 cümlenin her birine bir işaret koyarak cevaplarınızı veriniz. Lütfen hiçbir cümleyi cevapsız bırakmayınız. Sizce doğruya en yakın olan rakamı işaretleyiniz.

1. Ailem ve arkadaşlarım dışında olan ve ihtiyacım olduğunda yanımda olan bir insan (örneğin, flört, nişanlı, sözlü, akraba, komşu, doktor) var.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
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2. Ailem ve arkadaşlarım dışında olan ve sevinç ve kederlerimi paylaşabileceğim bir insan (örneğin, flört, nişanlı, sözlü, akraba, komşu, doktor) var.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

3. Ailem (örneğin, annem, babam, eşim, çocuklarım, kardeşlerim) bana gerçekten yardımcı olmaya çalışır.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

4. İhtiyacım olan duygusal yardımı ve desteği ailemden (örneğin, annemden, babamdan, eşimden, çocuklarımdan, kardeşlerimden) alırım.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

5. Ailem ve arkadaşlarım dışında olan ve beni gerçekten rahatlatan bir insan (örneğin, flört, nişanlı, sözlü, akraba, komşu, doktor) var.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

6. Arkadaşlarım bana gerçekten yardımcı olmaya çalışırlar.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

7. İşler kötü gittiğinde arkadaşlarıma güvenebilirim.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

8. Sorunlarımı ailemle (örneğin, annemle, babamla, eşimle, çocuklarımla, kardeşlerimle) konuşabilirim.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

9. Sevinç ve kederlerimi paylaşabileceğim arkadaşlarım var.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

10. Ailem ve arkadaşlarım dışında olan ve duygularıma önem veren bir insan (örneğin, flört, nişanlı, sözlü, akraba, komşu, doktor) var.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

11. Kararlarımı vermede ailem (örneğin, annem, babam, eşim, çocuklarım, kardeşlerim) bana yardımcı olmaya isteklidir.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

12. Sorunlarımı arkadaşlarımla konuşabilirim.

Kesinlikle hayır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle evet
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

APPENDIX G. Conflict Resolution Styles Scale

Aşağıda, evlilik ilişkilerinde yaşanan sorunların genel olarak nasıl çözümlendiği ile ilgili ifadeler yer almaktadır. Lütfen eşinizle ilişkinizi göz önüne alarak, aşağıdaki ifadelerden her birine ne derece katıldığınızı belirtiniz. Her bir ifadenin önündeki boşluğa aşağıdaki sayılardan uygun olanı yazınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Hiç	Oldukça	Birazcık	Birazcık	Oldukça	Çok
Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum

- ___ 1) Tartışma esnasında konuyla ilgisiz de olsa zayıflıklarını yüzüne vururum.
- ___ 2) Kavganın büyümemesi için onun istediği şeyleri yaparım.
- ___ 3) Çok sinirlenmişsem konuşmayı ertelerim.
- ___ 4) Sorun durumunda pek çok şeyi içime atabilirim.
- ___ 5) Sorunun uzamadan çözülebilmesi için kaynağını bulmaya çalışırım.
- ___ 6) Sinirlendiğimde kırıcı şeyler söylerim.
- ___ 7) Problemi büyütmemek için onu sakinleştirmeye çalışırım.
- ___ 8) Sesimi yükselterek beni dinlemesini sağlamaya çalışırım.
- ___ 9) Tartışmada ortak bir çözüm noktası bulmaya çalışırım.
- ___ 10) Çok büyük sorunlar yaşadığımızda ondan uzak durmaya çalışırım.
- ___ 11) Sorun çözümlenmeden tartışmayı sonlandırmam.
- ___ 12) Bağırıp çağırarak istediğimi yaptırırım.
- ___ 13) Sorunun tüm yönlerini tartışma sırasında konuşmak isterim.
- ___ 14) Eşimi ilişkiyi bitirmekle tehdit ederim.
- ___ 15) Bana bağırdığında onun olmadığı bir odaya geçerim.
- ___ 16) Kavgalarımız sırasındaki kızgınlığımı fiziksel olarak gösteririm.
- ___ 17) İlişkide sorun yaşanmaması için kendimden ödün veririm.
- ___ 18) Sorun yaşadığımızda eşimin yanından uzaklaşıyorum.
- ___ 19) Sorunun çözülmesine yardımcı olacağına inanırsam durumu alttan alırım.
- ___ 20) Onun olumsuz tepkilerine karşılık vermeyerek problemin büyümemesini sağlamaya çalışırım.
- ___ 21) Çok gergin olduğumuzda susarım.

- ___ 22) Bir problem yaşandığında, konuyla ilgili düşündüğüm her şeyi açıklarım.
- ___ 23) Eğer çok sinirlenmişsem, sinirim geçene kadar konuşmayı reddederim.
- ___ 24) Bir problem yaşandığında, kendimi eşimin yerine koyarak onun ne düşündüğünü anlamaya çalışırım.
- ___ 25) Sürekli imalarda bulunurum.

APPENDIX H. Turkish Summary

Evlilik, kişilerin fiziksel ve psikolojik sağlığını etkileyen yakın bir ilişki halidir (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). Evlilik uyumunun, kişinin genel mutluluğu (Young vd., 1998) ve hayattan memnuniyeti üzerinde önemli bir rol oynadığı ifade edilmiştir (Be vd., 2013; Chiu, 1998). Destekleyici bir eş, bireyler ve hayat problemleri arasında bir bariyer ya da tampon olarak görülmektedir (Bird & Melville, 1994). Genel yaşam doyumu ile mali durum, çocuklar, sağlık, iş ve evlilik doyumu arasındaki ilişkiye bakıldığında, en güçlü ilişkinin evlilik doyumuyla olduğu görülmüştür (Fleeson'dan aktaran Be vd., 2013).

“Uyum”, “nitelik”, “doyum”, “başarı”, “mutluluk”, “sıkıntı” ve “istikrar”, evlilik ilişkileri üzerine yapılan araştırmalarda sıklıkla kullanılan belli başlı terimlerdir. Timm (1999) ve Kluwer (2000) örneklerinde olduğu gibi kimi araştırmacılar birbirinden farklı bu terimleri aynı anlama gelecek şekilde kullanmışlardır. Bununla birlikte, White (aktaran Koçak, 2009) bu terimler arasında bir takım farklılıklar olabileceğini, ama birbirleri yerine kullanılmasının ciddi bir hata oluşturmayacağını ifade etmiştir. Bu çalışmada da bu terimler ve evlilik uyumu birbiri yerine kullanılmıştır.

Karney ve Bradbury 1995 yılında evliliklerin ne şekilde devam edebildiğini veya zarar gördüğünü anlamak amacıyla incinebilirlik-stres-uyum modelini geliştirdiler (VSA). Model, dayanıklı incinebilirlikleri, stres yaratan yaşamsal olayları, uyum süreçlerini, evliliğin niteliğini ve istikrarını açıklayan kapsamlı bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu modele göre, dayanıklı incinebilirlik ve stres yaratan olaylar uyum süreçleri vasıtasıyla evlilik üzerine etki etmektedir. Yine bu modele göre, incinebilirlikler, stres etkenleri, uyumlu ya da uyumsuz davranışlar arasındaki ilişkilerin, evlilikte uyum veya uyumsuzlukta değişikliğe, dolayısıyla istikrar ya da istikrarsızlığa neden olması beklenmektedir.

Dayanıklı incinebilirlikler, her çiftin evliliğe beraberinde getirdikleri stabil özelliklerdir ve evliliğin üzerinde ciddi etkileri bulunmaktadır (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Sürekli duygulanım bunlara bir örnektir. Sürekli duygulanım, nispeten sabit ve kalıcı kişilik özellikleridir ve iki yapıda incelenir: olumlu ya da olumsuz duygulanım (Watson & Clark, 1984). Olumlu duygulanım “sık ve yoğun deneyimlenen keyifli, hoş ruh hali; genel anlamda konuşkanlık, neşelilik, heyecanlılık, faal, güvenilir ve atik olma” (Watson, 2002, s. 106) eğilimi olarak tanımlanırken olumsuz duygulanımdaki eğilim “endişelilik, üzüntü ve kendine dair kötü algı” (Watson & Clark, 1984) olarak tespit edilmiştir. Daha önce yapılmış çalışmalar hem olumlu (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009) hem de olumsuz duygulanımın (Donnellan, Conger, & Bryant, 2004; Renshaw, Blais & Smith, 2010) evlilik uyumunun ön göstergesi olduğunu göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, kişinin duygulanımı kendi evlilik uyumunun yanı sıra eşinin evlilik uyumuyla da ilişkilidir (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Hanzal & Sergin, 2009). Dahası, duygulanım kişinin sosyal desteği nasıl algıladığı (Steptoe vd., 2009; Swickert & Owens, 2010) ve evlilikte çatışmaları nasıl çözdüğüyle (Montes, Rodriguez, & Serrano, 2012; Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013a, 2013b) de alakalıdır.

Dayanıklı incinebilirliklere ek olarak, Karney ve Bradbury’ye göre (1995), çiftlerin karşı karşıya kaldıkları geçiş durumları, belli başlı koşullar ve olaylar, süreğen veya şiddetli durumlar gibi stres etkenlerinin de evliliğin niteliği üzerinde etkisi bulunmaktadır. Yaşam olaylarının etkileri, kişilerin bu olaylara yönelik, duruma göre değişen olumlu ya da olumsuz öznel duygularına göre farklılık gösterebilir (Sarason, Johnson & Siegel, 1978). Olumsuz yaşam olayları, etkileri olumsuz deneyimlenen, yakın zamanda gerçekleşmiş olaylardır (Tesser & Beach, 1998). Williams’a (1995) göre çiftlerin başlarına gelen olayları olumsuz ya da stres sebebi olarak algılaması olayların nesnel deneyiminden çok evliliğin niteliğine bağlıdır. Yapılan araştırmalar, olumsuz ya da stres etkeni olaylardan daha çok şikayetçi olan çiftlerin, evliliklerinden doyumlarını az olarak değerlendirdiklerini göstermiştir (Li & Wickrama, 2014; Neff

& Karney, 2009). Bunun yanı sıra, olayların etkisini olumsuz olarak hisseden kadın ve erkeklerin eşlerinin, evliliğe uyumunun daha az olduğu belirlenmiştir (Neff & Karney, 2007). Stres etkeni olaylara maruz kalmanın evlilikte daha sık saldırganlığa (Cano & Vivian, 2001, 2003), destekleyicilik ve samimiyetten uzak düşmanca davranışlara (Cogner vd., 1990; Matthews vd., 1996) sebep olduğu görülmüştür. Dahası, evlilikte görülen olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkisi çiftlerin sosyal destek algısı ve çatışma çözme stillerine bağlı uyum kapasitesine de etki etmektedir. Bu sebeple çiftler desteği daha az olarak algırlar (Norris & Kaniasty, 1996; Keinan, 1997) ve çatışma çözmede daha az yapıcıdır (Conger vd., 1990; Wosidlo & Segrin, 2013a). Sonuç olarak, olumsuz yaşam olayları evliliği olumsuz yönde etkileyen önemli bir faktördür.

Uyum süreçleri olarak da bilinen bir çiftin etkileşim ve davranışları da evliliğin niteliğine etki edebilir (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Sorun çözümünde eşlerin ortaya koyduğu davranışlar, evlilikte etkileşime biçtikleri değer ve destek algıları uyum süreçlerine birer örnektir. VSA'ya göre dayanıklı incinebilirlik ve stres etkeni olaylar uyum süreçleri yoluyla evliliği etkilerler. Buna ek olarak, bu modele göre evliliğin niteliğine en doğrudan etki uyum süreçlerindedir. Bu da evliliğin istikrarlı olup olmayacağını belirlemektedir. Başka bir deyişle, uyum süreçlerinin evlilik üzerinde etkisi büyüktür. Algılanan sosyal destek, uyum süreçlerine bir örnektir ve buradaki algı kişinin sosyal ağda farklı destek türlerine veya belli başlı kişilere erişimine olan inancına yöneliktir (Gottlieb & Bergen, 2010). Bu belli başlı kişiler aile fertleri, eş, yakın arkadaş, komşu, akraba veya bir meslektaş olabilir (Thoits, 1986). Yapılan çalışmalara göre hem algılanan eş desteği hem de dışarıdan gelen destek, eşlerin evlilik içinde olumlu davranışlar göstermesini sağlayabilir (Scheidler, 2008; Tuncay-Senlet, 2012).

Evlilikte çatışma çözüm stilleri de uyum süreçlerine dahildir. Çatışma çözümü çiftin belirli bir sorunla nasıl başa çıktığıyla ilgilidir (Mackey vd., 2000). Battol ve Khalid'e göre (2012) "sağlıklı bir evliliğin sırrı içinde çatışma olmamasında değil, çatışmayla

başa çıkma yollarında yatmaktadır” (s. 66). Çatışma çözüm stilleri farklı yollarla tanımlansa da temelinde yapıcı ve yıkıcı tarzlar öne çıkmaktadır. Yapıcı bir yolla soruna yaklaşıldığında evlilikte uyum ve istikrarda yükselme olurken, yıkıcı yolla yaklaşıldığında çiftlerin evliliklerinden memnun olmadıkları görülmektedir (Fincham, 2003; Greef & Bruyne, 2000). Çatışma çözüm stilleri, evliliğin niteliğinin zayıf olmasının yanı sıra, boşanma riskinde de etkili olarak görülmektedir (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Gottman, vd., 1998).

Sonuç olarak, çoğu araştırma duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları, algılanan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm stilleri ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiye kendi bağlamlarında veya VSA’ya referansla yer vermiştir. Karney ve Bradbury (1995) VSA’yı kuramsal bir çerçeve olarak sunmuş ve model bu ilişkinin kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasına yardımcı olmuştur. Ayrıca, Karney ve Bradbury’ye göre (1995) VSA’nın herhangi iki boyutu arasındaki ilişkiye dayanan bir inceleme diğer boyutun bilgisine sahip olmayacağından her zaman eksik bilgi sunacaktır. Bunun ışığında, bu çalışmanın amacı VSA vasıtasıyla duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları, algılanan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm stilleri ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi kapsamlı bir şekilde tespit etmektir. Değişkenler VSA yoluyla şu şekilde tanımlanmıştır: Duygulanım dayanıklı incinebilirlik olarak, olumsuz yaşam olayları stres etkeni olarak, algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stilleri uyum süreçleri olarak ve evlilik uyumu evliliğin niteliğinin göstergesi olarak belirlenmiştir. Her ne kadar evliliğin doğası ve niteliğini etkileyen şeyin her çifti de etkilediği öne sürülse de (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009), bugün Türkiye’de evlilik hakkında bildiğimiz şeylerin çoğu bireysel olarak toplanan verilere dayanmaktadır. Bu sebeple, bu çalışma her iki eşin boyutlarının analize dahil edilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla planlanan, sadece kişinin kendi boyutları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemekten ziyade bu boyutların eşinin boyutlarıyla olan ilişkisini de incelemeye dahil etmektir. Buna ek olarak, Cutrona’nın belirttiği üzere (1996), bazı çalışmalar çatışma ihtimalini yükseltip destekleyici davranış ihtimalini azalttığı için çatışmayı önemli kılarken evlilikte sosyal desteğin

rolünü görmezden gelmişlerdir. Çatışma çözüm stillerinin algılanan sosyal destek üzerindeki olası baskılama etkisini göz önünde bulunduran bu çalışmada algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkideki aracı değişken rolü ayrı analizlerle incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Savları:

S1: Eşlerin duygulanım boyutları ve olumsuz yaşam olayları çiftin evlilik uyumunu yordayacaktır.

S2: Algılanan sosyal destek, çiftin duygulanım boyutları, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumları arasındaki ilişkide aracılık edecektir.

S3: Çatışma çözüm stilleri, çiftin duygulanım boyutları, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumları arasındaki ilişkide aracılık edecektir.

YÖNTEM

Katılımcılar

Çalışmanın örnekleme 165 evli Türk çiftten oluşmaktadır. Amaçlı örnekleme prosedürü (Kerlinger, 1986) ile çiftler ilk evliliklerinde, en az ilköğretim eğitimi almış, büyük şehirlerde eşleriyle birlikte yaşayan resmi nikahlı kişiler olarak belirlenmiştir. Potansiyel katılımcılara ulaşmak amacıyla kartopu örnekleme yöntemi (Kumar, 1996) kullanılmıştır. Evlilik süreleri bir aydan 44 yıl 11 aya kadar değişen çiftlerde kadınların yaşları 22 ile 64, erkeklerin yaşları 24 ile 66 arasında değişmektedir. Çiftlerin 14.5%'i çocuk sahibi değilken, sırasıyla 22.4%'ünün bir, 46.7%'inin iki, 13.3%'ünün üç, 1.8%'inin dört ve 0.6%'sının beş ve altı çocuğu bulunmaktadır. Sırasıyla kadınların 26.7%'si ve erkeklerin 14%'ü ilköğretim, 25.5% ve 26.7%'si lise, 38.2%'si ve 45.5%'i üniversite, 9.7%'si ve 13.9%'u lisansüstü mezundur.

Kullanılan Ölçüm Araçları

Çalışmada kullanılan ölçüm araçları demografik bilgi formu ve beş ölçekten oluşmaktadır. Evlilik uyumunu ölçmek için Çiftler Uyum Ölçeği (Spanier, 1976), duygulanımı ölçmek için Pozitif ve Negatif Duygu Durum Ölçeği (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988), olumsuz yaşam olaylarını ölçmek için Yaşam Deneyimleri Ölçeği (Sarason, Johnson & Siegel, 1978), algılanan sosyal desteği ölçmek için Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği ve çatışma çözüm stillerini ölçmek için Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği kullanılmıştır.

Prosedür:

Araştırmayı uygulamak için ODTÜ Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi'nden tüm izinler alınmıştır. Daha sonra ODTÜ ve 29 Mayıs Üniversiteleri'nde okuyan öğrencilerden seçmeli psikoloji dersleri alanlara doktora tezi için evli çiftler gerektiği konusunda bilgi verilmiştir. Evli çiftler hakkında bilgi edinmeleri karşılığında ders notlarına fazladan (bonus) bir not eklenmiştir. Ölçüm araçları zarflara yerleştirilerek, Bilgilendirilmiş Onam, cetvelin kullanımında önemli noktalar, katılımcıların gizlilik ilkesi ve araştırmacının iletişim bilgileri ve yönergelerle birlikte tüm bilgiler de eklenmiştir. Ölçüm araçları kapalı zarflarda teslim edilmiş ve kapalı zarflarda geri alınmıştır. Sıralama etkisini kontrol etmek amacıyla ölçeklerin sıralaması rastgele yapılmıştır. Ancak, eşler tüm ölçümleri aynı sırada doldurmuşlardır.

Veri Analizi:

Araştırma savlarını değerlendirmek için pek çok istatistik teknik kullanılmıştır. İlk olarak, SPSS yoluyla verinin özellikleri ve cinsiyet farklılıkları hakkında bilgi edinmek için betimleyici istatistik ve ANCOVA uygulanmıştır. İkinci olarak, APIM yoluyla algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkilerdeki aracı rolünü sınamak için bir dizi yol (path) analizi uygulanmıştır.

SONUÇ

Betimleyici İstatistik

Araştırmanın ana değişkenlerinin ortalama, standart sapma ve cevap değişkenlerinin ölçüm aralıklarından oluşan bilgileri aşağıdaki tabloda sunulmuştur. Savların sınanmasından önce potansiyel cinsiyet farklılıklarını incelemek amacıyla duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları, algılanan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm stilleri ve evlilik uyumu üzerine bir dizi ANCOVA uygulanmıştır. Sonuç olarak, cinsiyet farkı tespit edilmemiştir.

Tablo 1. Çalışmanın Ana Değişkenlerinin Ortalama, Standart Sapma ve Dağılımı

Değişken	Kadın (n= 165)		Erkek (n= 165)		
	Ort.	SS	Ort.	SS	Aralık
OD	3.52	.66	3.59	.68	1 – 5
OzD	2.00	.61	1.94	.60	1 – 5
OYO	-.09	.10	-.08	.09	-3 – 3
ASD	5.47	1.25	5.28	1.28	1 – 7
OÇÇS	4.39	.88	4.22	.83	1 – 6
OzÇÇS	2.39	.90	2.30	.84	1 – 6
EU	110.85	17.37	112.92	16.82	0 – 151

Note. OD = Olumlu Duygulanım; OzD = Olumsuz Duygulanım; OYO = Olumsuz Yaşam Olayları; ASD = Algılanan Sosyal Destek; OÇÇS = Olumlu Çatışma Çözüm Stili; OzÇÇS = Olumsuz Çatışma Çözüm Stili; EU = Evlilik Uyumu

Savların Sınanması:

APIM çerçevesinde, algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkilerdeki aracı rolü bir dizi

yol (path) analiziyle sınanmıştır. Tüm analizlere evlilik süresi, çocuk sayısı ve çiftlerin eğitim seviyesi kontrol değişkeni olarak eklenmiştir. Yapılan ilk yol analizinde, duygulanımın ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarının evlilik uyumuna etkileri sınanmıştır. Sonrasında, algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin, duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkilerdeki aracı rolü ayrı ayrı değerlendirilmiştir. Analizde çiftlerin duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olayları, bağımsız değişken olarak, algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stilleri aracı değişkenler olarak, evlilik uyumu ise bağımlı değişken olarak kullanılmıştır. Evlilik süresi, çocuk sayısı ve çiftlerin eğitim seviyeleri ise kontrol değişkenleri olarak kullanılmıştır.

Duygulanım ve Olumsuz Yaşam Olaylarının Evlilik Uyumunu Tahmininde Aktör-Partner Etkisi (S1)

Duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarının evlilik uyumuna etkisi APIM yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Anlamli olmayan ilişkiler modelden çıkarıldığında modelin ki-kare değeri anlamsız ve model uyum endeksleri olması gereken aralıklarda bulunmuş, model veri ile oldukça iyi uyum göstermiştir. Sonuçlara göre hem kadınlar hem erkeklerin kendi olumlu duygulanımlarının kendi evlilik uyumlarını olumlu olarak etkilediği tespit edilmiştir ($\beta = .16, p < .01$; $\beta = .17, p < .01$). Diğer yandan kadınların olumsuz duygulanımları sadece kendi evlilik uyumlarıyla olumsuz olarak ilişkilirken ($\beta = -.22, p < .01$), erkeklerin olumsuz duygulanımlarının hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumlarını olumsuz olarak etkilediği bulunmuştur ($\beta = -.29, p < .01$; $\beta = -.20, p < .01$). Olumsuz yaşam olaylarına gelince, hem kadınlar hem erkekler yaşam olaylarının etkisini yüksek oranda hissettikleri zaman (düşük değerler yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam deneyimini temsil etmektedir) evlilik uyumlarının düşük çıktığı görülmüştür ($\beta = .16, p < .01$; $\beta = .22, p < .01$).

Algılanan Sosyal Desteğin Duygulanım, Olumsuz Yaşam Olayları ve Evlilik Uyumu Arasındaki İlişkilerdeki Aracı Rolü (S2)

Algılanan sosyal desteğin aracı değişken rolünde bulunduğu modelde APIM yöntemi kullanılarak analiz yapılmıştır. Anlamlı olmayan ilişkiler modelden çıkarıldığında modelin ki-kare değeri anlamsız ve model uyum endeksleri olması gereken aralıklarda bulunmuş, model veri ile oldukça iyi uyum göstermiştir. Sonuçlar ele alındığında, birçok aktör etkisi bulunmuştur. Olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan kadın ve erkeklerin sosyal destek algılarının da yüksek olduğu görülmüştür ($\beta = .23, p < .01$; $\beta = .34, p < .01$). Yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkisini hisseden erkeklerin ise sosyal destek algısının düşük olduğu bulunmuştur ($\beta = .16, p < .02$). Buna ek olarak, olumlu duygulanımları daha yüksek ($\beta = .11, p < .05$), olumsuz duygulanımları daha düşük ($\beta = -.20, p < .01$), olumsuz yaşam olayları deneyimlemeleri daha düşük ($\beta = .16, p < .01$) ve algılanan sosyal destekleri daha yüksek ($\beta = .10, p < .05$) olan kadınların evlilik uyumları da daha yüksektir. Diğer yandan, olumsuz duygulanımları daha düşük ($\beta = -.27, p < .01$), olumsuz yaşam olayları deneyimleri daha düşük ($\beta = .17, p < .01$) ve algıladıkları sosyal destekleri daha yüksek ($\beta = .28, p < .01$) olan erkeklerin evlilik uyumları daha yüksektir.

Bunlara ek olarak, aktör etkileri iki önemli aracı durumunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. İlk olarak, erkeklerin algılanan sosyal desteği olumlu duygulanımlarının evlilik uyumuna etkisinde tamamıyla aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki*: $.09, p < .01$). Başka bir deyişle, olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan erkekler sosyal desteklerini de yüksek olarak algılamakta ve bu durum yüksek evlilik uyumunu yordamaktadır. İkinci olarak, erkeklerin algılanan sosyal desteği olumsuz yaşam olaylarının evlilik uyumları üzerindeki etkisinde kısmi olarak aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki*: $.05, p < .01$). Diğer bir deyişle, olumsuz yaşam deneyimi yüksek olan erkekler sosyal desteklerini düşük olarak algılamakta ve bu durum evlilik uyumunun düşük olmasını yordamaktadır. Duygulanım boyutları ve evlilik uyumu arasında tek bir partner etki bulunmuştur.

Erkeklerin olumsuz duygulanımının kadınların evlilik uyumuyla olumsuz olarak ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$).

Çatışma Çözüm Stillerinin Duygulanım, Olumsuz Yaşam Olayları ve Evlilik Uyumu Arasındaki İlişkilerdeki Aracı Rolü (S3)

Çatışma çözüm stillerinin aracı değişken rolünde bulunduğu modelde APIM yöntemi kullanılarak analiz yapılmıştır. Anlamli olmayan ilişkiler modelden çıkarıldığında modelin ki-kare değeri anlamsız ve model uyum endeksleri olması gereken aralıklarda bulunmuş, model veri ile oldukça iyi uyum göstermiştir. Sonuçlar ele alındığında birçok aktör etkisi bulunmuştur. Öncelikle, hem kadınların hem erkeklerin olumlu duygulanımları, olumlu çatışma çözüm stillerini daha fazla kullanmaları ($\beta = .18, p < .01$; $\beta = .31, p < .01$) ve evlilik uyumlarının daha yüksek olması yönünde ($\beta = .15, p < .01$; $\beta = .19, p < .01$) etkilemiştir. Diğer yandan, hem kadınların hem erkeklerin olumsuz duygulanımı olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini daha fazla kullanmalarını ($\beta = .27, p < .01$; $\beta = .36, p < .01$, sırasıyla) etkilerken, sadece kadınların evlilik uyumlarının daha düşük olmasını ($\beta = -.20, p < .01$) sağlamıştır. Olumsuz yaşam olaylarını deneyimleyen kadın ve erkekler daha düşük evlilik uyumu bildirirken ($\beta = .17, p < .01$; $\beta = .23, p < .01$, sırasıyla), sadece erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerinin yüksek olduğu görülmüştür ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$). Kadınların olumlu çatışma çözüm stillerinin evlilik uyumlarını olumlu olarak ($\beta = .17, p < .01$), olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerinin evlilik uyumlarını olumsuz olarak yordadığı ($\beta = -.15, p < .02$), erkeklerinse olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerinin evlilik uyumlarını olumsuz olarak yordadığı görülmüştür ($\beta = -.32, p < .01$).

Sonuçlar, partner etkilerini de ortaya koymuştur. Kadınlar yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam olayları bildirdiğinde, erkekler daha düşük oranda olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili bildirmiştir ($\beta = .23, p < .01$). Diğer yandan, erkekler daha düşük olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili bildirdiklerinde kadınlar daha yüksek evlilik uyumu bildirmişlerdir ($\beta = -.26, p < .01$). Kadınlar yüksek oranda olumlu çatışma çözüm stili ($\beta = .19, p < .01$) ve

düşük oranda olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili ($\beta = -.15, p < .02$) bildirdiklerinde ise erkekler daha yüksek evlilik uyumu göstermişlerdir.

Aktör ve partner etkileri görülen on aracı durum ortaya koyulmuştur. Kadınların olumlu çatışma çözüm stilleri, kadının olumlu duygulanımının hem kadının (1) hem erkeğin (2) evlilik uyumlarına etkilerinde aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki* = .30, $p < .05$; *dolaylı etki* = .03, $p < .01$). Diğer bir deyişle, olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan kadınların olumlu çatışma çözüm stillerini kullanma eğilimleri yüksek olmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak yükseltmektedir. Kadınların olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri, kadınların olumsuz duygulanımının kadın (3) ve erkeğin (4) evlilik uyumlarına etkilerinde aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki* = -.04, $p < .05$; *dolaylı etki* = .04, $p < .05$). Başka bir deyişle, olumsuz duygulanımı yüksek olan kadınların olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini kullanma eğilimleri yüksek olmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak düşürmektedir. Erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri, erkeklerin olumsuz duygulanımının kadın (5) ve erkeğin (6) evlilik uyumlarına etkilerinde aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki* = -.12, $p < .01$; *dolaylı etki* = -.09, $p < .01$). Diğer bir deyişle, olumsuz duygulanımı yüksek olan erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini kullanma eğilimleri yüksek olmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak düşürmektedir. Erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili, erkeklerin olumsuz yaşam olaylarının kadın (7) ve erkeğin (8) evlilik uyumlarına etkilerinde aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki* = .08, $p < .01$; *dolaylı etki* = .07, $p < .01$). Başka bir deyişle, erkeklerin tecrübe ettiği olumsuz yaşam olayları arttığında olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili kullanma eğilimi artmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak düşürmektedir. Erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri, kadınların olumsuz yaşam olaylarının kadın (9) ve erkeğin (10) evlilik uyumlarına etkilerinde aracı durumdadır (*dolaylı etki* = -.08, $p < .01$; *dolaylı etki* = -.06, $p < .01$). Diğer bir deyişle, kadınların tecrübe ettiği olumsuz yaşam olayları arttığında erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm

stili kullanma eğilimi azalmakta ve bu durum hem kendilerinin hem eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu anlamlı olarak yükseltmektedir.

TARTIŞMA

Sonuçların Değerlendirilmesi:

Çalışmanın amaçlarından biri, duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi tespit etmektir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, yüksek oranda olumlu, düşük oranda olumsuz duygulanım sergileyen kadın ve erkeklerin evlilik uyumları daha fazla olmaktadır. Bu bulgu literatürdeki çalışmalarla tutarlılık göstermektedir. Sonuçlara göre hem olumlu (Berry & Willingham, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 2009) hem de olumsuz duygulanım (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Watson vd., 2000) evlilikte tatminin öngöstergeleridir. Sürekli duygulanım gibi kişilik özellikleri de eşlerin ne düşündüğünü, ne hissettiğini, ne dediğini ve ne yaptığını (Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Thomsen & Gilbert, 1998) etkileyerek uyuma etki edebilmektedir.

Diğer yandan, partner etkisi bu çalışmada ancak erkeklerin olumsuz duygulanımı ve kadınların evlilik uyumları arasında gösterilmiştir. Olumsuz duygulanımı yüksek olan erkeklerin eşlerinin evlilik uyumlarını düşük olarak bildirdikleri görülmüştür. Karney ve Bradbury'e göre (1995), diğer kişilik faktörlerinden ziyade olumsuz duygulanımın evliliğe etkisi daha büyüktür. Benzer şekilde, Thomsen ve Gilbert (1998) de evlilik uyumunu anlamada olumsuz duygulanımın daha iyi bir öngösterge olduğunu söylemişlerdir. Bu sebeple, olumsuz duygulanıma ait hem aktör hem partner etkisine dair bulgular şaşırtıcı değildir. Yine de bu etki yalnızca erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımında görülmüştür. Lavee ve Ben-Ari (2004) bu gibi durumların cinsiyet farklılığıyla açıklanabileceğini bildirmişlerdir: Bu farklılıklar kendisini kişinin sıkıntı, hayal kırıklığı, endişe ve suçluluk gibi olumsuz duygularını nasıl deneyimlediğini de göstermektedir. Bunlarla beraber düşünüldüğünde, çalışmadan çıkan sonuçlar çiftin evlilik uyumunu ve evliliğe neyin daha çok zarar verdiğini

anlamada erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımının daha iyi bir öngösterge olduğunu işaret etmektedir.

Sonuçlar ayrıca, kadınlardan farklı olarak, erkeklerin evlilik uyumu seviyesinin ancak kendi faktörlerinin fonksiyonu olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu cinsiyet farkı kadın ve erkeklerin evliliklerdeki rolleriyle ilişkilendirilebilir. Kadınlar ilişkilerinde kendilerini daha eşleriyle bağlı olarak görebilmekte, ilişkiye daha sıkı tutunmakta ve ilişkileri düzeltmek adına daha fazla iletişim kurmaktadır (Impett & peplau, 2006). Erkekler ise daha otonom, bağımsız ve kadınlara oranla ilişkilerinde daha çok kendilerine odaklı olma eğilimindedirler (Gilligan, 1982; Kirsch & Kuiper, 2002).

Sonuçlar, yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkisini hisseden kadın ve erkeklerin evlilik uyumlarının daha az olduğunu göstermiştir. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalarla (Li & Wickrama, 2014; Neff & Karney, 2009) bu anlamda tutarlılık söz konusudur. Bu çalışmalar da benzer şekilde, olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkisini olumsuz ve stres etkeni olarak deneyimleyen çiftlerin evliliklerinden daha az doyum sağladıklarını göstermiştir. Tesser ve Beach'in (1998) iddiasına göre olumsuz yaşam olaylarının artmasıyla birlikte olumsuz ruh hali de artmaktadır. Bunun sonucu olarak, çiftlerin evlilikleri hakkında vardıkları yargılar da olumsuz olabilmektedir.

Bu çalışmada, çiftlerin olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu algılayışında partner etkisinin anlamlı olmadığı görülmüştür. Kadın ve erkeklerin olumsuz yaşam olaylarını yüksek ya da düşük hissetmesi ile eşlerinin evlilik uyumlarını değerlendirmesi arasında bir ilişki bulunmamıştır. Bu sonuç, Wozidlo ve Segrin (2013a) veya Neff ve Karney'inki (2007) gibi kimi çalışmalardan farklılık göstermektedir. Bu çalışmalar genellikle yeni evli çiftlerle birlikte yürütülmüş olmasıyla birlikte bu tez çalışmasında hem yeni hem de uzun süreli evli çiftlere yer verilmiştir. Bu anlamda, evliliklerinin başlangıcında olan çiftler, eşlerinin hissettiği olumsuz yaşam deneyimleri konusunda daha hassas olabilirken, evliliğin ilerleyen yıllarında sorumlulukların (çocuk sahibi olma, ekonomik şartlar, hastalıklar vs.)

artması ile beraber kendi deneyimlerine odaklanma eğiliminde olmaları söz konusu olabilir.

Çalışmanın ikinci amacı ise algılanan sosyal desteğin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve çiftlerin evlilik uyumları arasındaki ilişkilerdeki aracı değişken rolünü incelemektir. Sonuçlar, erkek ve kadındaki algılanan sosyal desteğin yüksek olmasının kendi olumlu duygulanımlarıyla ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan kadın ve erkeklerin sosyal destek algılarının da yüksek olduğu görülmüştür. Literatür çalışmalarından çıkan sonuca göre, evlilikte duygulanımın kişinin çevresinde bulunan sosyal desteğe etkisi bulunmaktadır (Stephoe vd., 2009; Swickert vd., 2010). Buna ek olarak, bulgular Finch (1998) algılanan sosyal destekten memnuniyetin olumsuz duygulanımla değil, olumlu duygulanımla ilişkili olduğunu ileri sürmüştür. Benzer şekilde Steptoe da (2009) olumlu duygulanımın daha fazla sosyal destek algısı ve sosyal bağlılıkla ilişkili olduğunu bildirmiştir.

Bu çalışmada gösterildiği üzere yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam olaylarının etkisini hisseden erkeklerin ise sosyal destek algısının düşük olduğu görülmüştür. Stres etkeni olaylar, sosyal desteğin değerlendirilmesini etkileyen durumsal değişkenler olarak görülmektedir (Keinan, 1997). Norris ve Kaniasty (1996) algılanan sosyal desteğin, yaşanan olaylar sonrası bozulmalara karşı hassas olduğunu ve bazı olayların desteklenme hissine zarar verdiğini iddia etmişlerdir. Ancak bu tez çalışmasına göre kadınlar için ne partner ne de aktör etki için olumsuz yaşam olayları ve algılanan sosyal destek arasında bir bağlantı bulunmamaktadır. Kadınların olumsuz yaşam olaylarını yüksek ya da düşük hissetmesi ile kendilerinin veya eşlerinin algıladıkları sosyal destek arasında bir ilişki bulunmamıştır. Türkiye’de aile fertleriyle, akraba ve komşularla kurulan bağ genellikle oldukça sıkı ve birbirine bağlıdır (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 2007). Bu gruplar özellikle de kadınlar için (Phillipson, 1997; alıntı Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001) potansiyel destek kaynakları olarak görülmektedir (Thoits, 1986). Kadınlar olumlu ya da olumsuz etkisi olan birçok olayı

bu gruptakilerle beraber yaşamakta veya paylaşmaktadır. Bu sebeple, yaşam olayları ya da durumsal olayların etkisindeki değişim kadınlar için paylaşım veya desteğe ulaşımında, dolayısıyla algılanan sosyal destekte bir değişikliğe sebep olmayabilir. Diğer yandan, erkeklerin sorun ve güçlükleri paylaşma eğiliminin eşleriyle olduğu görülmektedir (Phillipson, 1997; alıntı Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). Evlilikte birçok yaşam olayının tek destek olarak görülen eşlerle ortak yaşandığı düşünüldüğünde, erkeklerin algıladıkları sosyal desteğin olumsuz yaşam olaylarından etkilenmesi daha muhtemel olabilmektedir.

Araştırma sonuçları iki önemli aracı ilişkiyi ortaya koymuştur. Olumlu duygulanımı yüksek olan (1) ve olumsuz yaşam deneyimi düşük olan (2) erkekler sosyal desteklerini de yüksek olarak algılamışlardır. Bu durum da evliliklerine yüksek oranda uyum olarak geri dönmüştür. Elde edilen sonuçlarda kişiler arası aracı etkiye rastlanmamıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, olumlu duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarından algılanan sosyal destek ve evlilik uyuma doğru olan ilişkiler kişiler arası olmaktan çok kişinin kendi boyutları arasında gerçekleşen bir durumdur.

Bu çalışmada erkeklerin olumlu duygulanımı dışında diğer tüm direkt etkiler algılanan sosyal desteğin aracı etkisinden sonra bile sabit kalmıştır. Özellikle de kadın ve erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımı direkt etki etmeye devam etmiştir. Çıkan sonuçlar, olumsuz duygulanımın evlilik ilişkisine daha fazla etki ettiği ve evlilik uyumunu anlamada daha iyi bir ön gösterge olduğu yönündeki görüşü güçlendirmiştir. Dahası, bu direkt etkiler algılanan sosyal desteğin özellikle de kadınlar için duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkide iyi bir yordayıcı olmayabileceğini göstermiştir. Phillipson'a göre (aktaran Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001) erkekler temel destek noktaları ve kişisel sorun ve güçlüklerini paylaşmada güvendikleri kişiler olarak eşlerini işaret ederlerken kadınların destek kaynakları çoğunlukla eşleri, yakın arkadaşları ve akrabalarıdır. Özetlemek gerekirse, şayet kadınlar sadece eşlerini değil yakın arkadaş, komşu ve akrabalarını destek kaynağı olarak görüyorlarsa, algılanan destek sadece evlilik ilişkisi ile sınırlı kalmak zorunda

değildir. Erkekler ise sadece eşlerini destek olarak görmekte ise algıladıkları sosyal destek daha çok evlilik ilişkisinde bulunmakta ve evlilik uyumunu yordamakta olabilir.

Çalışmanın üçüncü amacı çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve çiftlerin evlilik uyumları arasındaki ilişkilerdeki aracı değişken rolünü incelemektir. Bulgular, hem kadınların hem erkeklerin olumlu duygulanımları, olumlu çatışma çözüm stillerini daha fazla kullanmalarına yol açarken; olumsuz duygulanımlarının ise olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini daha fazla kullanmalarına sebep olduğunu göstermiştir. Watson ve Hubbard'ın (1996) iddialarına göre, olumlu duygulanımlarını yüksek seviyede bildiren kişiler, aktif ve olumlu tepkiler verme eğilimindeyken, olumsuz duygulanımlarını yüksek seviyede bildiren kişiler ise olumsuz ve duygu temelli tepkiler vermektedirler.

Çalışmada, Hanzal ve Segrin (2009) veya Woszidlo ve Segrin'den (2013b) farklı olarak hiçbir partner etkisi bulgusuna rastlanmamıştır. Kadınların ve erkeklerin olumlu ya da olumsuz duygulanımlarının, eşlerinin çatışma çözme stillerine etkisi bulunmamıştır. Barelds (2005) kişilik-ilişki alışverişi bakış açısına göre ilişki deneyimlerinin eşininkinden çok bireyin kendi kişiliğiyle ilişki içinde olduğunu savunmuştur. Bu bilgiler ışığında, bu çalışmada eşin kişiliğiyle ilişki bulunmamış olması beklenen bir durum olabilir. Dikkati çeken bir diğer nokta, erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımının direkt etkisini ortadan kaldıran tek değişkenin erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili olmasıdır. Benzer sonuçlar kadınların olumsuz yaşam olaylarında da görülmüştür. Daha önce belirtildiği üzere erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stiline evlilikteki rolü oldukça belirleyicidir.

Yapılan araştırma kadın ve erkeklerin olumsuz yaşam deneyimlerinin erkeğin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stiliyle ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Olumsuz yaşam olaylarını deneyimleyen kadın ve erkekler daha düşük evlilik uyumu bildirmişlerdir. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalara göre stres etkeni yaşam olayları evlilikte saldırganlığın sıklaşmasına (Cano & Vivian, 2001, 2003), psikolojik saldırgan davranışlar (Frye &

Karney, 2006) ile yakınlık ve destekleyicilikten uzak düşmanca davranışlara yol açmaktadır (Matthews vd., 1996). Ancak sonuçlar göstermiştir ki, kadınlar yüksek oranda olumsuz yaşam olayı deneyimlediğinde, erkekler olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilini daha az kullanmaktadırlar. Türkiye'deki evliliklerde gelenekselden moderne doğru giden bir trend görülmesine (İmamoğlu & Yasak, 1997) rağmen, bazı toplumsal yargılar diğerleri kadar çabuk değişmemektedir (Doğan, Turgut & Gölbaşı, 2013). Geleneksel cinsiyet rolleri erkeklerin daha kararlı ve lider ruhlu (Erden-İmamoğlu, 2013) olduğunun altını çizmektedir. Bu sebeple kadınlar istenmeyen durumlarla karşılaştığında eşlerinin güçlü olmak, eşlerini desteklemek zorunda olmak ve çözüm bulmak zorunda hissetmeleri anlaşılabilir bir durumdur. Bu sebeple erkeklerin eşlerinin olumsuz yaşam olaylarından etkilendiklerini fark ettiklerinde bu durumla mücadele etmeleri, kendi olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerini bir kenara bırakmaları mümkündür.

Çalışma sonuçlarına göre kadın ve erkeklerin çatışma çözüm stilleri önemli aktör-partner aracı değişkenleridir. Daha önce yapılan araştırmalar farklı çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım ve evlilik uyumu arasında kişisel ve kişiler arası ilişkide aracı olduğunu göstermiştir. Örneğin Hanzal ve Segrin'e (2009) göre erkeklerin sorun çözümlerine olumlu yaklaşımı, çatışmanın içine giriş-çıkışları ve kadınların sorun çözümlerine olumlu yaklaşımı kendi duygulanımları ve evlilik uyumları arasında aracıdır. Bir diğer iddiaları ise çiftlerden birinin çatışmaya giriş-çıkışının diğerinin olumsuz duygulanım ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklayabileceğidir. Literatürde açıklanan bilgilere göre belirli kişisel geçmiş, sosyal destek, kaynaklarla başa çıkabilme, bilişsel değerlendirme, çatışma yönetimi ve kişilerin psikolojik bozuklukları gibi birçok öge stres etkeni yaşamsal olaylar için aracı konumdadır (Conger vd., 1990, Vitalino vd., 1993). Bu tez çalışmasının sonuçlarına göre erkek ve kadınların olumsuz çatışma çözüm stillerinin duygulanım, olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumunda oynadıkları rol büyüktür. Duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarından evlilik uyumuna direkt etkiler var olmaya devam etse de; direkt etkilere,

algılanan sosyal destekle olan ilişkide olana göre daha az rastlanmaktadır. Bu sebeple, çatışma çözüm stiline duyulan olumsuz yaşam olayları ve evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamada anahtar görevi gördüğü söylenebilir.

Çalışmanın gösterdiği bir başka sonuç ise, çatışma çözüm stili göz önüne alındığında, kadınların boyutlarının eşlerinininkileri etkilediğidir. Bu, evlilikte çatışma çözümünün birbirine bağımlı yapısının altını çizmektedir. Olumlu ya da olumsuz çatışma çözümü evlilikten duyulan memnuniyeti öngörmekle kalmaz, bazen de eşlerin memnuniyetiyle ilişkilendirilir. Açığa çıkarılan bir diğer ilişki ise erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımı ile kendisi ve karısının evlilik uyumu arasındaki ilişkinin erkeğin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili temelinde oluşabileceğidir. Buna göre, olumsuz duygulanıma sahip erkekler daha az uyum bildirir ve aynı etki kadının evlilik uyumuna da yansır. Bunun kısmi sebebi olumsuz duygulanıma sahip kişilerin sorunlara olumsuz yaklaşmasıdır.

Sonuçlardan Yapılan Çıkarımlar

Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, çiftler üzerindeki klinik uygulamalar hakkındaki tartışmalara katkıda bulunma niteliğindedir. Araştırmaya göre, sürekli duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olayları, her ne kadar algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stilleri göz önünde bulundurulsa da, evlilik uyumuna direkt etki etmeye devam etmektedir. Sonuçlar, duygulanım ve olumsuz yaşam olaylarının evlilik için ciddiyetini ortaya koymuştur. Evlilik terapisinde bu dinamiklerin farkında olmak, bilgi alma, gözlem ve müdahale planlamada etkili olabilir. Diğer yandan duygulanım sabit bir özelliktir ve olumsuz yaşamsal olaylar çoğu zaman kontrol edilebilir olmaz. Ancak VSA, evliliğin niteliği üzerinde en çok direkt etkiye sahip olduğu için uyum süreçlerine büyük önem vermektedir (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, algılanan sosyal destek ve çatışma çözüm stillerinin oynadığı önemli rolü de kaydetmektedir. Bu bulgulara göre, özellikle de öğretilebilir olan çatışma çözüm stillerinin evliliğe etkisi büyüktür. Terapistler, sorun çözme veya herhangi bir iletişim

tarzı öğretilbilir olduğundan, çiftler arasında daha geniş etkili kontrol ya da değişim sağlamak amacıyla çatışma çözüm stillerini şekillendirmeyi faydalı bulabilir.

Çıkan sonuçlara göre erkeklerin ve kadınların evlilik uyumlarını değerlendirmede farklı yapıları mevcuttur. Terapi sırasında klinisyenlerin bunu dikkate alması ve çiftleri bilgilendirmesi önemli olacaktır. Birbirlerinin farklılıklarını anlama ve davranışların yanlış anlaşılmasını önlemek adına klinisyenlerin olayların değerlendirilmesindeki farklılıklarını anlamaları için çiftlere yardımcı olması önemlidir.

Çatışma çözümü konusunda uygulama ya da çalışma yaparken bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının kullanımı psikoterapiyi destekleyebilir. Bulgulara göre evli erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözümü stilleri, erkeğin olumsuz duygulanımı, kendisi ve eşinin maruz kaldığı olumsuz yaşam olayları ve her ikisinin evlilik uyumları arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamaktadır. Bu sebeple, erkeklerin olumlu çatışma çözme yönünü harekete geçirmekten ziyade olumsuz çatışma çözümünün azaltılması evlilik için daha faydalı görünmektedir. Çıkan sonuçlar erkekler için sosyal desteğin önemini de vurgulamıştır. Bu bilgi psikoterapi müdahalelerinde paylaşılabilir ve kişilerin farklı destek kaynakları bulmaları teşvik edilebilir. Kişiliklerinin ve yaşamsal olaylar hakkında deneyimlerinin sosyal desteği algılamalarını ne şekilde belirlediği ve etkilediği anlatılabilir. Kendi algıları hakkında farkındalık evliliklerini farklı durumlarda daha uyumlu şekilde devam ettirmelerini sağlayabilir.

Çıkarılan bir diğer sonuç, erkeklerin boyutları eşlerinin evlilik uyumunu farklı durumlarda etkilemesine rağmen erkeğin boyutlarının etkilendiği durumu ortaya çıkaran sadece eşinin çatışma çözüm stilidir. Bu bulgu erkeğin evlilikteki rolü hakkında önemli bir bilgi vermektedir. Çatışma çözümü birbirine bağlı ve iki yönlü bir yapıdır, eşleri de etkiler. Eşlerinin davranışlarının yanlış anlaşılmasını önlemek ve olayların doğru değerlendirilmesini sağlamak adına klinisyenler bu eğilimi anlamaları için çiftlere yardımcı olabilirler. Bu bilgi eşlerin, özellikle de erkeklerin, birbirlerinin boyut ve beklentilerini anlamalarına yardımcı olabilir.

Evlilikler her ne kadar iki ayrı kişiden oluşsa da iki kişi arasındaki ilişki birbirine bağlıdır. Evlilikte gerçekleşen durumlar her iki kişiyi de ilgilendirir ve etkisi altına alır. Bu çalışma evlilikte kişiler arasında olanların, çatışma çözüm stilleri, bireysel olandan daha önemli olduğunun altını çizmiştir. Çatışma çözümüne dair ortaya çıkan sonuçlar kişilik etkilerinin ve yaşam olaylarının dengelenmesinde önem arz ettiğini ortaya koymuştur. Bu sebeple, çiftlerin evlilikteki uyumu adına, evlilik terapisinin bireysel terapiden daha önemli olduğu sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Sınırlılıklar

Bu çalışmada işaret edilmesi gereken kimi sınırlılıklar mevcuttur. İlki katılımcıların eğitim seviyesi ile ilgilidir. Bu çalışmadaki eğitim seviyesi dağılımı nüfusun geneline olan dağılımdan farklıdır. Gelecek çalışmalarda bu durumun kontrol edilmesi için nüfusa uygun şekilde, eğitim seviyeleri için kota belirlenmesi uygun olabilir. İkincisi ise kartopu örnekleme yönteminin kullanılmasıdır. İlk evliliklerinde olmaları, ilköğretim mezunu olmaları, büyük şehirlerde yaşamaları, resmi nikahlı olmaları gibi kimi özelliklere sahip katılımcılara ulaşmada bu yöntem faydalı olsa da yöntemin temsil yeterliliği sorgulanabilir. Son sınırlama ise, çalışmada yer alan hem erkekler hem de kadınların evliliklerinde yüksek oranda uyuma sahip bireyler olmalarıdır. Bu da orta seviye ya da düşük seviyede uyumlu evlilikler adına yapılan genellemeleri sınırlandırabilir. Bu evliliklerde olumsuz duygulanımın ve olumsuz çatışma çözme stiline etkisi daha yoğun olarak görülebilir.

APPENDIX I. Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Sakmar, Elçin
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 30 June 1983, İstanbul
Marital Status: Married
email: elcinsakmar@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Clinical Psychology	2010
BS	METU Psychology	2007
High School	Haydarpaşa Lisesi, İstanbul	2001

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2013-	Istanbul 29 Mayıs University,	Lecturer
Present	Psychology Department	
2012-2013	Boylam Psikiyatri Hastanesi	Clinical Psychologist

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Basic French

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Sakmar, E., & Fıfşilođlu, H. (2015, July). *Actor-partner effects of sexual satisfaction on relationship satisfaction*. Paper presented at meeting of The 14th European Congress of Psychology, Milan, Italy.

Sakmar, E., & Fıfşilođlu, H. (2011, July). *Differences on communication patterns, sexual satisfaction and relationship satisfaction among married individuals with and without children and cohabiting individuals*. Paper presented at meeting of The 12th European Congress of Psychology, İstanbul, Turkey.

APPENDIX J. Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : SAKMAR

Adı : ELÇİN

Bölümü : Psikoloji

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : TESTING THE VULNERABILITY-STRESS-ADAPTATION MODEL IN TURKEY: A DYADIC MODEL

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: