

EXAMINING MARITAL SATISFACTION IN BINATIONAL MARRIAGES,  
FROM AN ECOSYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

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NIHAN TEZER YÖRÜK

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---

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz  
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

---

Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıfşılıođlu  
Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members**

Prof. Dr. Esin Tezer (METU, EDS)

Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıfşılıođlu (METU, PSY)

Prof. Dr. Şennur Kıfşlak Tutarel (AU, PSY)

Doç. Dr. Türker Özkan (METU, PSY)

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ferhat Yarar (MU, PSY)

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

Name, Last name : Nihan Tezer Yörük

Signature :

## ABSTRACT

### EXAMINING MARITAL SATISFACTION IN BINATIONAL MARRIAGES, FROM AN ECOSYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

Tezer Yörük, Nihan

Ph.D., Department of Psychology

Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıfılođlu

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The aim of this dissertation is to examine marital satisfaction of binational couples from an ecosystems perspective. For this purpose, predictive role of personality, acculturation attitudes, and perceived social support as individual traits; conflict resolution styles, cultural distance and language skills as couple traits; demographics, received social support, societal reactions and relations with family of origin as contextual factors on marital satisfaction were investigated. This study involved Russian-Turkish and German-Turkish who the husbands were Turkish and wives were both Russian or German, living in Turkey, married at least for 6 months and wives could speak Turkish. The data were collected from 81 Russian-Turkish, 63 German-Turkish, totally 144 binational couples. Marital satisfaction was assessed by Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The instruments utilized in order to assess IVs are: Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, Acculturation Attitudes Scale, Multiple Source of Perceived Social Support Inventory (MSPSS), Conflict

Resolution Style Scale, Cultural Distance Scale, Language Proficiency Index, Social Network Questionnaire, Tangible and Information Support Questions, Negative Societal Reactions Index and Communication with Family of Origin Index. Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) was employed in the present study and predictive role of interactions were examined by multiple stepwise regression analysis. Results revealed that only husbands' and wives' scores on MSPSS from family, negative conflict resolution styles and negative societal reactions predicted both their own and partner's marital satisfaction. The results supported three levels for examining marital functioning. The findings of the study were discussed with the relevant literature. Implications for clinical applications and information for future studies were suggested.

**Keywords:** Marital satisfaction, binational marriage, ecosystem, couple, APIM

## ÖZ

### ÇİFT ULUSLU EVLİLİKLERDE EVLİLİK DOYUMUNUN EKOSİSTEM BAKIŞ AÇISIYLA İNCELENMESİ

Tezer Yörük, Nihan  
Doktora, Psikoloji Bölümü  
Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıfılođlu

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Bu alıřmanın amacı, ekosistem bakıř aısıyla ift-uluslu iftlerin evlilik doyumunu incelemektir. Bu amala, bireysel zellikleri olarak, kiřilik zellikler, kltrlenme tutumları ve algılanan sosyal destek; ift zellikleri olarak, atıřma özme stilleri, kltrel mesafe ve dil becerileri; bađlamsal faktrler olarak, demografik zellikler, alınan sosyal destek, toplumsal tepkiler ve kk aile iliřkilerinin evlilik doyumunu zerindeki yordayıcı rol arařtırılmıřtır. Bu alıřma kocaların Trk ve karıların Rus veya Alman olduđu, Trkiye’de yařayan, en az 6 aydır evli olan ve karıların Trke bildiđi Rus-Trk ve Alman-Trk iftleri kapsamaktadır. Veriler, 81 Rus-Trk, 63 Alman-Trk, toplam 144 ift-uluslu iftten toplanmıřtır. Evlilik doyumunu iftler Uyum leđi ile deđerlendirilmiřtir. Bađımsız deđiřkenleri lmek iin řu aralar kullanılmıřtır: oklu Kltr Kiřilik leđi (K, bu arařtırma iin Trke’ye uyarlanmıřtır), Kltrlenme Tutumları leđi, ok Ynl Algılanan Sosyal Destek leđi, atıřma özm Stilleri leđi, Kltrel Uzaklık leđi, Dil Yeterliliđi İndeksi, Sosyal Ađ leđi, Maddi Destek ve Bilgi Desteđi Soruları, Olumsuz Toplumsal Tepkiler İndeksi ve Kk

Aile ile İletişim İndeksi. Bu çalışmada Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Modeli (APIM) kullanılmıştır ve etkileşimlerin yordayıcı rolü çoklu stepwise regresyon analizleriyle değerlendirilmiştir. Genel sonuçlar sadece kocaların ve karıların aileden alınan sosyal destek, olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri ve olumsuz toplumsal tepkiler puanlarının hem kendinin hem de partnerinin evlilik doyumunu yordadığını göstermektedir. Sonuçlar evliliğin işleyişini değerlendirirken üç seviyeyi de desteklemiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, ilişkili literatür doğrultusunda tartışılmıştır. Klinik uygulamalara yansımalar ve sınırlılıkları değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Evlilik doyumu, çift-uluslu evlilik, ekosistem, çift, APIM

*To my family*

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

In the following section, firstly, background information relating to the topic of the study is highlighted. Secondly, aims and significance of the study are presented while, thirdly, suggested implications are introduced

### **1.1 Background Information**

Marital satisfaction is one of the empirical precedents of a healthy marriage and a key concept in predicting marital outcome and which has been researched from various aspects (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). Marital satisfaction has been discussed and identified in various ways throughout the literature. It has been suggested that marital satisfaction refers to the degree of happiness and pleasure experienced in a marital relationship (Rho, 1989) or the degree of fulfillment of the spouses' expectations towards the marital relationship (Bahr, 1989, cited in Sharaievska, Kim & Stodolska, 2013). Among the different definitions, a final consensus as regards the concept of marital satisfaction indicates a subjective evaluation (Craighead and Nemeroff, 2001). Karney and Bradbury (1995) suggested that marital satisfaction is one of the core components of the marital relationship because of its high correlation with marital stability and marital quality.

The importance of studying marital satisfaction derives from its benefit to individuals and family wellbeing (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007; Bradbury, et al., 2000). Research showed that being married is significantly associated with emotional and physical wellbeing, if and only if, the couples are satisfied with their marriages (Carr, Freedman, Cornman, & Consulting, 2014). Additionally, it was found that marital satisfaction is a significant predictor of a stable marriage (Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Schutte, Bhullar & Rooke, 2010). Karney and Bradbury (1995) outlined that greater satisfaction predicts more stable marriages.

Marital satisfaction is one of the widely studied variables in marital researches and in the universal sense, numerous variables are identified as the predictive factors of marital satisfaction (Brandbury, et al., 2000). Marital satisfaction has been related to various facts, such as personality (Charania, 2006; Teichner & Farnden-Lyster, 1997); social support (Reevy, 2007; Cramer, 2006; Copeland and Norell, 2002); communication (Wong, 2009; Blanchard, Hawkins, Baldwin & Fawcett, 2009; Johnson & Jacob, 1997); sexual satisfaction (Karney & Brandbury, 1995); coping strategies (Gottman, 2007; Brandbury, et al., 2000;); gender roles (Hock et. al., 1995). Efficient conflict management styles (Hünler and Gençöz, 2003; Gottman & Silver, 1995), increased sexual satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), high levels of social support (Reevy, 2007; Copeland and Norell, 2002), personality traits such as high levels of conscientiousness (Cihan Güngör, 2007) and low levels of neuroticism (Charania, 2006), have been suggested as being the important components of a satisfying marriage. Cihan Güngör (2007) found that increased skills concerning active planning, type of coping mechanisms for dealing with stress, marital self-efficacy and marital readiness, and all increase marital satisfaction; the existence of psychological symptoms, can decrease marital satisfaction. Çağ and Yıldırım (2008) highlighted the role of high levels of perceived social support from the spouse, sexual satisfaction and a decreased level of education, on predicting high levels of marital satisfaction.

Celenk and van de Vijver (2013) suggested that cultural difference affect the predictors of marital satisfaction. In a study conducted with Dutch and Turkish couples, it has been reported that married Dutch partners place a priority on the personality of a spouse, reciprocity, psychological roles and emotional processes, for a satisfying marriage. On the other hand, Turkish couples found children issues and economical aspects, more important to a satisfying marriage. The studies proposed that marital satisfaction is also affected by cultural differences. Additionally, families' functions in different cultures are affected by the different expectations of male and female behavioural patterns (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008). McFadden and Moore (2001), highlighted, however, that relatively little attention was given to

understanding the marital satisfaction of intercultural couples and integrating the findings of previous studies about intercultural family life and marital satisfaction.

It terms of intercultural relationships, culturally diverse marriages have been identified as specific treatment populations, in family therapy and counselling literature (Furrow, Brandley & Johnson, 2011). There is still, however, debate concerning the terminology used to identify culturally diverse couples (Rohrlich, 1988). Bustamente, Nelson, Henriksen and Monakes (2011) underlined that, different terminologies could be used to identify marriage between individuals of two different social units; examples being, ethnicity or nationality; because of the fact that people might be identified with more than one culture or subcultures, at any given time. It is preferable to use, an 'intercultural couple', for any culturally diverse couple. On the other hand, in order to focus on the nationality difference, marriages across nationalities were defined as, 'bi-national marriage' (Roca & Urmeneta, 2013; Schroedter, 2006).

It is difficult to identify worldwide statistics as regards the actual number of intimate bi-national marriages. Based on the impact of globalization, however, it is suggested that trends would indicate a rising number of bi-national couples (Smith, Maas, & van Tubergen, 2012). Furthermore, immigration is suggested as a factor in the increasing numbers of bi-national marriages. One of the countries with a diverse population is the United States and even there, accurate statistics are not available (Bystydzienski, 2011), however, it is estimated that there are tens of millions of intercultural couples living in the US (US Census Bureau, 2008; cited in Bystydzienski, 2011). In addition, when the intermarriages consist of inter-religion relationships, the percentage of couples increases to 50 % of American couples (McGoldrick & Giordano, 1996). In Germany, the percentage of bi-national marriages was 9.7 % of the overall newlyweds in 1991 and this had increased to 15.5 %, in 2006 (Nottmeyer, 2009). In Portugal, the percentage is 12% and in Switzerland, 37% of the marriages are bi-national relationships, which are difficult to determine (Lind, Relvas & Saravia, 2010).

In Turkey, the marriage statistics of bi-national marriages have been available since 2009 and the motivation for marriage were reported to be different, such as getting permanent residence and work authorisation (USAK report, 2008). According to statistics reported by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT, Marriage Statistics, 2009) 2.9% of the overall marriage was bi-national, within two years increasing to 3,11% (TURKSTAT, Marriage Statistics, 2011), with the highest rate, 21,4% being for German-Turkish marriages. In 2014, there were 599704 newlyweds and 16 866 (nearly 2,9% of the overall marriages) of the brides were foreigners. According to the USAK report (2008) in Didim, in 2005, 30% of the overall marriages were bi-national.

Several attempts have been made to identify culturally sensitive factors that contribute to a stable marriage in intercultural and binational marriages, such as adjustment to a dual-culture marriage (Tseng, McDermonnt, & Marezki, 1977), marital satisfaction and communication (Karlsson, 1951, cited in Rohrlich, 1998), social support, acculturation, and marital adjustment (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Increased social support (Chi, Tsang, Chan, Xiang, Yip, Cheung & Zhang, 2011; Kisselev, Brown & Brown, 2010) and semantic accurateness as well as emotional expressiveness in communication (Abela, Frosh & Dowling, 2005; Romano, 1997; Rochlich, 1988; Tseng, et al., 1977), were found to have a positive effect on the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples. Additionally, flexibility in gender roles (Bustamante, et al., 2011) and matched expectations in both gender roles, plus the division of labour (Cottrell, 1990), are positively associated with marital satisfaction.

Personality is one of the significant predictors of marital satisfaction (Larson & Holman, 1994). Personality is the trait which determines how to react according to a context (Baucom, Eldridge, Jones, Sevier, Clements, Markman & Chritense., 2007; Muller, 2004) and it is shaped in a cultural context (Cloninger, Svrakic, & Przybek, 1993). Personality researchers, interested in how personality traits contribute to marital satisfaction, suggested intrapersonal and interpersonal models and examined the influence of both actors' and partners' personality traits on their own and partners' marital satisfaction (Harma & Sümer, 2015; Caughlin, Huston, & Houts, 2000). There

are several studies which highlighted that marital satisfaction is predicted by the personality traits of the partners (Larson & Holman, 1994). Furthermore, personality has been found to be a significant predictor of marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages (Sung, 1990). On the other hand, Luo, Chen, Yue, Zhang, Zhaoyang and Xu (2008), investigated the effects of interactions on individual outcomes of marital satisfaction, according to the similarities and complementary hypothesis. Depending on the findings, it is suggest that predictive role of personality traits are universally valid.

There are clear findings that personality traits play a crucial role in marital satisfaction (Larson and Holman, 1994). According Teichner and Farnden-Lyster (1997), without considering nationality or cultural difference, several studies suggested that personality traits might correlate differently with satisfaction at different stages of a relationship. Kansız and Arkar (2011) examined the relationship between marital satisfaction and Temperament and Character traits and the results indicated that emotionally and socially sensitive, compassionate and devoted, empathic, affectionate, considerate and committed traits are all positive, whereas, anxious traits are negatively correlated with marital satisfaction. Larson (2000) suggested that vulnerability to stress, impulsiveness, anger and hostility, self-consciousness and dysfunctional beliefs are the personality traits that contribute to marital dissatisfaction. On the other hand, being high in sociability, flexibility, assertiveness traits and the absence or low levels of neurotic traits have a positive impact on marital satisfaction. Cihan Güngör (2007) found that the direct effects of neuroticism and agreeableness were not significant, whereas there was a significant effect of conscientiousness on predicting marital satisfaction in a Turkish sample. It is also suggested that any personality trait that assists in handling culturally diverse situations would be important in a marital relationship (Tseng, 2001), and personality traits were found to be significant predictors of marital satisfaction in binational marriages (Sung, 1990).

Most of the studies which examine the predictive role of personality on marital satisfaction in culturally diverse settings, mostly stress the ethnic differences between

couples. When it is sought to integrate the findings for binational couples, Tseng (2001) suggests that personality traits which enhance the handling of misunderstandings and uncertainty would contribute to a better marital life. Bustamante and colleagues (2011) supported this idea and found that flexibility, especially as regards gender role flexibility had a positive impact on intercultural couples' relationships and it is an essential coping mechanism. Sung (1990) indicated that openness plays a crucial role in the relationship of culturally different partners. According to the findings, couples who had cultural, language and religious differences, reported problems as a result of personality traits and the personal habits of spouses. Moreover, it is suggested that, from the beginning, partners may have an advantage in being flexible because individuals who choose a culturally different mate are more likely to be non-traditional or unconventional (Sung, 1990). According to Tseng (2001), whose studies mostly focus on cultural differences, openness about viewing the world in different ways, is necessary for a satisfying marriage. On the other hand, Muller (2004) suggested that being mono-cultural or intercultural, did not show a significant difference in terms of the relationship between partner's personality traits and partner's satisfaction.

When multicultural issues are pointed out, due to the higher predictive capacities of more specific personality traits, a culturally sensitive set of traits was recommended for use in culturally diverse environments and for immigrants (Ashton, 1998). Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2001) suggested one culturally sensitive set of traits with five dimensions, namely *cultural empathy, openmindedness, emotional stability, flexibility and social initiative* which could distinguish multicultural activity better than other set of personality traits suggested. Although most of the studies indicated that culturally specific personality traits for could be effectively employed for a having better adaptation process in multicultural settings (Luijters, van der Zee, & Otten, 2006; Leone, Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Perugini & Ercolani, 2005; Ali, Van der Zee & Sanders, 2003), there is still a gap in the literature on assessing the relations between sets of culturally sensitive personality traits and the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples.

Acculturation is also associated with marital satisfaction (Negy & Snyder, 2000). The knowledge of acculturation growing especially in a multicultural society, results from an efforts to find more constructive relationships in society, thus, it becomes one of the major concerning variables in a diverse cultural context (Padilla & Borrero, 2006). There are different definitions for acculturation process. There are different definitions for the acculturation process. Stephenson (2000) defined it as a, ‘complex, *multidimensional process of learning that occurs when individuals and groups come into continuous contact with different societies*’. The attitudes and behavior of individuals who encounter a different cultural setting, are referred to acculturation strategies (Gül & Kolb, 2009). There are two different theoretical aspects as concerns acculturation strategies. Firstly, in acculturation theories it has been assumed that immigrants should change their culture and language for a better adaptation to the dominant culture (Falicov, 2003), and these are referred to as being unidimensional models (Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993). Unidimensional models ignore the possibilities of experiencing mainstream culture and own culture thus, they can be conceptualized as being assimilated or not assimilated (Falicov, 2003). The second perspective offers the assumption that individuals can behave according to their own cultural background and mainstream culture, when meeting a diverse culture, without choosing one culture, this being termed called bidimensional or two dimensional models (Thompson, 1999; cited in Negy, Hammos, Reig-Ferrer, & Carper, 2010). Research findings concerning immigrants have shown that only behaving according to the mainstream cultural codes and shedding the own culture, will lead to psychological problems (Escobar, 1998; cited in Falicov, 2003; Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993). These findings suggest the need for a two-dimensional model, for understanding the contributions of acculturation in a multicultural family setting (Falicov, 2003).

Acculturation is a dynamic process that occurs in many different dimensions and may result in various types of outcome as acculturation attitudes, namely *assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation* (Berry & Kim, 1988). The *assimilation* attitude refers to a desire to adapt a host culture, rather than maintaining the home culture. Contrarily, the *separation* attitude is an individual concern regarding

maintaining a home culture, rather than adapting a host culture. In a *marginalisation* attitude, individuals show little interest in adapting either a home culture or a host culture. When individuals show a desire to both maintain the home culture and learn about the host culture, this is described as an *integration* attitude. The latter is a process which is defined as a learning process concerning behavioral repertoire and the shedding of some prior behaviour traits and attitudes, at a psychological level (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000). Thus, this process contributes to a marriage from two covariant dimensions, an acculturation attitude as a balance for misunderstandings (Falicov, 2003) and an acculturation attitude, with its leading role regarding acculturative distress (Negy, et al., 2010; Ataca & Berry, 2002).

Although it is suggested that there is a need for more research, in order to understand the relationship between marital satisfaction and acculturation attitudes (Padilla & Borrero, 2006), Falicov (2003), stated that as a result of distinguishing cultural codes, acculturation attitudes may contribute to misunderstandings between culturally diverse couples. Negy and Snyder (2000) compared Mexican-White American couples and monoethnic couples, in terms of marital satisfaction and concluded that the effect of differences particularly observed, related to gender roles, child rearing attitudes and financial decisions. The increased differences in these subjects' attitudes and behaviour significantly increased the marital distress, especially for immigrant women. Rodriguez-Garcia (2008) investigated the dynamics of hybridity in Senegalese, Gambian and Spanish families and reported that conflicts most obviously take place during the upbringing of children, especially involving the transmission of values and socio-cultural models, gender relations and gender roles. The results of the study suggest that the conflicts arising in 'hybrid' bi-national marriages are more likely mediated by socio-economic, situational and personal factors, rather than from cultural attitudes.

One another contribution of different acculturation attitudes on marital satisfaction is associated with acculturative distress. Negy and colleagues (2010) indicated that when compared to mono-national married peers, acculturative distress can be identified as a significant difference. It results of the study which examined the

relationship between acculturative stress and marital distress depicted that was real or perceived and the indications were that the pressures acculturated among Hispanic women, were significantly correlated to marital distress. Similarly, Aycan and Berry (1996) suggested that language has a major contribution to acculturative distress, moreover, there are enormous challenges involving numerous tasks such as practical (e.g., deciding which bus to take), economic (e.g., finding a job) and social (e.g., making new friends).

Another factor associated with marital satisfaction, universally, is perceived social support (Cutrona, 1996; Burman and Margolin, 1992). Perceived social support is mainly conceptualized under the process of the sense of receiving support when needed (Rusell, 1990; Cohen, Evans, Stokols & Krantz, 1986). Scheidler (2008) defined perceived social support as, *'believing that others are there to help if needed, are source of comfort, can assist with needs or concerns, are available to listen when needed and are dependable'*. Social support can be in many forms, such as emotional, social integrative, social network or perceived from different sources, such as family and friends (Rusell, 1990). Most of the studies underlined the importance of perceived social support, especially from family, for a better, intimate relationship (Cutrona, 1996).

The literature explains the role of perceived social support for bi-national and intercultural couples, this depending on the social circumstances and dependency of the partners in a new cultural environment (Cools, 2009). Considering the immigrated partners, the protective role of perceived social support against acculturation stress plays a crucial role in the individual life of binational couples (Berry, 2006; cited in Falconier, Nussbeck, & Bodenmann, 2013). Social support is one of the concepts which is highly correlated with psychological well-being and plays a buffering role for stressful life events (Frese, 1999). Additionally, the increased emotional support from one partner predicts the increased wellbeing of the other, which results in a better marital relationship (Carr et al., 2014).

There are several models suggested, in order to understand the nature of the relationship between perceived social support and marital satisfaction (Cutrona, 1996).

In particular, for the binational marriages, the contributions of perceived social support may become relevant to marital satisfaction from two aspects; the buffering role in stressful events (Frese, 1999) and decreased social ties (Cools, 2009). Among the different models, however, Burman and Margolin (1992) suggested that marital satisfaction increases due to the fact that perceived social support increase to feeling loved and respected, regardless of any cultural difference. On the other hand, this giving and receiving process may be affected by gender (Cutrona, 1996) and cultural factors (Dilworth-Anderson & Marshall, 1996).

Communication skills are also important for a better understanding of marital satisfaction, particularly for bi-national couples (Rohrlich, 1988; Sharaievska, et al., 2013). A communication process consists of the ability to send a message to a partner, which is then received by the other partner and understood (Larson, 2000). Communication is a key to marriages and improved communication skills and intelligibility of the messages for both sides is possible, when the partners express their thoughts and feelings clearly, with appropriate words, hereby contributing to resolve conflicts in a way of strengthening the relationship (Larson, 2000; Bird & Melville, 1994, p.296). Communication and language skills lead to better understanding, so they are important and yet this is a challenging issue for bi-national couples (Renalds, 2011; Waldman and Rubavca, 2005). Due to the fact that expressing thoughts and feelings in a clear manner is one of the important demands of a marriage, bi-national couples cannot be equal in dyadic communication (Renalds, 2011). Thus, the role of language proficiency in a couple context can be discussed because in the case of bi-national marriages, at least one of the partners can use language in a native manner (Cools, 2009; Ter Wal, de Munnik, & Andriessen, 2008).

Karlsson (1951, cited in Rohrlich, 1988), suggesting three areas for the classification of communication adequacy; *'(1) Judgmental level of what to communicate (2) inhibitions affecting communication, and (3) degree of semantic inaccuracy'*. *'Judgmental level of what to communicate'*, refers to the content of the communication and *'inhibitions affecting communication'* is related to communication styles. According to this classification, this study only focuses on the

contributions of a couple's individual language skills, to the what degree they can express their emotions and thoughts in daily life, in the couples' common language and adopted language, that correspond to the, '*degree of semantic inaccuracy*' and its relationship to marital satisfaction.

The language adaptation process, according to (Tseng, 2001), the influence of language skills on the power relationship between couples (Rosenblatt, 2009) and the significance of language skills to an acculturation process (Chen, 1990), have been discussed through the literature but only a few studies directly examined the role of language skills in a culturally diverse marriage. Among these studies, Renald (2012) conducted a study with Asian- American intercultural couples involving the effectiveness of language skills on developing intimacy in a relationship and marital satisfaction. It is proposed that increased language skills enhance communication, which is crucial for intimacy and trust in the relationship and which contributes to more satisfying marriages. The language fluency increases the sense of dependence and autonomy and decreases misunderstandings between couples that results in magnifying conflict. Moreover, language fluency contributes to developing meaningful relationships and increases the chance for engaging in more daily activities as a couple. Thus, it has been indicated that the effectiveness of language skill would significantly contribute to intimacy, which predicts marital satisfaction of bi-national couples (Renalds, 2011). Similarly, Sharaievska and colleagues (2013) found that marital satisfaction among Korean-American and East European-American couples decreases as a result of communication problem differences with respect to language skills.

Cultural distance is one of the crucial variables which contributes to marital satisfaction, especially in bi-national marriages (Romano, 2008; Waldman and Rubalcava, 2005). Cultural distance indicates the distance between own culture and the host culture (Babiker, Cox, & Miller, 1980). Among the studies focused on the cultural challenges, Romano (2008) and Danesphour (2009) identified nineteen different dimensions in which the differences can be observed; *religion, belief systems and values, power issues, gender relations, time orientations, political view, economic*

*and financial issues, extended family reactions, child raising, problem solving and communication, values, food and drink, sex, place of residence, friends, in-laws, social class, illness and suffering and ethnocentrism.* Crohn (1995), suggested time, the nature of the universe, cohesiveness of the family, emotional expressiveness, interpersonal relations and gender roles, as being the six broad, organising dimensions which are specific to couples or people in a multi-cultural setting, to interpret the human condition and serve as a personal guide.

Although the relationship of people from similar backgrounds is not simpler than culturally diverse relationships and regardless of the culture, many of the stressors are common to all marriages (Crohn, 1995; Donovan, 2004), the absence of shared rituals and traditions causes substantial stress to a marriage (Crohn, 1995). Tseng and colleagues (1977) indicated that, *'understanding and awareness of different cultural patterns can help to anticipate potential problems from clash of values and attitudes'*. The vast majority of literature suggests that more culturally distant couples are exposed to more conflict, therefore, suffer from less satisfying relationships (Larson, 2000). In fact, the studies that focus on the cultural distance and difficulties are not backed by empirical research and are commonly composed of the held beliefs about intercultural couples (Donovan, 2004).

The way in which romantic or married partners deal with conflicts in their relationship has a general impact on their relationship satisfaction (Bradbury et al., 2000). Conflict, refers to a situation of disagreement on one or a combination of issues in a marital relationship (Mackey et. al, 2000; cited in Özen, 2006). Peterson (1983, cited in Bird & Melville, 1994) stated that conflict should be conceptualised as a three-stage process, with the stages a being trigger, engagement and termination. The engagement stage encompass the conflict resolutions, whether the issue is solved or escalated. Bird and Melville (1994) highlighted that, depending on the conflict resolution, whether it has increased the understanding of each other or not, conflict may contribute to an improvement in a partner's marital satisfaction. Gottman & Krokof (1989) indicated that, in distressed couples, the relationship between couples might be damaged by impaired problem-solving.

There are various studies focused on the associations between conflict resolution styles and marital satisfaction. Conflict resolution styles significantly contribute to a long-lasting marriage, hence, for a satisfying marriage, couples should avoid criticism, contempt, defense and staying distant (Gottman & Silver, 1995). These four characteristics of communication during a conflict would be a sign of an unbalanced relationship, which leads to marital dissolution. There is a consensus in the literature that negative conflict management styles have a negative effect on marital satisfaction (Özen, 2006; Johnson, 2004; Gottman & Silver, 1995). Özen (2006) found that the negative conflict resolution styles of both partners predicted the decreased marital satisfaction of a couple. Moreover, husbands significantly predicted lower levels of marital satisfaction than wives, however, the effects of the conflict resolution styles of wives on predicting the marital satisfaction of husband, were not significant.

Abela and colleagues (2005) suggested that, conflict management styles were affected by cultural differences. In their study with Anglo-Americans and Maltese, it is found that woman demand/man withdrawal corresponded to marital satisfaction for Anglo-Americans, whereas, it was to the contrary, for Maltese. In one of the few studies conducted with an intercultural sample, Bustamante and colleagues (2011) found that humour had a positive impact on intercultural couple's relationships. Additionally, knowledge of conflict-coping mechanisms might enhance a therapist's cultural competence, in counseling intercultural couples. They concluded, however, that much more examination is needed to understand the association between coping mechanisms and marital satisfaction.

Throughout the literature, there are different findings on the effects of the demographic variables regarding marital satisfaction. Larson and Holman (1994), suggest that demographic characteristics offer a context for a marriage and significantly, predict marital satisfaction. The association between some demographics and cultural configuration, which is brought by someone to the relationship, are suggested as the contextual factors (Larson & Holman, 1994). The literature revealed that, without focusing on the assessment of cultural differences, marital satisfaction

is found to be related to age and a spouse's age, the number of children, the length of the marriage, income and education (Jose and Alfonson, 2007). One of the main issues arise as to whether gender significantly predicts marital satisfaction or not. With relevance to gender, research suggests that wives report more decreased marital satisfaction than husbands (Lee, 1999). Carr and colleagues (2014) found that, among older couples, the marital satisfaction of husbands was still higher, however, marital quality was a function of the perceived benefits for both husbands and wives. On the other hand, some of the researches indicated that there is little difference between husband and wives, in this regard (Celenk & van de Vijver, 2011). Nichols and Schwartz (2001) indicated that the degree of marital satisfaction might differ, according to length of the marriage because the tasks in the relationship differ according to the marital cycle. According to Nichols and Schwartz (2001), the exposure of the transitions would play a significant role as a result of the task in marriage thus, there may be a curvilinear relationship. Age, occupation, education and income also play a significant role in later marital skills (Larson & Holman, 1994). Larson (2000) indicated that in the early stages, individuals may still lack relationship skills, that would decrease marital satisfaction over time. There are different findings as regards the association between education and marital satisfaction. Education is not in an entirely linear relation with marital satisfaction (Larson & Holman, 1994), on the other hand, Dökmen & Tokgöz (2000) found that high education levels have a positive relation to marital satisfaction.

There are also several studies that examine the relevance between demographic variables, race, ethnicity and marital satisfaction. In the last two decades, cross-cultural studies suggest a poor relationship between race and marital satisfaction and that the degree of the marital satisfaction is not effected by race (Whyte, 1990, cited in Larson & Holman, 1994). On the other hand, Larson (2000), underlined the ideal need to be similar in age, educational level, income and contextual background, which would predict a healthy, stable marriage. In bi-national marriage cases, the length of settlement was found to predict marital satisfaction (Kisselev et. al., 2010). Furthermore, for culturally diverse couples, increased levels of education enhance the

adaptation process of couples (Çakır, 2009). There is, however, a lack of research that examines associations of demographic differences with marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages.

Received social support is proposed as another predictor of marital satisfaction (Kisselev, et al., 2010; Copeland & Norell, 2002). Received social support is defined as the amount of the support that is received from a person (Cohen et. al., 1986) or a number of functions from formal or informal social networks (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Vaux (1988, cited in Hlebec, Mrze, & Kogov, 2009) indicated that a social network serves as a social support resource and it is, '*as a subset of a larger social network to which an ego turns or could turn for assistance*'. Received social support can also be in the form of tangible and informational support (Cutrona, 1996; Cohen et. al., 1986). Tangible support refers to received assistance with regard to material needs, whereas, informational support indicates received informational help from a social network.

The importance of identifying the role of the received social support as regards marital satisfaction increases under such circumstances of bi-national marriages in which at least one of the partner emigrates. Due to this fact that, such circumstances encompass stressful life events because of a real loss of family, friends, community and the multiple connections that result from language difficulties and educational differences (Falicov, 2003). On the other hand, in bi national marriage cases, the role of social support in the international environment is accentuated because an assignment presents both the disruption of established social support networks and a challenge to developing new ones (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Social networks are significantly associated with coping with uncertainty and change (Herfst, Van Oudenoven, & Timmerman, 2008). Copeland and Norell (2002) indicated that accompanying couples on international assignments need adequate informal and formal social networks, to reduce the risk of unsuccessful marriage as a result of the adjustment process.

Marrying in a culturally diverse setting, accompanied by the decrease in social skills that often arises, stresses the importance of tangible and informative support

(Kisselev, et al., 2010; Türker, 2002). There is a significant loss of significant resources, familiar regulation, places, friends, networks and familiar food, in culturally diverse settings (Abuzahra, 2004). Çakır (2009) found that getting practical and financial support from a husband plays a protective role in an immigrant wife's wellbeing. Additionally, Copeland and Norell (2002) suggested a contribution to the acculturation process explanations. It has been found that, those who have deeper relations with far- distant supporters, are less likely to adjust to multicultural settings, than those who try to establish contact with a local network of friendships. It is also indicated that a non-native partner may need an enlarged local social network.

Families' and friends' reactions towards the marriage are the listed among the challenges to bi-national marriages (Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001). Larson and Holman (1994) conceptualised the approval or disapproval reactions of parents and friends in an immediate network as societal reactions, which constitute the 'current context'. Bhugra and De Silva (2000) identifies societal attitudes as one of the dimensions that make culturally diverse couples more problematic than others. Additionally, according to the systemic perspective, marriage consists of both wives' and husbands' family systems, so that their relationship with family origins would have various effects on the marriage (Nichols, 1988).

In intercultural families, marital satisfaction is more likely to decrease as a result of any external oppressions, such as negative societal and family reactions (McFadden & Moore, 2001). Jones and Chao (1997) supported the idea that many bi-national families suffer from prejudice and discrimination, which are common factors that can serve as a barrier to a healthy marriage. Fu and colleagues (2001) indicated that, not only family reactions but also friends' approval is crucial in promoting marital satisfaction. Moreover, Larson (2000) suggests that reactions of family and friends has a universally valid impact on the process of the marriage and family and friend's approval are positively associated with marital satisfaction.

One of the challenges for bi-national couples is to keep close contact with the family of origin members, particularly for the immigrated spouse (Fu, et al., 2001). The migration case studies, which are conducted on both individualistic and

collectivistic samples, highlighted the importance of having social interaction with the family of origin (Negy et al., 2010). Rosenblatt (2009) indicated that, especially for the spouse who lives away from family of origin, losing connection and contact with the family of origin members may lead to a feeling of loss and embarrassment in the relationship with the community. Additionally, family of origin cohesion was significantly correlated with marital distress, in Hispanic immigrant women sample (Negy et. al., 2010). Copeland and Norell (2002) also indicated that, especially for the one who lives in an international setting, who seeks a long distant supporter, which is now much easier by the developing technology. It has, however, been found that those who have deeper relations with far-distant supporters, are less likely to adjust to multicultural settings, as opposed to those who try to make contact with a local network of friendships. To the contrary, according to a cross-cultural study conducted with 16 different nations, in each culture, there is a need to have contact with the family of origin members, and that the importance of the contact with the family of origin members for spouses is universally valid (Georgas, Mylonas, Bafiti, Poortinga, Christakopoulou, Kwak, Kagitcibasi, Ataca, Berry, Orung, Sunar, Charalambous, Goodwin, Wang, Angeleitner, Stepanikova, Pick, Givaudan, Zhuravliova-Gionis, Konantambigi, Gelfands, Marinova, McBride-Chang, Kодиç, 2010). Similarly, Larson (2000) proposed the relations with partners' own parents or siblings, after marriage, is one of the indicators for a long-term marriage success.

Most of the studies on culturally diverse populations and marital satisfaction underlined a need for assessing complementary and similarity in the traits of the couples (Renalds, 2011; Sullivan & Cottone, 2006; Larson, 2000). In particular, scholars indicated the importance of the differences in the main subjects, such as cultural distance (Falicov, 2003; Tseng, 2001), communication styles (Waldman and Rubalcava, 2005; Falicov, 2003; Tseng, 2001), as regards acculturation attitudes (Falicov, 2003; Tseng, 2001). Among the studies that examine actor-partner and couple similarities effects on marital satisfaction, Luo and colleagues (2008) suggested that personality similarities play a crucial role for higher levels of marital satisfaction, the level of similarity does not predict marital satisfaction. The happiness of a

relationship is a function of who the person is, who the spouse is and how similar they are concerning a specific trait, which relates to actor-partner and interaction effects.

There are studies which assess both the affects of actor-partner and couple similarities on marital satisfaction. The spouses' trait similarities on, 'unconventional and curious', 'talkative and energetic', 'regulative on impulses' and 'friendly, cooperative', that refer to being high on extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness, are associated with high marital satisfaction (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000). Hence, dominance/ submissiveness (Dryer & Horowitz, 1997) and impulsivity (Nemechek & Olson, 1999) traits provided a consistent support for a complementarity hypothesis. Regardless of assessing the nationality diversity between spouses, similarities on agreeableness and conscientiousness were significantly related to marital satisfaction. Based on the assumption that culturally diverse couples do not share a similar background and have decreased pool of shared values, similarities concerning cultural factors are suggested for a better marriage (Donovan, 2004; Crohn, 1995).

The results of the studies suggest that, regardless of a focus on cultural differences, various factors can predict marital satisfaction, moreover, marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction cannot be predicted by only one predictor (Falke & Larson, 2007), and requires a multilayered approach (Bradbury, et al., 2000). There are a number of reported variables, which are associated with marital satisfaction increasing in the literature, even so, there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of the associations between variables and marital satisfaction (Bradbury & Karney, 1995). Moreover, in recent decades, the concept that a marriage consists of two partners and partner's emotion, cognition or behaviour are interdependent, started a discussion about research methods (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). Focusing on one of the partners individually and ignoring the couple interactions, is inadequate in understanding the underlying dynamics of the marital relationship, the dyad being fundamental to interpersonal relationship research. Thus, an ecological perspective is suggested to overcome these issues. The ecosystem perspective analytically defines a problem and examines marital behaviour, in levels of analysis (Huston, 2000).

Huston (2005) suggested four fundamental ideas and a framework for assessing marital relationships, by using the Ecosystem framework, which is based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1977, 1979). This framework comprises on four fundamental ideas; '(a) *marriages are interpersonal systems, (b) spouses' psychological and physical qualities shape their efforts to maintain a successful union, (c) both marriage and the partners are dynamic, (d) marital unions are embedded in a social context*'. The ecological study of marriage also requires to link constructs across the levels of societal-individual and marital, recognising that each level provides the context for the others (Huston, 2000). The three broad levels of analysis consist of; ecological environment, as the society in which the spouses function, individual beliefs and attitudes, as the individual spouses and the behavioural systems, are in as close a relationship, as is the marriage relationship.

The contexts of influence refer to respectively, constructs that contain and directly influence the individual, the relationship between constructs that contain the individual; constructs do not contain the individual but have indirect influence and broader societal level values and ideologies that provide a total context for the other systems (Huston, 2005). Change in any part of the system affects the system as a whole and its other sub-parts, creating the need for adaptation of the entire system, rather than giving minor attention to only one aspect of the system (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). In order to test an ecosystem framework of dyadic relationships, the overall schematic organisation utilised examines the relationship of contextual factors, individual factors and couple inter-actional process or family influences (Larson & Holman, 1994).

Among the theories, the ecological framework is suggested for studying the family in all its diverse forms because of the potential for capturing the totality of human interactions and the relationships of families with their environment (Phenice & Griffore, 1996). Ecological systems perspective provides a global and a unique standpoint. Most of the theoretical approaches have particular strengths but serious limitations, however, the ecological model is well-designed to understand the complex dynamics, such as are observed in ethnic minority (Phenice & Griffore, 1996; Huston,

2000). Wong (2009) suggests that ecosystems' theory contributed effectively to understanding the development of predictors of marital satisfaction for interracial couples and it could give us a point of view of the dynamics that may be present across most combinations of multicultural settings. The ecosystem approach is also useful in running a research and conduct professional practice (Wilson, Larson, McCulloch & Stone, 1997).

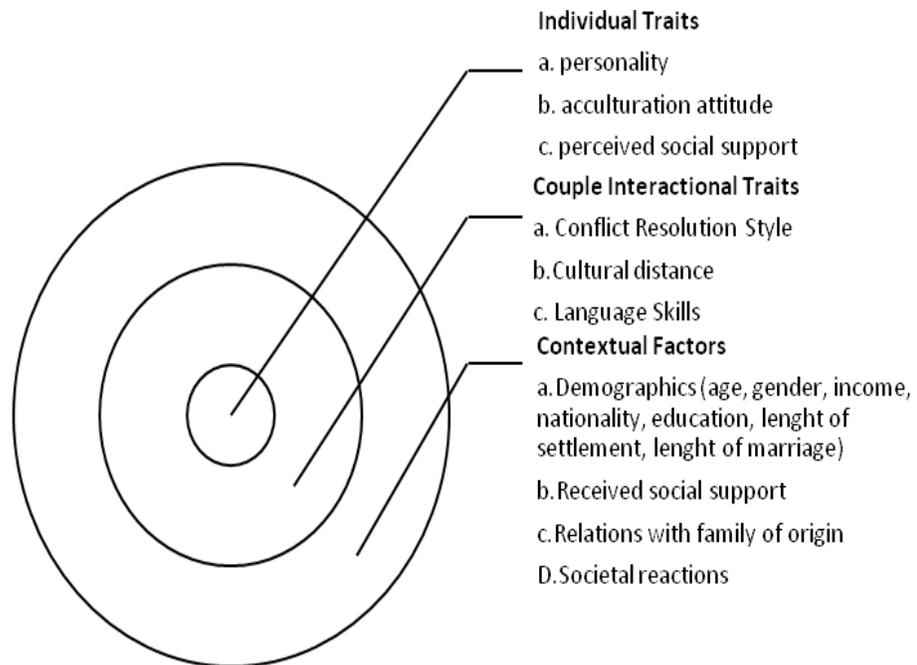
## **1.2 Aims of the Study**

Bi-national marriage and the marital satisfaction of the couples constitute the major focus this study, while ecosystem perspective provides a framework. When it is sought to integrate the predictors of marital satisfaction in bi-national couples and an ecosystem perspective, the definitions of Huston (2005), Larson (2000) and Larson and Holman (1994) were utilised and classified, based on these researchers findings. In the current study, the three levels named, *individual traits*, *couple traits* and *contextual factors*, were used and presented in a schematic organisation in Figure 1.

- *Individual traits* consist of individual-member influences on the couple system and the variables contributing to individual traits are personality traits, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support.
- *Couple traits* refer to the influences of the skills as a couple or the circumstances that the relationship consists of; it is the couple's interactional processes which consist of variables as conflict resolution styles, language skills and cultural distance
- *Contextual factors* that comprise the environments in which the couple system is embedded, consist of variables such as demographics, received social support, societal reactions and relations with family of origin.

According to the schematic organization, the aim of the current study is to examine the predictors of unique contributions at each level. Additionally, considering the contributions of both wife and husband, the concept of, 'Actor Partner Effects' was utilised, for examining the predictive role of interaction effects (Kenny, et al., 2006). Since it is intended to examine the contribution of the variables more comprehensively, not only the unique contributions but also the pooled effect of the

variable were targeted for assessment. The literature suggests employing the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) (Kenny, et al., 2006), to observe the reciprocity of the marital partners and the pooled effect of the variables, therefore, in the current study, the interaction effects were assessed by APIM.



**Figure 1.** The schematic organisation of the variables of the study

The aim of this study is to identify the unique and multiple contributions of variables to healthy and permanent relationships in a culturally diverse setting, as regards cross-national marriages. According to a prior aim of this study, the results of the study suggest providing the following information;

- The unique and multiple contributions of husbands’ individual, couple trait and contextual factors on the explained variance of his own marital satisfaction and wives’ marital satisfaction and comparison of both husbands’ and wives’ contributions,
- The unique and multiple contributions of wives’ individual, couples trait and contextual factors, as regards the explained variance of her own marital

satisfaction and her husbands' marital satisfaction and a comparison of both husbands' and wives' contributions,

- The predictive role of similarities and differences concerning husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction.

The roles of multicultural differences need further understanding because everyone should be understood in their own context (APA, 2002). According to this aim of the study, German-Turkish and Russian-Turkish couples, where the husbands are Turkish and the wives are either German or Russian, were included in this study, in order to assess the contributions of cultural diversity to marital functioning, by means of marital satisfaction. Moreover, the couples in this study are living in Turkey, which means that at least one of the partners of each couple has an immigration experience. On the other hand, both husbands and wives experience new cultural settings, as result of their relationships with their partners. Scholars indicated the importance of having similar values, attitudes and backgrounds (Danesphours, 2009; Crohn, 1995) and these similarities promote marital satisfaction, due to the better understanding of their expectations (Larson, 2000). Nonetheless, more information is needed, to better understand how couples who have a different ethnicity, race or nationality background, manage any differences in such a way as to promote marital satisfaction.

This study specifically focuses on cultural differences, thus a question arises as to whether there is any specific difference between mononational and binational spouses, in terms of the personality characteristics that are associated with marital satisfaction. There is a need to understand what cultural difference can bring to a relationship because there is still a gap in the literature about any relationship between marital satisfaction and universally valid and culturally sensitive variables. Thus, according to previous studies, this study aim, to understand a two-dimensional issue for marital satisfaction will;

- Identify culturally sensitive traits that are relevant to adaptation and which contribute to marital satisfaction (Negy et al, 2010; Sullivan & Cottone, 2006),
- Identify culturally sensitive traits that are relevant to sustaining a marital relationship (Sullivan & Cottone, 2006; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005; Tseng, 2011).

Ecosystem perspective suggests that a change in marital satisfaction can cause a change in the perceptions of family life (Huston, 2005; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). The current study aims to evaluate only the effect of the differences (changes) in ecosystem of bi-national families, at a specific point in time. Thus, the effects of individual, couple and contextual levels are analysed as predictors of marital satisfaction at the present stage.

### **1.3 Research questions and Hypothesis**

This study is the first to systematically assess the predictive role of individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors of self and partner's own, self and partner's marital satisfaction, in a bi-national couple sample. Although there has been no systematic or compressive research conducted before, depending on the concept that general findings should be universally valid (Luo, et al., 2008), research questions and hypothesis were presented as regards the following. On the other hand, in order to test an actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) with a structural equational model (SEM), first a hypothesis regarding the predictive role of an actor and partner's traits as regards actors' and partners' marital satisfaction, has been presented. It been hypothesised that actor and partner effects of individual, couple and contextual traits would predict marital satisfaction of both actor and partner, in bi-national marriages.

*Research questions and hypothesis related to the predictive role of an actor on the marital satisfaction of wives and husbands;*

RQ 1. Do individual traits, such as personality, acculturation attitude and perceived social support of the actor, predict an actor's marital satisfaction?

H1: Personality traits of the actor are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.

H2: Acculturation attitudes of the actor are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.

H3: Perceived social support for the actor is expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.

RQ 2. Do couple traits, such as conflict resolution style, cultural distance and the language skills of the actor, predict the actor's marital satisfaction?

H4: Conflict resolution styles of the actor are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H5: Cultural distance of the actor is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H6: Language skills of the actor are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

RQ 3. Do contextual factors, such as demographics (age, gender, length of settlement, length of marriage, income, education), received social support (social network, tangible and information support), societal reactions and relations with family of origin of the actor, predict the actor's marital satisfaction?

H7: Demographics (age, gender, length of settlement, length of marriage and the income, education) characteristics of the actor, are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H8: Received social support for the actor is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H9: Societal reactions of the actor are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H10: Relations with family of origin of the actor is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

*Research questions and hypothesis related to the predictive role of the partner, as regards the marital satisfaction of wives and husbands;*

RQ 4. Do individual traits, such as personality, acculturation attitude and perceived social support of the partner, predict the actor's marital satisfaction?

H11: Personality traits of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H12: Acculturation attitudes of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H13: Perceived social support of the partner is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

RQ 5. Do couple traits, as a conflict resolution style, cultural distance and the language skills of the partner, predict the actor's marital satisfaction?

H14: Conflict resolution styles of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H15: Cultural distance of the partner is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H16: Language skills of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

RQ 6. Do contextual factors, such as demographics (age, gender, length of settlement, length of marriage, income, education), received social support (social network, tangible and information support), societal reactions and relations with the family of origin of the partner, predict the actor's marital satisfaction?

H17: Demographics (age, gender, length of settlement, length of marriage, income, education) characteristics of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H18: Received social support of the partner is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H19: Societal reactions of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

H20: Relations with the family of origin of the partner is expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

#### *Interaction effects*

Considering the complementary aspects and similarities of findings, with emphasis on the cultural similarities of bi-national couples, the interaction of actor-partner effects is tested and hypothesised as follows;

RQ 7. Do similarities in individual traits, such as personality, acculturation attitude, and perceived social support, predict the actor's and his partner's marital satisfaction?

H21: Similarities in personality traits are expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H22: Similarities in integration attitudes are expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H23: Similarities in perceived social support is expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

RQ 8. Do similarities in a couple traits, as regards conflict resolution style, cultural distance and language skills, predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction?

H24: Similarities in positive conflict resolution style is expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H25: Similarities in cultural distance is expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H26: Similarities in language skills are expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

RQ 9. Do similarities in contextual factors in demographics (age, gender, education) received social support and societal reaction predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction?

H27: Similarities in demographics (age, gender, education) characteristics are expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H28: Similarities in received social support (social network), is expected to predict the actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

H29: Societal reactions of the actor are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

It is evident that the number of bi-national marriages is increasing, not only in Turkey but also all over the world. Although immigration statistics do not directly reflect the percentage of the bi-national marriages, according to proximity effects, an increase in immigration would increase the probability of having intimate relationships and marriages across individuals of different nationalities (Jacobson & Heaton, 2008). In particular, a suitable climate for living and low living expenses, make the cities on the costs of Turkey alluring to Western citizens, such as Germans, Dutch and Scandinavians and it is predicted that the number of immigrants will increase over time, that predicts a higher number of bi-national marriages (Südaş, 2006).

According to the statistics, the significance of focusing on bi-national marriages is increasing, not only in Turkey but also in a global sense. There is, however, a gap in the literature for empirically testing the marital relationships of culturally diverse couples. The result is that, this study is the first that has assessed the nature of bi-national marriage, as a special population in Turkey, with a comprehensive study and one of the few studies in the literature. Statistics given in the background information section could not accurately reflect the percentages of underlying expectations of marriage and the focus of this study is only on romantic relationships, so that overall percentages would not be the targeted population.

Most researchers who study multicultural settings underline the importance of understanding the ecosystems of a bi-national marriage (Arredondo, 2003; Sung, 1990). Another aim of this study is that the results will provide information for comparison at three levels, namely as individuals, couple traits and contextual factors, according to the contributions to husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. Thus, the model that is presented in this study enables identifying the impact of ecosystems, individual-couple traits and contextual factors. The result is that the study presents a model that encompasses the role of the individual and couples' psychological factors, as well as and contextual factors, such as socioeconomic status, in a stable bi-national marriage.

Additionally, in the current study, an ecosystem perspective was utilised for understanding the culturally diverse nature of bi-national marriages and marital satisfaction. Even although the theoretical background of the ecosystem perspective is well-documented, few studies conducted in an effort to understand the complex structure of marital satisfaction have considered three levels, not only for culturally diverse marriages but also concerning mononational marriages. In addition,, this study will be one of the first to examine a three- level model for bi-national marriages.

In virtually every treatment process of the couple, involving therapy or counseling, in order to improve marital quality, marital satisfaction is assessed (Gottman & Levenson, 1992), thus, understanding the predictors of marital satisfaction becomes important. One of the principal objectives of the current study is to establish and

present a comprehensive understanding of the factors which can provide increased marital satisfaction, in a specified population, as regards bi-national marriages.

The significance of examining marital satisfaction as an indicator of marital functioning comes from its benefit to individual, psychological health (Proulx, et al., 2007; Bradbury, et al., 2000). When the results of this study are considered, the study will be one of the first studies that comprehensively provides empirical evidence as regards the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples.

Tseng (2001), did, however, suggest that culturally sensitive variables would be utilised in interventions for culturally diverse populations (Tseng, 2001). There are still comparatively few studies that examines the contributions of culturally sensitive variables, particularly those concerning multicultural personality traits, acculturation attitudes and cultural distance, language skills, tangible and information support, social network and relations with the family of origin, as the affect marital satisfaction. Ashton (1998) suggested assessing a culturally sensitive set of personality traits, yet still there is gap in the literature concerning the relationship between multicultural personality traits and the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples. The current study employs an assessment of culturally sensitive personality traits. Moreover, acculturation attitudes were significantly assessed, in understanding the adaption process to a new cultural setting; this study differs from the literature in that the contribution of acculturation attitudes, as a two-dimensional model to marital satisfaction, is examined.

Among the studies which discuss culturally sensitive variables associated with marital satisfaction, most employed a qualitative method, depending on interviews, thus, this study will be the one of the few studies that employed a quantitative method. Additionally, in light of the three-level analysis results, not only will there be unique contributions but also covariate contributions of the variables to marital satisfaction will be discussed.

The vast majority of literature highlights the different characteristics and needs of immigrants in culturally diverse settings (Negy et al., 2010, Baltaş & Steppeo, 2000). As Tseng (2001) noted, having a racial or an ethnic difference between couples brings

different dynamics. Participants in this study comprised one native and one immigrant spouse. Thus, the current study would differ from the literature by providing an understanding of the dynamics of native-immigrant couples' marital satisfaction. The results are, therefore, discussed considering the characteristic of the participants, which enables the comparison of two different experiences and characteristics of the spouses.

The actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) enables researchers to observe dyads intrapersonal and interpersonal influences on the interested variable (Kenny, et al., 2005). This study is the first to empirically test the intrapersonal and interpersonal influences on the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples in Turkey. Moreover, the results of the current study provide further information in understanding the similarity and complementarity effects of particular variables, such as personality, acculturation attitudes, conflict resolution styles, received and perceived social support and demographics, on bi-national marriages, in Turkey and this will supplement existing knowledge. Thus, as indicated above, it is predicted that this study will add significantly to current literature, in providing descriptive information to fill the gap in the literature for validated interventions and theoretical studies, both in Turkey and on a global scale.

### **1.5 Implications of the Study**

The treatment process of the couple therapy or counseling, requires an understanding of marital satisfaction, due to the increased associations with marital quality and stability (Karney & Brandbury, 1995). The present study improves the knowledge of marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages, as a result of understanding the predictive role of several variables of the present study on marital satisfaction, which will enhance an assessment by serving the information as regards what to assess. Moreover, the current study will improve the knowledge about what contributes to marital satisfaction in bi-national couples, which is crucial for empirically validated interventions

Several scholars suggested intervention options and treatment models for bi-national couples, under culturally sensitive approaches (Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005;

Tseng, 2001; Falicov, 1995; Ibrahim & Schroeder, 1990). In any culturally diverse setting, when working with couples, therapists should be a, 'cultural broker' (Tseng, 2001). On the other hand, there is still the need for empirical support for the models. This study proposes comprehensive empirical findings for increasing the understanding of the nature of bi-national marriages. Thus, one of the contributions of the present study would be improving treatment options for bi-national couples. This study examines relationship concerns, moreover culturally sensitive factors, such as one of the important variable acculturation attitudes. In practice, in addition to addressing relationship concerns, professions, couple therapists and counsellors should understand, assess and treat as necessary multicultural and culturally sensitive factors, when working with bi-national couples. The findings concerning culturally sensitive factors will have implications in intervention contexts.

Another of the values of the current study will be provided by testing a three-level approach, with an ecosystem. Clinicians may benefit from a three-level analysis, by distinguishing the effects of the individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors. The information, provided by the levels of analysis, help clinicians concerning assessment procedures. Moreover, understanding the contributions of both actors and partners at each level, will guide a clinician about how to support or who to support, for a better marital life. In Turkey, there is an important gap requiring the production of social policies, including preventive systems for bi-national marriages. The information regarding, in particular, contributions of acculturation and other contextual factors such as demographics, societal reaction, tangible support, information support and social network, would provide a basis for policies. Thus, the results of the current study offer information as to how to serve and produce political changes in a societal context.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the related literature is presented in sections, according to the aims of the study. In the first section, the concept of marital satisfaction and related issues to bi-national marriages are introduced. Secondly, the general characteristics of bi-national marriage and general considerations, such as ethical issues and theoretical backgrounds and applications are presented. In the last section, the ecosystem perspective and study variables according to the ecosystem, are presented.

#### **2.1 Marital Satisfaction**

In the following section, definitions and general concerns as regards marital satisfaction and general concerns marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages are presented.

##### **2.1.1 Definition**

Marital satisfaction has been identified and considered in various ways throughout the literature (Bradbury, et al., 2000). Hawkins (1968, p. 164; cited in Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen & Wilson, 1989), defined marital satisfaction as, ‘the subjective feeling of happiness, satisfaction and pleasure experienced by a spouse when considering all current aspects of his marriage’. Marriage is a process, that encompass attitudes and reflects the properties of spouses. According to Gilford and Bengston (1979), marital satisfaction is an evaluation of spouses’ on positive interactions and negative feelings in the relationship. In another definition, Rho (1989), indicated that marital satisfaction is the degree of happiness and pleasure experienced in the marital relationship. Marital satisfaction was also identified as the degree of fulfillment of the spouses’ expectations towards marital relationship (Bahr, 1989, cited in Sharaievskia, et al., 2013). Bird and Merville (1994), stated that marital satisfaction indicates the spouse’s description and evaluation of the quality of their own marriage, whether it is good, happy or satisfying. Craighead and

Nemeroff (2001) pointed out that the common the definitions of marital satisfaction is that it is a subjective evaluation.

Spanier (1976) suggested evaluating marital functioning by means of dyadic adjustment, on a dimension from well-adjusted to maladjusted. The level of dyadic satisfaction, is one of the components which defines the outcome of a dyadic adjustment. Dyadic adjustment is determined by the outcome components, such as, '*troublesome dyadic differences; interpersonal tension and personal anxiety; dyadic satisfaction; dyadic cohesion; consensus on matters of importance*'. Dyadic adjustment is an assessment in a continuum, due to fact that it has a changing state. Fitzpatrick (1988, cited in Bird and Merville, 1994) stated that the amount of conflict, agreement on particular areas, such as beliefs, values, ratings about happiness of the spouses, expectations about the duration of the marriage, are used as components of marital satisfaction in different studies.

Through the literature, the concept of, 'marital satisfaction' and the differences between marital adjustment, marital happiness, and marital stability, were discussed. Karney and Brandbury (1995) have suggested that, although there is a high correlation between marital satisfaction and marital stability, marital stability tends to increase over time, hence marital satisfaction decreases, therefore, using marital stability and marital satisfaction interchangeably, is inaccurate. Bir Aktürk (2006), however, cited that marital adjustment and satisfaction are suggested to correlate similarly with other variables, in spite of some differences in definitions, using the terms in a common sense way would be acceptable (White, 2003). Moreover, adjustment and satisfaction in a first dimension and divorce and disharmony in a second dimension, comprise two major components of marital quality (Weiss & Cerreto, 1980; cited in Fowers & Olson, 1993).

### **2.1.2 General Concerns of Marital Satisfaction**

In the last two decades, as a result of understanding that, the nature of the relationship between spouses is not independent, the assessment and the studies of the concept of marital satisfaction have taken a new direction (Weiss & Heyman, 1997). According to the Kenny and colleagues (2006), dyads are interdependent, the

relationships are reciprocal, each spouse has an impact on the other and his/her own marital satisfaction. The study of Fowers, Applegate, Olson and Pomerantz (1994), supported the concept of reciprocity, which found that spouses' marital satisfaction correlates to each other, suggesting that significant correlations were observed only for the couples who report high levels of marital satisfaction. In order to assess the marital satisfaction of a dyad actor-partner interaction model (APIM), is suggested to observe both intrapersonal and interpersonal influences (Luo et al., 2008; Kenny et al., 2006).

Despite several factors being identified as the predictor of marital satisfaction, nevertheless the subjectivity of the marital satisfaction is a challenge in identifying the set characteristics for marital satisfaction (Sharaievska, et al., 2013). Huston (2005) underlined a need for assessment tools and methods, which would enhance better understanding of the reciprocal nature of marital satisfaction and accordingly, offered to use diaries. On the other hand, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), which was developed by Spanier (1976), is one of the widely used assessment tools for examining marital satisfaction (Bradbury et al., 2000).

There is a paradigm shift that, for better understanding of the dynamic of a long-term marriage, would indicate that studies should not only focus on what causes a problem but, more focus should give to what makes a marriage better (Gottman & Silver, 1995). Marital satisfaction is one of the empirical precedents of a stable and a healthy marriage (Malouff, et al., 2010; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). It is, thus, one of the widely studied variables in marital researches and numerous variables have been identified as being the predictive factors of marital satisfaction (Bradbury, 2000). Efficient conflict management styles (Hünler & Gençöz, 2003; Gottman & Silver, 1995), increased sexual satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), high levels of social support (Reevy, 2007; Copeland & Norell, 2002;), personality traits such as high levels of conscientiousness (Cihan Güngör, 2007), low levels of neuroticism (Charania, 2006), have all been suggested as important components of a satisfying marriage. Among the few studies conducted of Turkish monoculturally, married couples that comprehensively assessed the multiple affect of marital readiness, marital self-efficacy, psychological symptoms and personality traits on marital satisfaction.

Cihan Güngör (2007) found that increased skills in active planning ways of coping with stress, marital self-efficacy and marital readiness increase marital satisfaction, were beneficial, whereas, existing psychological symptoms decrease marital satisfaction. Çağ and Yıldırım (2008) highlighted the role of high levels of perceived social support from the spouse, sexual satisfaction and decreased level of education, on predicting marital satisfaction.

According to the literature review results, Karney and Bradbury (1995) concluded that there are respectable numbers of studies that assess the unique predictors of marital satisfaction, besides which, there is much more need to deepen the understanding of the contributions of several variables. Brandbury and colleagues (2000), therefore, suggested employing a multi-layered approach for examining the predictors of marital satisfaction, in order to assess possible multiple relations and the contributions of predictive variables.

## **2.3 Binational Marriages**

### **2.3.1 Definitions**

Rohrlich (1988), mainly raised the discussion of terminology and the added the concept of a marriage of ‘dual-culture’, which refers to the multi-cultural contexts of the couple. In different disciplines, endogamy and exogamy were used to identify partners from different ethnic backgrounds (Larson & Murno, 1990). The marriages of partners from same economic, social and cultural categories were identified as homogamy marriages whereas, contrarily, heterogamy was used to describe the ‘dual-culture’ version (Eeckhaut, Lievens, Van de Putte, & Lusyne, 2011; Thomson, 1990)(Eeckhaut, Lievens, Van de Putte, & Lusyne, 2011). Thus, this definition represents a broader definition of culture and subcultures.

Culture is, however, ‘a design for living, the shared understanding underlying a shared way of life. The essential attribute of culture is that is it shared, and that is provides a vocabulary of symbols to express and assign meaning to various aspects of social life’ (Keith, 1991, p.95; cited in Dilworth-Anderson & Marshall). According to this definition, culture subsumes and may represent as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or class. The diversity of the culture perspective dominated the terms for

definitions thus, scholars explained the underlying reasons for using the different terms.

Similarly, some scholars use the term, 'intermarriage', according to a broader definition of culture, in order to represent the partners from at least two races, nationalities or religions (Ho, 1990; Crippen & Bre, Gudykunst, 1994; Gordon, 1964; cited in Rohrlich, 1988). Muller (2004), explained the setting of borders, such as race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion and that any marriage across those borders was defined as, 'intermarriage'. The term, 'intercultural', was also used frequently by different scholars, in order to encompass racial, ethnic, nationality diversity in any classification. (Muller, 2004; Tseng et al., 1977)

Multicultural perspectives suggest avoiding any definition that consists of labelling (Ivey, D'Andrea, Ivey & Simek-Morgan, 2002). Cottrell (1990) used the term, 'cross-national', in order to define marriages of individuals across different nations and suggested that because one of the partner probabilities in continuing to main ties, such as citizenship, there is the chance that the couple may live in a country where both partners are foreigners, although, this is much more likely with interethnic marriages, which are different. Similarly, Jacobson and Heaton, (2008) preferred to use cross-cultural for the latter described couples. On the other hand, in studies conducted in Spain (Roca & Urmeneta, 2013) and Germany (Schroedter, 2006), 'bi national' was used, in order to identify two people married across nationalities.

### **2.3.2 Ethical Considerations**

The debate may arise as to whether or not 'bi-national marriage' offers a context for studying intimate relations. There are several viewpoints in the literature, which argue the need for culturally sensitive research and intervention for intercultural marriages (Karis & Killian, 2008; Bustamente, 2011). Ivey, and colleagues (2002, p.18), proposed that, it is a primary ethical responsibility to provide effective practice, according to the needs of culturally diverse clients.

On an individual basis, with a multicultural context, therapies/counselors should consider three points, which should be covered in assessing an approach for an effective way of providing help (Jereb, 1982, cited in Bolton-Brownlee, 1987): Firstly,

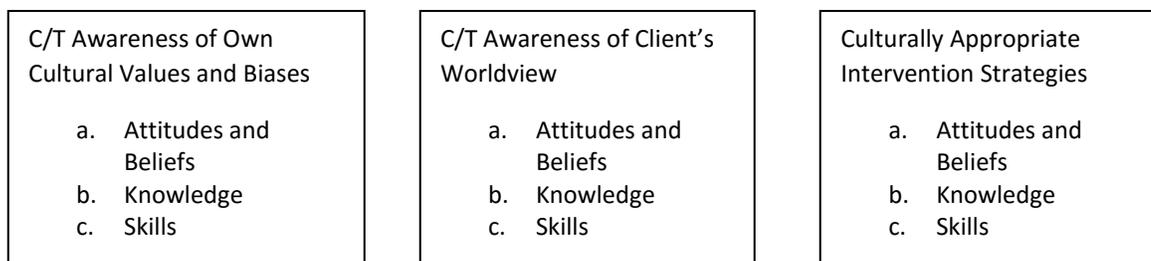
the assessment procedure should encompass a framework or context that the client can understand. Secondly, the goal determines a desirable change in functioning, according to the context of the client and counselor. Thirdly, the intervention that is suitable for an effective change. The result is that, acceptance of the multiplicity of variables that constitute an individual's identity and development of a client-centered and balanced method, would be necessary in a multicultural approach. Ballou (1996; cited in Ivey et al., 2002) criticised traditional models, theories and practice for being biased, in that the information was provided for white and middle-class persons, which did not reflect a suitable context for approaching diverse populations.

The first formal recognition of mentioned responsibility and the importance of multicultural issues, were provided by the American Psychology Association (APA). APA (2002), published a, 'Guideline on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists', which that suggested the four main goal to assist psychologists:

- (a) the rationale and needs for addressing multiculturalism and diversity in education, training, research, practice, and organizational change;*
- (b) basic information, relevant terminology, current empirical research from psychology and related disciplines, and other data that support the proposed guidelines and underscore their importance;*
- (c) references to enhance on-going education, training, research, practice, and organizational change methodologies;*
- and (d) paradigms that broaden the purview of psychology as a profession.*

According to the multiculturalist therapist's point of view, all clients deserve to be understood, within their own context (Addison & Thomas, 2009). This context also includes the therapist's variables and belief system. The multicultural, cultural diversity, literature, which also comprises bi-national families and couples, addresses different aspects of the client, as suggested by a model with three domains, Counselor/Therapist Awareness of Own, Counselor/Therapist Awareness of Client's Worldview, Culturally Appropriate Intervention Strategies and within these three

components, Attitudes and Beliefs, Knowledge, and Skills should be included, as shown in Figure 2. (Arredondo, et. al. 1996; cited in Arredondo, 2003) The first domain consists of the counsellor/therapist awareness of own, which reflects the dimensions of their own beliefs, attitudes, biases or stereotypes. The second domain focuses on the dimension of knowledge and awareness of the client, which is developed with an understanding of the client’s culture and worldviews. The third domain consists of specific clinical techniques and culturally-appropriate intervention strategies.



**Figure 2.** Multicultural Counselling Competencies (Reprinted from Arredondo, et.al., 1996)

On the other hand, approaching a culturally appropriate intervention does not mean becoming an expert in every cultural configuration, nor letting go of the psychological theories; the aim should be to present a universally working framework (Addison & Thomas, 2009). Researchers should only focus on the planning requirements, which result from any cultural diversity or context, while avoiding presenting one ethnicity or cultural group, as being superior to any other (Ivey, et al., 2002)

### **2.3.3 Assumptions for Studying Bi-national Marriage**

Multicultural issues and the number of the studies that focus on intermarriages, eg. intercultural, interracial, bi-national, have been increasing in recent decades (Bystydzienski, 2011). Despite this, even in the U.S. which has the highest frequencies, it is difficult to identify the frequency of intercultural marital statistics, despite it being acknowledged that, as a result of changes in political and the economic circumstances, the frequency of bi-national marriages has been increasing

(Donovan, 2004; Killian, 2008). In family therapy and counselling literature, culturally diverse families and marriages are identified under the specific treatment of populations (Furrow, Brandley, & Johnson, 2011). Despite the clear and expanding presence of intermarriages (McFadden & Moore, 2001), it is the one of the less researched issues of marriages considered, particularly with respect to marital satisfaction in bi-national families. It is, thus, appropriate to explain some basic assumptions as to why it is of value to study marital satisfaction and bi-national marriages as a special population, so as to inform interventions for couple and marital therapy and also, counselling.

The first assumption as to why there is value in studying bi-national marriages as a special population, is that after the second half of the 20th Century, there has been an ever-increasing frequency in intercultural marriages. The globalising affects of immigration and technology and people having more opportunity to contact others of different cultures, nationality, race and ethnicity, all contribute to the value of examining this phenomenon. Moreover, as a consequence of proximity and societal trends (Jacobson & Heaton, 2008), the probability of forming intimate intercultural relationships has increased (Donovan, 2004). According to sociological researches on marriages, geographical proximity is a reliable predictor of mate-selection (Katz and Hill, 1958; Kerckhoff, 1974; cited in Bilgin, 2003). Pederson (2000, cited in Bustamante et. al., 2011), highlighted the increasing amount of intercultural dating among college students and both the numbers and social acceptance of bi-national couples have increased (Killian, 2008). In Germany, the percentage of bi-national marriages was 9, 7 %, from all newlyweds in 1991, then the trend accelerated, reaching 15, 5 % in 2006 (Nottmeyer, 2009). In Portugal, 12% and in Switzerland 37%, relatively, of marriages are bi-national (Lind et. al., 2010). More than 50 % of American couples intermarry (McGoldrick & Giordano, 1996). In Turkey, the marriage statistics of bi-national marriages have been available since 2009. According to the statistics reported by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT, Marriage Statistics, 2009), %2,9 of the overall marriages were bi-national and in two years, this

number had increased to %3,11 (TURKSTAT, Marriage Statistics, 2011), with the highest rate, %21.4 of those marriage, being German-Turkish marriages.

Secondly, compared to culturally homogenous marriages, intercultural marriages suffer from higher divorce rates (Kalmijn, 2005) and are more likely to be less satisfying (Smith, et. al., 2012). High rates of divorce can be a consequence of experiencing significant complications in the early stages of a marriage (Halford & Simons, 2005). According to Cottrell (1990), where t different characteristics become apparent and which were formed by the combination of their culture, social class and location, which leads to each family experiencing different challenges, issues and themes. Contrarily, Negy and Synder (2000), indicated that intercultural couples who have a long-term relationship, report high levels of satisfaction for both partners and they do not always suffer from higher rates of divorce (Cools, 2009).

Thirdly, there are several viewpoints in the literature, which argue the need for aculturally sensitive research and intervention, for intercultural marriages (Karis & Killian, 2008; Bustamente, 2011), meanwhile, argue the universality of the models. According to the multiculturalist therapist's point of view (Addison & Thomas, 2009), all clients deserve to be understood within their own context. This context also should also include the therapist's variables and belief system. This does not involve becoming expert in every cultural configuration, nor letting go of the psychological theories, the aim being to present a universally working framework. The multicultural, cultural diversity, literature, which also includes bi-national families and couples, addresses different aspects of the client, as suggested by a model with three domains (Arredondo, et.al., 1996). The first domain consists of the counsellor/therapist's awareness of own, which reflects the dimensions of their own beliefs, attitudes, biases or stereotypes. The second domain focuses on the dimension of knowledge and the awareness of the client, which is developed with an understanding of the client's culture and worldviews. The third domain consists of specific clinical techniques, which dictate culturally appropriate intervention strategies (Rosenblatt, 2009).

Fourthly, the motivations, expectations and dynamics of bi-national marriages may differ from those in mononational couples' marriages. According to Jones and Chao

(1997), culturally sensitive factors can contribute to a stable marriage in intercultural marriages or serve as a barrier to a healthy marriage. The studies and theories which focus on bi-national marriages, have underlined differences in cultural values and worldviews (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000), language problems and distinct communication styles (Jones & Chao, 1997; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005); religious and belief differences (Heaton & Pratt, 1990), that can be a source of stress for bi-national and intercultural couples. According to Danesphour, (2009), religious, belief systems and values, power issues, gender relations, time orientation, political views, economic and financial issues, extended family reactions, child raising, problem solving and communication, were all identified as being challenges for intercultural couples. In the case of bi-national marriages, where at least one of the partners lives away from his/her homeland, this may directly influence the power relationship between partners. This does not, however, mean that intercultural, and thus, bi-national marriages, are not inherently problematic (Crohn, 1995). These claims do not appear to be well-supported by empirical researches, as most studies examine the difficulties depending on interview results, therefore, the degree of their contribution to the cultural challenges is not specified. Sullivan and Cottone (2006) emphasise the need for more empirical findings that could facilitate a conceptualisation of the problems and interventions specifically, for not only bi-national but also intercultural couples.

Fifthly, compared to culturally homogenous marriages, intercultural marriages are exposed to high levels of stress and conflict and consequently, low levels of marital satisfaction (Fu et. al., 2001). High levels of stress can be the result of acculturation (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000; McFadden & Moore, 2001) and social oppression (Jones & Chao 1997) and negative societal and family reaction (McFadden & Moore, 2001). In bi-national marriage cases, at least one of the partners may lose a network, only gained by language skills, which is a significant stress factor in the acculturation process (Ataca & Berry, 2002). As a result of the aforementioned difficulties, newlywed bi-national couples may experience more complications that may lead to divorce, than do mono-national couples (Halford & Simons, 2005).

### **2.3.4 Theories and Applications**

Through the literature, theories and models concerning multicultural counselling and therapy suggest that therapists' awareness of own culture and cultural flexibility is necessary, in any therapeutic strategy (Falicov, 2003, Tseng, 2001, Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005, Sullivan & Cottone, 2006). The reasons for this vary first it is important to create a better rapport (Tseng, 2001), secondly, expand an understanding of the problem (Falicov, 2003), McGoldrick (1998, cited in Guanipa, 2003) and thirdly, avoid using an intervention that do not fit to the reality of the family and is culturally insensitive (Falicov, 2003). Finally, efforts must be made to prevent from a therapist demonstrating any attitude of cultural superiority and power issues (Bhugra and De Silva, 2000). Focusing on cultural differences at inappropriate times and contents, uncovering strengths may lead to a higher degree of distress in couples and only culturally well-equipped therapists and counselors, aware of own cultural background can eliminate the appropriate time and content to be covered (Falicov, 2003).

Mostly in the literature, couple-counseling and therapy approaches adapt basic principles to culturally diverse couples and discuss the applicability of the mainstream approach. Liu and Andrea (2011) underlined that theory may suggest that attachment styles are universal and yet, the expression of the emotions varies across cultures. Thus, additional principles are necessary, in order to decode the emotions for culturally diverse couples. The Multicultural Counseling and Therapy (MCT) framework suggests three considerations that should be applied, according to the structure of the theoretical work (Ivey, D'Andrea, Brandford Ivey, & Simek-Morgan, 2002). According to MCT, using basic listening skills and reinforcing the client's satisfaction, are necessary factors. Additionally, information about family rules and stories should be gathered and finally, eliminating the specific thoughts, behaviours and feelings of the individuals in their story, is important.

One of the first articulation, culturally sensitive competencies arose during the 1970s and was designed by the members of the Division of Counseling Psychology of APA, as a result of their efforts, one of the initial frameworks for working across

cultures was published by Sue and colleagues (1982, cited in Collins & Arthur, 2010). In time, according to mostly single observations, depending on the observational studies on bi-national and multicultural families and marriages, scholars adapted cultural perspective to marital and couple interventions. Despite the development over time, s many frameworks still lack empirical validation (Sullivan and Cottone, 2006).

After the declarations of the Division of Counseling Psychology of APA, post-modern approaches and more culturally sensitive family theories and interventions were suggested. Cultural differences can be a source of differences in cognitive, affective and behavioural responses (Burlison & Hanasono, 2010, p.298; Cutrona, 1996). On the other hand, Streek (1994) outlined that interpersonal communication can be local and generic, yet also specific and universal. Nevertheless, there is still debate regarding what is specific about being a bi-national couple, as opposed to being a multicultural couple. The question may arise as to whether or not this argument should imply that there are no universal and general characteristics that can be covered by classical theories.

Scholars emphasised different components concerning counselling or a therapy setting such as, approaching similarities and differences (Hsu, 2001; Perel, 2000, cited in Sullivan & Cottone, 2006), emphasising the adjustment process (Tseng, 2001, Romano, 2008, Falicov, 2003), the importance of acculturation stress for interventions (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000; Ibrahim & Schroeder, 1990) and communication skills (Cools, 2009; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005; Biever et al., 1998; Ibrahim & Schroeder, 1990;). Several studies stressed the importance of working on any cultural similarities and differences of the couples, as an appropriate strategy for intervention.

Firstly, Perel (2000; cited in Sullivan & Cottone, 2006) emphasised assisting couples, when handling cultural differences. In that study, it is suggested to use reframing techniques and the metaphor of a, tourists in a foreign country', in order to encourage couples to deal with cultural differences. Hsu (2001) identified the reason for the problems as being the discord in values, beliefs, attitudes and habits. The primary goal of culturally sensitive therapy is to increase the tolerance between

couples, as understanding promotes cultural interest and greater harmony. Additionally, the capacity of therapists own acknowledge of the culture is important in helping the couple in identifying culturally-rooted behaviors. Similarly, Sullivan and Cottone (2006) suggested focusing on similarities and differences in therapy.

One of the more comprehensive suggestions was presented by Tseng and his colleagues (2001). Several ways of adjustment were identified, by which culturally different couples can adapt, when they encounter problems as a result of a cultural difference. *Ignoring Adjustment* refers to the process which couples do not heed problems. The *One-Way Adjustment* process means that one partner gives up their own cultural habits, attitudes or beliefs and adapts to the other partner's cultural patterns. When the partners adapt a cultural pattern interchangeably between their cultures, this demonstrates an *Alternating Adjustment*. Partners can have an agreement after discussing needs and feelings, which indicates the *Midpoint Adjustment*. *Parallel Adjustment* is defined as finding a couple's own boundaries and arriving at a compromise on those boundaries. Partners can also adapt a new cultural pattern, other than their own cultural backgrounds, which indicates a *Creative Adjustment* process.

In another culturally sensitive approach focuses on the adjustment process; Falicov (1995) introduced a balanced and unbalanced view, as a framework for working with couples who have culturally different backgrounds. It assumes that all couples being embedded in different social class, region, occupation, rural; i.e. interethnic, interracial or interfaith couples. It is acknowledged that, couples experience a cultural transition and have various psychological reasons which may affect the time and area of similarities and differences and whether they are maximised or minimised by a couple. A balanced view indicates couples who are able to ascribe differences to the fact that they were raised in a different culture but also, instead of focusing on differences and having a confrontational different background, they point out the similarities of their own. Contrarily, an unbalanced view highlights couples, which are inappropriately focused on and maximising their differences, which are the signs of distorted adaptation to cultural transition. According to observation of these patterns, therapist should use an appropriate therapeutic strategy,

based on cultural issues where the couples can achieve a balanced view. Falicov (1995) identified three different patterns, based on own clinical experience. Firstly, the conflicts which arise in the marriage are based on differences in cultural codes, which refers to *conflicts in cultural code*. Secondly, the difficulties may be rooted in negative reactions of extended family members, as a result of a perceived, exogamous choice of partners. Thirdly, in order to prevent emotional suffering, partners may bring the cultural stereotyping to the fore, at times of severe stress.

Romano (2008), described three phases for adjustment for intercultural couples that reflect the reactions to the cultural differences between each other, namely, *the honeymoon phase*, *the settling-in phase*, and *the life-pattern phase*. During the *honeymoon phase*, couples do not focus on potential conflicts which would arise from cultural differences rather, they interpret difference as being romantic and exciting. After the honeymoon phase, if the couples were not aware of the cultural differences and develop an empathic understanding, they would experience a more chaotic problems in the second phase. All couples experience the same phases, thus, as they get to know each others' expectations and defence of 'right ways', may be more common, encouraging major disagreements in this phase. Romano (2008) noted that, although the problems do not mainly result from cultural differences and the conflicts may indicate similar to those of mono-cultural couples, such as emotional responses to stressful situations. Moreover, cultural differences are easier to spot as a conflict area for all couples but bi-national couples have more elements to cover, before that solving process becomes more complicated. In the last phase, the life-pattern phase, couples either negotiate the differences that becomes more crucial for culturally diverse couples or conflicts remains unresolved, that may lead to a higher risk of divorce.

Depending on the assumptions made, cultural differences can increase conflict areas, during an intervention. Szapoznisc (1983, cited in Ibrahim & Schroeder, 1990) suggested handling conflicts as the problem and targeting a reduction in the acculturation stress, which is related to conflicts. Ibrahim and Schoeder (1990), suggested a psychoeducation model, which was inspired by three different

approaches; Guemey's (1978) Relationship Enhancement Therapies, Szapocznik, Sandsteban, Kurtines, Perez-Vidal, and Hervis' (1983) Bicultural Effectiveness Training, and Ibrahim's (1987) Curriculum to Enhance Multiculturalism. The model mainly focuses on resolving conflicts and suggests cross-cultural communications strategies that would strengthen the skills of communication and multicultural awareness. The model suggests four components; *Awareness and Consciousness Raising Component*, refers to understanding the contributions of contextual factors, where similarities and differences are observed, such as gender issues, cultural and religious concerns, life stage issues, age issues, career concerns and family life cycle. The second component is identified as an, *Overlapping component*, in which partners try to empathise with each other's cultural identities, by means of structured relationship exercises. During, *Knowledge component*, the partners are introduced to information about the specific culture. In the last component, which is named, *Culture specific problem solving and conflict resolution component*, culturally appropriate communication and conflict resolution skills are presented and skills are improved by gaining information regarding the awareness, affective and knowledge components.

Waldman & Rubalcava (2005), indicated that as a result of cultural differences, couples have distinct and divergent ways of organising experiences which interfere with the couples capacity to understand self-object functions and validation of each other' subjective experiences. An interculturally equipped therapist can, however, lead a couple to understand and validate each other's experiences and acceptance of differences, by enhancing awareness and the way in which they communicate. Thus, misunderstandings and empathic ruptures would decrease and heal limits in their mutual provision of self-object functions.

Emphasising communication skills such as language proficiency, negotiated topics and conversational styles, as being an important component of intercultural couples, Cools (2009) approached Finnish and non-Finnish bi-national couples, through Baxter and Montgomery's (1996), relational dialectics concept. In order to deal with unresolved tension and additional conflicts results from cultural difference, couples should adapt appropriate communication styles that can be suggested as an

intervention during therapy. The language proficiency level may increase a non-native couple's dependency on the other in the new cultural setting, therefore, it appears essential for therapists and counselors to acknowledge language proficiency.

## **2.2 Marital Satisfaction in Bi-national Marriage**

Most scholars focused on different characteristics of bi-national couples, in order to explain marital instability and decreased marital satisfaction. The studies have emphasised macro-level sources that heighten more the distress level of bi-national marriage than, than they do mononational couples (Fu and Heaton, 2000; Sung, 1990). Equally, some scholars focused on different aspects and variables, at different levels, according to the ecosystem perspective, such as the diversity and decreased shared pool of values, beliefs, attitudes and habits (Hsu, 2001; Crohn, 1995).

According to the literature, it is obvious that bi-national couples experience different challenges and experience more distress than do monocultural couples, however, identifying the source of the challenges and distress differs in studies. One of the underlined sources of distress is the increased prejudice and discrimination toward culturally-diverse, married couples (Falicov, 2003). On the other hand, Tseng (2001) indicated that it is difficult to identify the encountered prejudice and discrimination for different groups, as, for example, being black or white as husband and a wife, has different dynamics.

One important dynamic that can be unique to bi-national couples is the dynamics concerning power relations. Scholars explained the effect of power in the relationship as mostly depending on the disadvantaged position of the non-native partners regarding economic status and social relationships with social network and institutions, especially for those who lack of language skills (Rosenblatt, 2009). Power relationships can be determined by the partners' country of , as any 'national characteristics', such as any economic difference between the partners' countries, results in undermining the self-esteem of one the partner to the other, which would establish an unbalanced power relationship.

None of the married couples share a totally similar cultural background, each partner needing a trust, affection, respect and support so, all couples can struggle

concerning marital satisfaction (Falicov, 2003). Numerous aspects of studies suggest, however, that bi-national couples can encounter more marital distress (Bustamante et al., 2011; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005; Mcfadden & Moore, 2001). Goodman (1991, cited in Fu, et al., 2001) explains that cultural homogamy facilitates having a better understanding of each other's expectancies, thus, distress levels and the number of conflicts can increase, due to cultural differences. Contrary to the other findings, Negy ve Syyder (2000), reported that there was no significant difference between Mexican-White American couples and monoethnic couples, in terms of marital satisfaction, concluding that, the magnitude of cultural differences did not have a negative effect on marital satisfaction. In fact, the effect of differences, particularly in gender roles, child rearing attitudes and financial decisions, were significant in increasing marital distress, especially for immigrant women. In the light of these contrary findings it is suggested that, mate selection according to their own expectations, complementary and similarity in traits and different dimensions, such as personality and gender roles, would be significant in terms of any magnitude of difference (Botwin, Buss & Schakelford, 1997).

In another study, Muller (2004), indicated that difference in values, thus cultural differences, may lead to different expectations from marriage, such as one partner maybe making 'love' as the priority, whereas, the other may place greater value on 'economics and/or social' matters. The direction of the violation of marital expectancy, whether it is perceived as more positive or negative, is considered as a determinant for developing higher degrees of marital satisfaction. Predictors of marital satisfaction and emphasis on the meaning of being married, can change across cultures. Celenk & Van de Vijver (2013) reported that married Dutch couples find the personality of a spouse, reciprocity, psychological roles and emotional process, to be more important for a satisfying marriage. Married Turkish couples and married Turkish couples living in Netherlands, contrarily, give priority to children and economic aspects, for a satisfying marriage. Vega and colleagues (1986, cited in Miranda, Estrada & Firpo-Jimenez (2000), conducted a study to compare Mexican-American and Anglo-American attitudes and found significant differences in terms of

family cohesion and adaptation, that implies the significant role of cultural difference in a family setting.

One of the mostly focused characteristics that is suggested as a reason for bi-national marriages exhibiting higher levels of marital distress is the acculturation process and stress. The previous studies that focused on immigrant samples documented the relationship between acculturation stress and marital distress, indicating that more acculturation stress results in higher levels of marital distress (Negy, et.al., 2010). Additionally, Prigersoti and colleagues (1999, cited in Negy 2010), suggested that there is a gender difference, as a result of the existence of more domestic responsibilities in a household and the assumption that these are the province of the wife, women are more distressed than men. The assumption is based on the concept that marital distress always corresponds to a decrease in marital satisfaction, however, Halford, Kelly and Markman (1997) suggested that increased stress is not always related with decreased marital satisfaction. Nonetheless, the effect of the acculturation process on the marital satisfaction of bi-national couples is not well-documented (Donovan, 2004).

On the other hand, some scholars suggests that, bi-national couples do not always suffer from cultural differences that may result with a higher risk for a divorce, as some couples can be better at negotiation, learning from each other, acceptance and appreciation, and enrichment of life, when compared to some mononational couples (Cools, 2009) . Marital satisfaction is promoted through developing intercultural communication competence and perseverance strengthens and improves interactions with spouses (Renalds, 2011). Danesphour (2009) suggested some ingredients for a happier and satisfying Muslim-Christian marriage, which monocultural couples would not need. Firstly, couples should perceive and be responsive to partner's emotional and physical needs, which means accepting cultural compromises. Secondly, adaptability would be a key point for partners, especially if they had limited acknowledge about the other's culture before getting married. They would be more willing to negotiate about cultural and regional issues, so that it would be easier to find a way to tolerate differences. Thirdly, stereotypical assumptions and judgments may

harm one partner's positive sense of self, which would damage the relationship. Muslim males may feel threatened and defensive about any judgment as regards Islamic values, while allusion to individualist attitudes towards a Western partner would result in a similar reaction. Finally, mutual goals and educational levels would make negotiating easier, due to the effects on the value and beliefs systems of the partners. Jones and Chao (1997), identified three factors that contribute to a healthy relationship specific to culturally diverse couples: '*(a) A conscious awareness by both partners of the role which culture plays in relationship; (b) The ability of both partners experience ethnic and cultural energies to be viewed as an expansion rather than a threat to the self; (c) The paradoxical ability of both partners to develop their own uniqueness because of the other partner's different cultural background.*' .

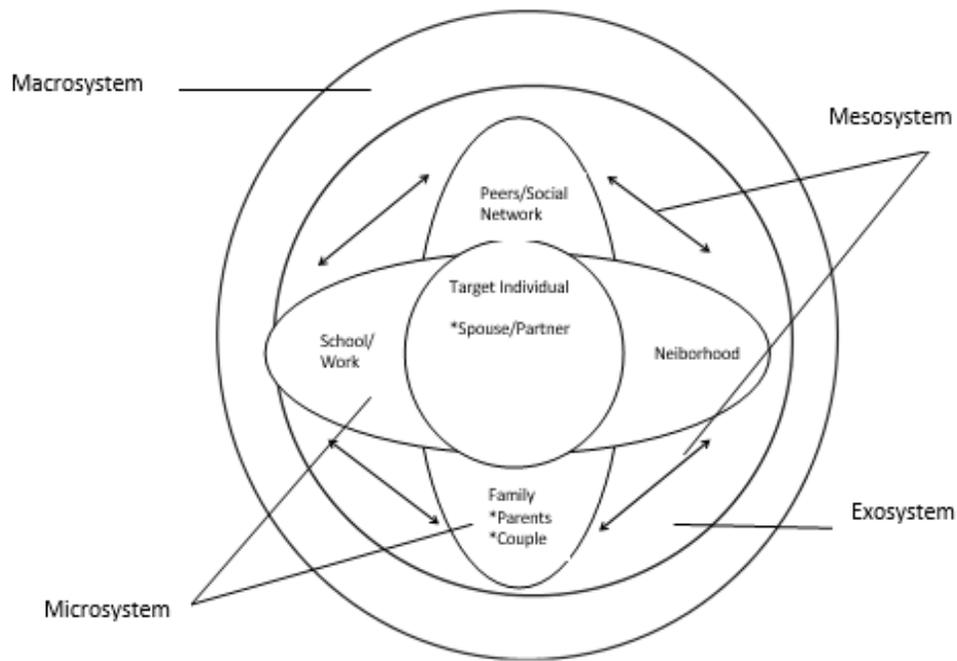
Despite successful culturally sensitive therapy applications, a gap still exists about the contributions of different contexts to marital satisfaction in a bi-national family setting. Thus, in the following, detailed information regarding the ecosystem theory of marriage is introduced and predictors of marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages are presented, according to the framework.

### **2.3 Ecosystem Perspective of Marriage**

Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1979), introduced a theory on the process of influences on individuals called the, 'ecological systems theory', which mainly has an impact on ecological approaches (Robbins, Mayorga, & Szapocznik, 2003). Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979), consists of four different nested levels namely, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. *Microsystem* targets the individual systems, according to the purpose of the observation. Thus, an adult, an adolescent, a spouse, a family or a school, may represent the unit for observation as a microsystem. The relationships between these single settings are represented as a *mesosystem* that is required for observing the development of the single settings. The third level is the *exosystem*, which represents the ecological environment; the system has no direct interaction with a unit in a microsystem but will have an impact on the social system. *Macrosystem* refers to the context that consists of culture, mental representations of people and the ideal standards in a society (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Any change in

each level will cause variation in the other levels. (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979). Ecological levels nested in the context are presented in Figure 3, according to Robbins, Mayorga, & Szapocznik (2003).

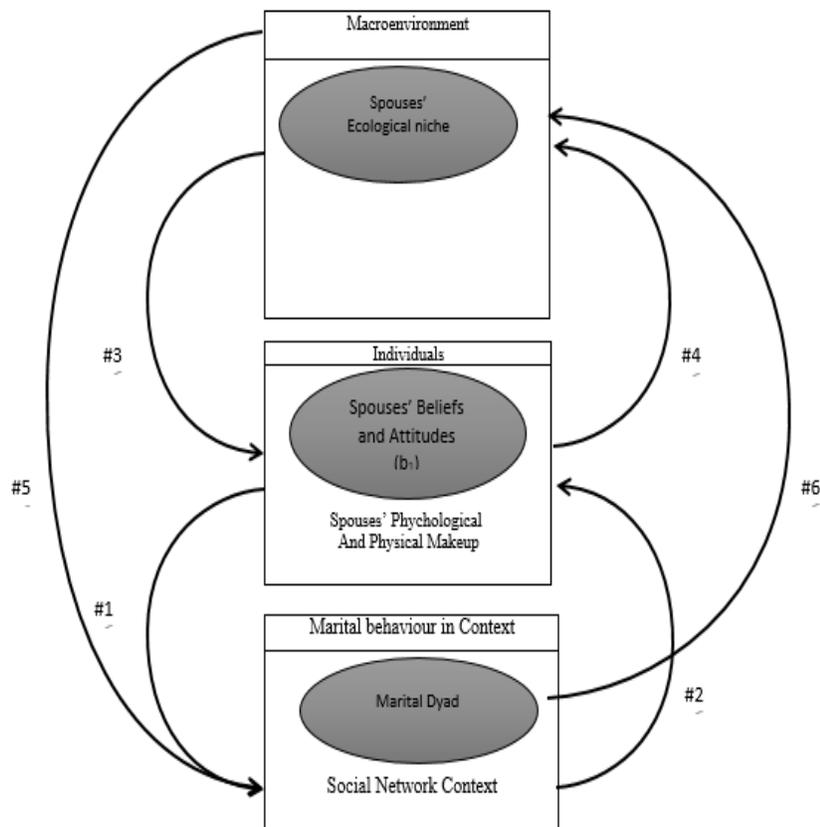
Bubolz and Sontag (1993) suggested a family ecology theory based on the Bronfenbrenner’s Ecosystem Theory, that basically assumes that, in order to enhance adaptation to the environment, families use the energy and information which is carried through communication, decision-making, physical and the material resources available for them in their daily life. Huston (2005), in his research, argues the application of the ecological framework to a marital relationship and indicates how to assess the cultural, interpersonal and psychological factors that contribute to a relationship.



**Figure 3.** Ecological levels

In studies within the last two decades, it has been suggested that, (a) marriages are interpersonal systems, (b) spouses’ psychological and physical qualities shape their individual and collective efforts to maintain a successful union (c) both marriage relationships and the partners themselves are dynamic and (d) marital unions are

embedded in a social context. In order to examine historical, multi-layered and interdependent casual pathways in a relationship, three level analysis suggests a broader perspective. According to the basic assumption of the ecosystem framework, all three levels have a continuous effect on the other, over time and the relationships are reciprocal (Huston, 2005). The three levels are defined in the following, which illustrates the conceptualisation shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** Schematic view of Huston (2005) conceptualisation

According to Huston 2005;

*(A) Macroenviroment; the society, characterized in terms of both macro societal forces and ecological niches within which particular spouses and couples function;*

*(B) Individual; the individual spouses, including their psychosocial and physical attributes, as well as the attitudes and beliefs they have about each other and their relationship;*

*(C) Marital behavior in Context; the marriage relationship, viewed as a behavioral system embedded within a larger network of close relationships*

Rosenblatt (2009) noted that, understanding not only the couple system but also the ecosystems that the couple have in interaction, is a core component for examining bi-national couples. The reason for the need to understand the ecosystem is due to the impact of the other systems on couples; it enhances and supports the couple, also the existence of the couple makes differences to the levels in which the couple is embedded. Moreover, the theory accepts diverse family structures; cultural diversities may affect family and human development and helps with coping with any problem with relationships between individuals, the family and larger society (Smith, 2006). Berry (2010), suggests it is a form of map that enhances exploring the layout of the categories of variable, for the purpose of understanding human diversity in a local context and comparative to others.

An ecological framework was suggested for examining the marital system and marital behaviour patterns, according to recent developments in marital behaviour researches and ecosystem theory. According to the fundamental ecosystem of the marriage framework, each part of the three-system affects the other, thus, there is a focus on the interdependence of the levels (Huston, 2005). This idea is parallel to the suggestion that dyads are interdependent, any change of a trait in one partner's system possibly affecting a change in the other partner's particular traits (Kenny, et al., 2006).

Larson and Holman (1994) suggested the overall schematic organization and related factors, in order to utilise an ecosystem framework in a dyadic relationship, namely individual traits, couple interactional traits and contextual factors. Individual factors consist of individual-member influences on the couple system; couple' traits, as the couple's interactional processes and contextual factors consist of the environments in which the couple system is embedded, which is the subject of this study. An organisational schema and suggested variables according to the categories,

were shown in Figure 3. The predictors of marital satisfaction in bi-national couples and from the ecosystem perspective, the definitions of Huston (2005), Larson (2000), and Larson and Holman (1994) were utilised and classified, based on those researchers work. In the current study, the three levels named, *individual traits*, *couple traits* and *contextual factors*, were used and presented in a schematic organisation in the Figure

- *Individual traits* consist of individual-member influences on the couple system; and the variables contributing to individual traits are personality traits, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support.
- *Couple traits* refer to the influences of the skills as a couple or the factors of which the relationship consists; it is the couple's interactional processes which consist of variables, such as conflict resolution styles, language skills and cultural distance
- *Contextual factors* that constitute the environments in which the couple system is embedded and consists of variables such as demographics, received social support, societal reactions and relations with family of origin.

### **2.3.1 Ecosystem Framework and Marital Satisfaction in Bi-national Marriage**

In the following section, literature regarding the variables of the current study are presented, according to the schematic organisation of the ecosystems perspective, respectively as individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors.

#### **2.3.1.1 Individual Traits and Marital Satisfaction in Bi-national Marriage**

Individual traits are the factors which include personality, attitudes and skills as an individual, for predicting marital satisfaction (Larson, 2000; Larson & Holman, 1994). Individual traits consists of three factors for bi-national marriages; acculturation attitudes, personality, and perceived social support.

##### **2.3.1.1.1 Personality**

Personality is a complex and unique system, which is composed of the different behavioural component that distinguishes individuals (Morris, 2002, p.452). Although there are different personality theories, it has been suggested to identify the ideal set of traits, when a multicultural aspect contributes to the issue (Ashton, 1998).

Van der Zee and Van Qudenhoven (2000), introduced Multicultural Personality Traits (MPQ), which are related to multicultural effectiveness. Van der Zee and Van Qudenhoven (2001), identified five personality traits, these being;

***Cultural Empathy** refers to the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of members from different cultural groups. **Open-mindedness** refers to an open and unprejudiced attitude towards outgroup members and towards different cultural norms and values. **Emotional Stability** refers to a tendency to remain calm in a stressful situation. **Flexibility** reflects the ability to switch easily from one strategy to another. **Social Initiative** refers to the ability to establish and maintain contacts and the courage to take an action.*

In a multicultural setting, individuals have to overcome some stressful life situations, such as loosing social environment (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001), so that there is a need to establish more friendships with locals, where Social Initiative plays a crucial role. Additionally, there is always the possibility of having to confront more contrary situations than expected, thus, Flexibility will be important. Acting without prejudice would enhance the development of positive relations with locals, which is an important attitude (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; cited in Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), covered under Open-mindedness characteristics. The Emotional Stability trait would also be moderator in unexpected situations, such as losing a passport, an accident or a broken-down car, may result in more heightened stress levels. It is evident that sensitivity to a difference, Cultural Empathy, would always enhance the adaptation process in a society. In a study with intercultural students, a positive relation was found between communication adaptability, interaction involvement, flexibility and intercultural effectiveness (Chen, 1990). MPQ can distinguish multicultural activity level better than Big Five traits. The correspondence of the MPQ dimensions of Openmindedness, Social initiative and Emotional Stability, among Big Five traits, are respectively; Openness to Experience, Extraversion and Neuroticism (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). It is, thus, evident that Multicultural Personality Traits would be important for anyone who experiences a culturally diverse environment and immigration. It is also suggested that

any personality trait that assists in handling culturally diverse situations would be important in a marital relationship (Tseng, 2001).

Karney and Brandbury (1995) evaluated the findings of 115 published longitudinal studies, which examined outcomes of marital life, with the purpose of understanding marital development. The studies, which were found in Psychological Literature database, were included and the findings of the studies with regard to predictors of marital satisfaction were summarised by meta-analytic technic, in the literature review. Among 200 variables, agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion were positively associated, while openness and neuroticism were negatively associated with husbands' and wives' own marital satisfaction. Moreover, none of the personality traits reported as predictor of the partners' marital satisfaction. The importance of the predictor role of neuroticism was underscored, in that most the studies were reporting the negativity effect on marital outcomes.

In one of the recent reviews of marital studies, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Schutte, Bhullar and Rooke (2010), conducted meta-analysis to 19 studies that assess the relationship between Five-Factor Personality traits and relationship satisfaction. The significant meta-analytic associations supported the previous findings, that high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion and low levels of neuroticism were significantly correlated with high levels of relationship satisfaction. Causality was not, however, tested in the included studies. The associations between low neuroticism and high agreeableness and conscientiousness may reflect a, 'low self-control' profile, which can be related to psychopathology, therefore, it has been suggested that these traits are significantly associated with relationship satisfaction. On the other hand, personality traits were suggested to have direct effects on relationship satisfaction, such as criticism and defensiveness, which are behavioral components of neuroticism and would decrease relationship satisfaction.

Charnai (2007) conducted a comprehensive research on 400 married couples, that assesses the associations between 13 personality dimensions as Big Five, attachment avoidance and anxiety, social absorption and social individuation, psychological masculinity and femininity, sensation-seeking and socio-sexuality and

marital satisfaction, by using a Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM). In the study, only the ethnicity of the individuals was reported and that the participants consisted of predominantly White/Caucasian and a minority of the participants were Latino, Asian and Black, in addition, the participants were all heterosexual couples. The results of the study indicated that Openness to experience is negatively connoted, whereas, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness were positively associated with the actor's marital satisfaction. The significant partner effects were observed for the predictive role of an extraversion trait, women's extraversion traits being positive predictors of husbands'/partner's marital satisfaction, however, in general, low levels of extraversion were a predictor of high marital satisfaction. Moreover, neuroticism was negatively correlated with marital satisfaction but the unique contribution on multiple regression analysis was not significant and high levels of openness predicted low levels of personal satisfaction. Empathy, respect, interest in local culture, flexibility, tolerance, technical skill, open-mindedness, sociability, positive self-image and initiative, were also identified as positive predictors of satisfied relationships. According to the assessment of the relationship between similarities and marital satisfaction, only attachment avoidance and social individuation were significant, which suggest that similarities in the need for closeness would be more important than any other personality dimension.

Larson (2000), suggested that vulnerability to stress, impulsiveness, anger and hostility, self-consciousness and dysfunctional beliefs, are the personality traits that contribute to marital dissatisfaction. On the other hand, being high in sociability, flexibility, assertiveness traits and displaying an absence or low levels of neurotic traits, have a positive impact on marital satisfaction. These traits increase the possibility of being a person who gets on well with others in a intimate relationship, which enhances open communication, resolving differences without anger and frustration, as well as being energetic and optimistic, therefore, these aspects are important for both spouses.

Kansız and Arkar (2011) examined the relationship between marital satisfaction and Temperament and Character traits and the results indicated that higher

marital satisfaction levels are correlated with the high score reward dependence, cooperation and persistence negatively correlated with harm and avoidance. Individuals who are more emotionally and socially sensitive, compassionate and devoted, empathic, affectionate, considerate and committed, all had high scores on marital satisfaction. Harm avoidance, which is related to anxious traits, had a negative correlation with marital satisfaction. This finding is consistent with a longitudinal study over a forty-year period, which indicated that less extravert and more agreeable husbands were more likely to stay married (Kelly & Conley, 1987, cited in Donovan, 2014).

Cihan Güngör (2007) examined a model for explaining marital satisfaction, which observed not only direct effects but also indirect effects of marital readiness, marital self-efficacy, psychological symptoms, coping with stress and personality traits, in a Turkish sample that consisted of 1024 individuals. It found that the direct effect of neuroticism and agreeableness were not significant, while marital self-efficacy mediated the relationship between neuroticism, agreeableness and marital satisfaction. It is suggested that neurotic traits decrease the level of marital self-efficacy and as a result, the degree of marital satisfaction also decreased. Agreeableness was found to increase marital self-efficacy, so that a lovely, generous and socially-connected individual had increased levels of marital satisfaction. Additionally, there was a significant direct effect of conscientiousness, on predicting marital satisfaction.

Sung (1990) indicated that openness plays a crucial role in relationships with culturally different partners. Interviews, marriage license applications with interethnic couples and reported complaints of Black-Chinese couples living in US, where the couples were from different nationalities, were assessed by the researcher. The data of the study was collected from 1972 to 1982. According to this study, couples put more emphasis on personality traits and the personal habits of the spouses as a source of problems, rather than couples having cultural, language and religious differences. It is suggested that, from the beginning, partners have an advantage in being flexible

because individuals who choose a culturally different mate are more likely to be non-traditional or unconventional.

In light of literature and applications, Tseng (2001), whose studies mostly focus on cultural differences, suggested that intercultural couples have to make many changes and adjustments, therefore, the proper personality trait for a better marital adjustment is necessary in culturally diverse couples. Open-mindedness about living in a world with a different manner and accepting the new experiences, would be one of the important characteristics for a satisfying relationship. More sensitivity to his/ her partner's needs, mutual consideration and similarities of the couples on both traits, are suggested as being requirements for a better marital life in culturally diverse couples.

In a study conducted with Latino-White, Latino-Latino and White-White couples, Muller (2004), examined the differences between Latino -White couples and the others, in terms of partner's personality traits and actor's marital satisfaction. Although it had been expected that there would be a group differences as a result of the cultural difference because personality is suggested as being shaped by the cultural context, there were no significant difference partner's personality traits and levels of marital satisfaction, whether monocultural or intercultural. Thus, it has been rejected that culture difference would lead to personality differences.

Renalds (2011) conducted interviews with 18 individuals who were involved in an Asian-American marriage and examined the effective communication, communication competencies, conflict resolutions and marital satisfaction. According to the results of the study, similarities in personality traits were reported as beneficial to a satisfying intercultural marriage. Empathy, patience, flexibility and openness skills, were suggested for enhancing the building of a satisfying marriage.

Çelenk and Van de Vijver (2013), assessed associations between cultural factors and marital satisfaction, in a Turkish, Turkish-Dutch (Turkish immigrant couples living in the Netherlands) and Dutch couple sample. The determinants of marital satisfaction were analysed, according to interviews conducted with dyads. The results indicated that there was a cultural difference in putting more emphasis on the personality of the partners, for a satisfying marriage. Personality of the partner was

more important for marital satisfaction in a married Dutch sample, than with married Turkish and Turkish immigrants (living in the Netherlands) sample. It has been suggested that the predictive role of personality traits on marital satisfaction would be affected by the cultural difference of individual spouses.

According to Luo and colleagues (2008), the happiness of a relationship is a function of who the person is, who the spouse is and how similar they are in terms of specific traits, thus, it is much more about actor-partner and interaction effects. It has been found that actor and partner traits predict marital satisfaction and that similarities play a significant role in marital satisfaction. On the other hand, the level of similarity does not predict marital satisfaction. Emotional stability, conscientiousness, social potency, dependability, accommodation and interpersonal relatedness, were related to higher levels of marital satisfaction. Similarities in, 'unconventional and curious', 'talkative and energetic', 'regulative on impulses' and 'friendly, cooperative' traits, which refer to being high on extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness, are all associated with high marital satisfaction (Watson et al, 2000). Nemechek and Olson (1999), found that similarities in agreeableness and conscientiousness were significantly related to the marital satisfaction of mononational couples. Charania (2006), reported that personality similarities were not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction but that similarities in variables that are more related to a couple context, a relationship, ie. attachment style, predicted marital satisfaction, thus, the relationship variables are suggested as reducing the effects of similarities in personality traits. Contrary traits, such as dominance/ submissiveness (Dryer & Horowitz, 1997) and dissimilarities in impulsivity (Nemechek & Olson, 1999), predicted higher levels of couple marital satisfaction (Nemechek & Olson, 1999; Dryer & Horowitz, 1997).

#### **2.3.1.1.2 Acculturation Attitudes**

The knowledge about acculturation is growing, especially in multicultural society, as results of finding more constructive relationships in society and it is one of the major concerning variables in a diverse cultural context (Padilla & Borrero, 2006). There are different definitions for acculturation, according to Redfield, Linton, &

Herskovits (1936; cited in Berry & Kim, 1988), acculturation refers to a culture change which is a consequence of the continuous and direct contact between diverse cultural groups. This process occurs in both group and individual level, moreover individual level is named as *psychological acculturation* (Graves, 1967; cited in Berry & Kim, 1988). Stephenson (2000), defined acculturation as a, ‘complex, multidimensional process of learning that occurs when individuals and groups come into continuous contact with different societies’. Additionally, Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2006) suggest that the acculturation process consists of three components, these being antecedent factors, strategies and consequences.

Acculturation strategies refer to the attitudes and behaviour of individuals who encounter a different cultural setting (Gül & Kolb, 2009). There are two different theoretical aspects about acculturation strategies. Firstly, among acculturation theories, it has been assumed that individuals who live in a host culture should change their culture and language for better adaptation to the dominant culture (Falicov, 2003), these being called unidimensional models (Negy et.al, 2010). Unidimensional models ignore the possibilities of experiencing mainstream culture and own culture, thus, can be conceptualised as being assimilated or not assimilated (Sanchez and Fernandez, 1993). Secondly, bi-dimensional or two-dimensional models (Thompson, 1999; cited in Negy et.al, 2010), offer the assumption that individuals can behave according to own cultural background and mainstream culture, when faced with a diverse culture, without choosing one culture. Research findings on the immigrants have shown that only behaving in the mainstream cultural codes and shedding their own culture, leads to psychological problems (Escobar, 1998; cited in Falicov, 2003; Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993). According to Berry and Kim (1988), dimensions of acculturation attitudes should be considered for individuals and groups, in a new cultural setting.

The acculturation model suggests there are four different patterns of acculturation attitudes considering attitudes towards own culture and host culture, namely integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation (Berry & Kim, 1988). In a plural cultural setting, negative and positive answers of individuals and groups regarding two main questions, “*Is my cultural identity of value and to be retained?*”

and “*Are positive relations with larger (dominant) society to be sought?*” determine the dimensions of an adapted acculturation attitude (see Figure 5). If the individual gives positive answers to both questions, that maintains own cultural identity and extends positive relations with the host culture, this indicating an integration attitude. On the opposite side, if the individual regrets own cultural identity and positive relations with the host culture, answers are negative to both questions, which shows a marginalisation attitude. Separation attitude refers to individual’s efforts to maintain own cultural identity but is less concerned about developing relationships with the host culture; answers are positive to first question and negative to the second. Contrarily, negative answers to the first question and positive to the second, indicates assimilation attitudes that individuals lose own cultural identity and extend relations with the host culture.

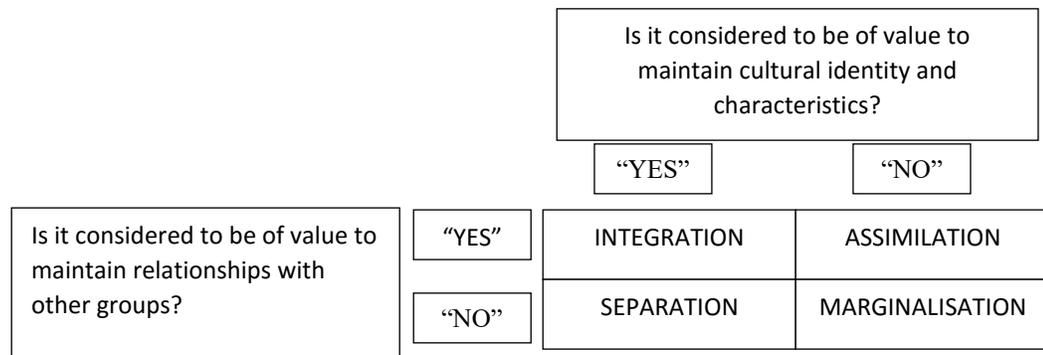


Figure 5. Dimensions of Acculturation

Falicov (2003) suggests that acculturation lenses facilitate handling misunderstandings between family members, even for the therapist in the larger system that occur with the conflict of underlying beliefs and expectations in cultural context. Miranda, and colleagues (2000), demonstrated the utility of exploring the meaning of acculturation and encouragement for acculturation for the Latino population living in the US. According to a uni-dimensional model, less acculturated and highly acculturated immigrant, Latino families demonstrated differences in

particular subjects. Family cohesion, emotional support, conflict, planning daily life and activities dynamics differed between the two groups.

Additionally, Ward and Kennedy (1994), examined the contributions of sojourners' acculturation attitudes to individual psychological stress in New Zealand. Both employees and partners participated in the study. Results of the study revealed that integration and assimilation attitudes were associated with lower levels of psychological distress. Separation attitudes were associated with more sociocultural difficulty and more levels of psychological distress. Marginalisation attitudes contributed to sociocultural difficulties and psychological stress was less than with separation attitudes.

Among the studies focused on couples with partners from different ethnic background Negy and colleagues (2010), it is well documented that there is a relationship between the immigration experience, acculturation stress and marital distress and it was concluded that acculturation plays an important role in marital satisfaction. Women who had more acculturation stress reported significantly higher levels of marital distress. There is, however, a need for more research, in order to understand the relationship between marital satisfaction and acculturation (Padilla & Borrero, 2006; Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993)

Türker (2002), presented an observation on bi-national marriage cases living in Turkey. It has been indicated that, when assimilation attitudes were expected from wives, such as concerning changing her name to a Turkish name, being criticised because of the clothes being worn, this raised marital discord and four of the five couples divorced. In a Turkish-German marriage case, after a suicide attempt by the wife, the husband encouraged his spouse to have a job and be more tolerant to her cultural needs, which indicates an integrative attitude process for both; later, they reported that they had a more stable marriage. On the other hand, wives who have more satisfying marriages reported that they were acting more as a Turk, than before. It has been outlined that it would be difficult to decide to divorce for the immigrant spouse, as a result of a long integration process to which she would need to adjust

herself again in her homeland; this might involve such as finding a job or restructuring a social network.

In an interethnic study, Negy and Synder (2000), found that in Mexican-White American couples, women who were more acculturated to American culture (more assimilated) had experienced more marital distress, as a result of disagreements about finances. This finding suggests that conflicts in gender role expectations increase marital distress. Even so, in that study, males were expected to be the fiscal manager in the area where the study was conducted, whereas, wives played an active role in financial issues, thus, the attitude of acculturation becomes a source of conflict. Similarly, Markoff (1977, cited in Muller, 2007), suggested that cultural difference may reveal different dynamics in a relationship. Western man would prefer to have control over a relationship, so that they might seek a submissive and supportive Asian partner. Thus, integration attitudes would not always predict a satisfying marriage.

In a cross-cultural study, Çelenk and Vijver (2013), conducted semi-structured interviews, in order to assess the determinants of marital satisfaction for Turkish couples (living in Turkey), Turkish-Dutch couples (Turkish immigrants in The Netherlands) and Dutch couples (living in The Netherlands). According to observations referring to the acculturation process, it is suggested that Turkish couples living in The Netherlands tend to protect their heritage of cultural behavioural patterns, especially in the private domain, such as in marital life. It has been cited that this is as result of a slower adjustment process in the private domain (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2004).

Falicov (1995), indicated that there is a need to test the affects of acculturation attitudes in cross-cultural partners' marital satisfaction, according to the concept of a balanced approach. Muller (2004) compared the characteristics of relationships in Latino-White, White-White and Latino-Latino couples and assessed the acculturation attitudes. The attitudes and differences about gender roles and religion and spirituality, were compared with regard to the mean difference of marital satisfaction of three groups. Only the difference in attitudes towards religion and spirituality had a significant impact on marital satisfaction, White-White couples reporting higher levels

of satisfaction and lower levels of differences than Latino-White and Latino-Latino couples. On the other hand, acculturation categories had no significant affect on marital satisfaction. It has been suggested that it would be a result of sample characteristics, that all three groups were good at English or structure of the assessment tool.

### **2.3.1.1.3 Perceived Social Support**

The definition of social support varies and perceived social support is mainly conceptualised under the process of the sense of receiving support when needed (Rusell, 1990). Scheidler (2008), defined perceived social support as, 'believing that others are there to help if needed, are source of comfort, can assist with needs or concerns, are available to listen when needed and are dependable'. This is a primary process for intimate relationships (Baxter, 1986; cited in Cutrona, 1996) and the importance of the perceived social support increases in multicultural settings (Berry, 2006).

As mentioned by Cutrona (1996), support is a giving and receiving process and culture has an influence on shaping the context of perceived social support. Culture may provide a reference for what to provide, who to provide support and how it is understood (Dilworth-Anderson & Marshall, 1996). Depending on the belief that Turkish people are more likely to be more collectivist, they appear to need more emotional support among family members (Mocan-Aydin, 2000). Georgas and colleagues (2010), however, compared 16 countries in terms of family systems and functions, as social support has indicated there is no such distinction; all 16 different cultures showed similar patterns in relations with family of origins and seek their support. Similarly, Dilworth-Anderson and Marshall (1996), indicated there is no difference between diverse cultural groups when seeking emotional support, however, there were differences in providing and receiving such support. Dilworth-Anderson and Marshall (1996), nevertheless, did not focus on intimate relationships and spousal support; they concluded that, when acknowledging diverse cultural groups, researchers should carefully use the instruments and interpret results, when differences occur.

Baxter (1986, cited in Cutrona, 1996), indicated that partners should support each other, otherwise the relationship may be damaged. The partner's responsivity, when the support is needed, contributes to a partner's beliefs about a relationship, that it capable of coping with i intimate relationships, and supported partners would be validated by the other's worth, feelings or actions (Cutrona, 1996).

The literature suggests that there is a gender difference in intimate relationships, that it is more crucial to wives than men (Cutrona, 1996). Belle (1987), explains the differences across gender on predicting relationship factors with a, 'ceiling effect', where women are more likely to provide support, thus, men to receive more support, on the other hand, men vary on giving support to their spouse. Scheidler (2008), however, implied there are no gender differences concerning perceived social support.

Scheidler (2008), conducted research on doctoral students during stressful times and assessed the relationship between perceived social support, perceived stress and marital satisfaction. A multidimensional scale, which consists of family, friends, and significant others, was used, in order to assess perceived social support. The results of the study implied that stress had a negative impact on marital satisfaction. Perceived social support, however, positively predicted marital satisfaction and among the support sources, spousal (family) support had a greater impact, when predicting marital satisfaction. Additionally, although female participants of the study reported higher levels of stress, there were no gender differences as regarded the perceived social support scores of the participants. It has been suggested that perceived social support has a buffering role in perceived spousal social support, during stressful life events. Consistently, Negy and colleagues (2010) underlined the importance of perceived social support, especially from family.

Negy and colleagues (2010), examined the predictive role of perceived social support, acculturative stress and marital distress in a Latino immigrant women sample living in the US, bilingual questionnaires being used as assessment tools. Results have shown that marital distress is significantly predicted by acculturative stress and perceived social support. In addition, perceived social support played a mediator role

between acculturative stress and marital distress. The ones who perceived family and friends as a source of support had a lesser degree of acculturative stress and marital distress. Burman and Margolin (1992), suggested two possible explanations for the function of perceived social support. Perceived social support either increases to the feeling of being loved, respected and assistance that helps to perceive the source of stress as being more tolerable and less stressful or the decrease in marital satisfaction can be a source of a stress for spouses, thus, decreased perceived social support is an indicator of poor relationships.

At times of stress, as life crises have shown, there was a significant negative effect on marital satisfaction, in a Chinese sample (Chi et al., 2011). Additionally, there is a direct effect of perceived social support, on predicting marital satisfaction. The relationship between stress and marital satisfaction is moderated by the perceived social support that, during times of stress, perceiving that support from family will be available when needed, significantly increases marital satisfaction. Perceived social support is, thus, suggested as having a buffering role in that, overcoming a stress factor will be easy for the supported individuals, which would increase marital satisfaction. Contrarily, it is suggested that perceived social support is more significant, when there is no actual stress or the stress level is decreased; received social support is more important as a result of the leaded benefits to the individual during stressful events (Norris & Kaniasty, 1996).

In one of the few studies conducted, which compares mononational and bi-national couples, Cools (2009), assessed the influences of language and communication on a Finnish/Non-Finnish partner's sample; the non-Finnish partner's were lacking in Finnish proficiency. Several interview techniques were used to assess 18 bi-national couples. According to the results, in bi-national couples, language proficiency and dependency on partners in a new culture may increase the need for increased perceived social support from partners, for a more stable marriage. ,

On the other hand, literature provided support that perceived social support may play a significant role in predicting wellbeing (Dehle and colleagues, 2001; Cutrona, 1996), which would moderate relationship satisfaction for culturally, diverse

couples (Tseng, 2001). Dehle and colleagues (2001), found that perception of adequacy of social support from the spouse decreases depressive symptoms, whereas, decreased perceived social support increases the symptoms. Additionally, Vanfossen (1986, cited in Cutrona, 1996), suggested that components of social support contribute to wellbeing differently across gender, men seeking more intimacy than women.

### **2.3.1.2 Couple Traits and Marital Satisfaction in Binational Marriage**

Couple traits refer to the influences of the skills as a couple or the circumstances of which the relationship consists (Larson, 2000). It is considered that, each cultural norm does not have same amount of effect on individuals, according to the ecosystem theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979). In order to generalise and compare differences, studies must focus on comparisons in the couple context, more than on individual differences. The literature findings regarding cultural distance, conflict management style and language skills, were presented in this section.

#### **2.3.1.2.1 Cultural Distance**

Cultural distance indicates the distance between own culture and the host culture (Babiker et al., 1980). Tseng (1977), indicated that, 'understanding and awareness of different cultural patterns can help to anticipate potential problems from clash of values and attitudes'. There are a limited number of studies which directly observe the relationship between cultural distance and marital satisfaction. The literature on bi-national marriages, however, mainly emphasises the risk in bi-national marriages, is as a result of the decreased pool of shared (Crohn, 1995) and similarities promote marital satisfaction (Larson, 2000). Moreover, the affect of cultural distance can be reflected through the acculturation stress degree and the effect of social proximity in attitudes and psychological distress being led by sociocultural difficulties.

Romano (1988) and Daneshpour (2009), identified nineteen dimensions, to which culturally diverse couples are exposed to the differences; religion, belief systems and values, power issues, gender relations, time orientations, political view, economic and financial issues, extended family reactions, child-raising, problem-solving and communication, values, food and drink, sex, place of residence, friends,

in-laws, social class, illness and suffering and ethnocentrism. Crohn (1995), suggested; time, the nature of the universe, cohesiveness of the family, emotional expressiveness, interpersonal relations and gender-roles; six broad organising dimensions that are specific to couples or people in a multi-cultural setting, in order to interpret the human condition and serve as a personal guide.

According to Renald (2011), knowledge and understanding cultural conflict areas are essential for preventing conflict. On the other hand, regardless of an emphasis on being a bi-national or mononational couple, Larson (2000), indicated the importance of having similar values, attitudes and backgrounds, these similarities promoting marital satisfaction, due to a better understanding of their expectations. Still more information is needed to understand how couples who have different ethnic, race or nationality backgrounds, manage the differences in such a way as to enhance marital satisfaction. Bhugra & De Silva (2000) underlines the importance of focusing on differences, when working with culturally diverse couples. It is suggested that culturally different couples need greater adjustment, according to the fact that at the microcultural level, they have different habits, beliefs, values and customs.

In their study, Fu, Tora and Kendall (2001), named the research focus group as being multi-ethnic, however, the participants were couples who were different in religion, national origin and first-spoken language and they found that, even after controlling the religion effect, cultural differences decreased the couples' overall marital happiness.

Sharaievska and colleagues (2013), assessed marital satisfaction among Korean-American and East European-American couples, with a qualitative method and highlighted the fact that intercultural couples increase marital satisfaction by learning each others culture and decreasing the cultural distance.

The increase in cultural distance indicates low degrees of adaptation to a host culture (Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker & Al-Timimi., 2004; Ward & Kennedy). Pan and colleagues (2007), stated that cultural distance increases acculturative stress. A contrary finding suggested by Bektaş (2004), indicated that there was no significant relation between cultural distance and the adaptation process. The results of some

studies have shown that the existence of social problems increases with cultural distance (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004). Hence, social problems lead to psychological distress that results in a decrease in marital satisfaction.

As Romano (2008), indicated, stress between couples is crucial in confronting conflicts, where the cultural differences between couples increases the level of stress. Similarly, Waldman and Rubalcava (2005), underlined cultural differences as potential stressors in intercultural relationships, as a result of the potential for misunderstanding. Higher levels of stress and conflict result in decreased marital satisfaction, when compared to culturally homogenous marriages. The findings clearly suggest the need to acknowledge the effect of the cultural distance of spouses, in terms of their marital satisfaction. Moreover, although there have been no studies assessing the degree of similarities as regards the cultural distance of bi-national spouses, according to the research findings resulting from in mononational marriage samples, value and background similarities significantly predict marital satisfaction (Luo et al., 2008; Özen, 2006; Larson, 2000).

#### **2.3.1.2.2. Conflict Management Style**

Conflict refers to a situation of disagreement, regarding one or a combination of issues in a marital relationship (Mackey et. al, 2000; cited in Özen, 2006). Regardless of the cultural differences, conflicts arise in all marriages (Renalds, 2011) and conflict resolution skills would be crucial for effectively dealing with conflict and increasing marital satisfaction (Larson, 2000).

The literature suggests that dealing with the problems in a more constructive and effective way, increases the couples' marital satisfaction (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). After reviewing related literature Özen (2006), suggested four different categories that encompass common features of conflict resolution style suggested through the literature, namely positive, negative, subordination and retreat conflict resolution styles. Positive conflict resolution style refers to discussing a conflict, by presenting constructive behaviour and suggesting reasonable solutions. Negative conflict resolution style consists of destructive behaviour, such as presenting verbal and physical aggression. Subordination indicates a submissive solution whereby, there

is acceptance of a partner's requests, without any negative response. Postponing the discussion, staying silent or refusing to discuss it, is related to the Retreat conflict resolution styles. This study employed these four categories, however, research results are presented according to the researchers' categories.

Johnson (2004), identifies two categories, namely pursue and withdraw and four possible negative cycles during a conflict resolution, which are mainly destructive and decrease marital satisfaction in relationships. The concepts of, criticise, complain, blame, demand and control, are related to pursuance, while, defend, dismiss, shut down, numb out and avoid, are characteristics of withdrawal. It is stressed that, responsiveness to the attachment need during a conflict is necessary for healthy and satisfying relationships.

Gottman and Krokoff (1989) observed the relationship between the behaviours of the couples, when attempting to resolve high-conflict resolution and marital satisfaction, with a three-year follow up study. According to the results, different behavioural patterns for husbands and wives played a significant role in improving concurrent marital satisfaction. Wives' reactions, such as anger and confrontation concerning disagreement, only improved marital satisfaction, when husbands did not engage whining, stubborn and withdrawn behaviours. On the other hand, negativity was a stronger predictor of marital satisfaction than positivity, for both current and follow up marital satisfaction.

Gottman and Levenson (1992), grouped couples according to their interactive behaviours during conflict resolutions, namely regulated and non-regulated. Non-regulated couples were the couples which displayed more conflict engagement, stubbornness and withdrawal from interactions. Two groups were examined in terms of marital dissolution, in which marital satisfaction was an indicator of marital dissolution. Results have shown that non-regulated couples suffer from decreased marital satisfaction. Moreover, in a four-year follow-up, the percentage of the couples which reported a decrease in marital satisfaction was higher for non-regulated couples, than for regulated couples. Husbands of non-regulated couples expressed more anger and whining and wives expressed more anger and disgust/contempt during conflict

resolutions, than did regulated couples. Gottman (1994) reported that, according to the results of the previous studies, it has been concluded that complaining, criticising, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling, puts couples at a higher risk of decreased marital satisfaction, which is called, the, '*Four Horsemen of Apocalypse*'.

Depending on the observations carried out over around 14 years, concerning approximately 650 couples, Gottman and Silver (1995), noted that, unless couples have an effective conflict management style, having a satisfying and happy marriage is nearly impossible. In order to have a happy marriage, couples should increase the 'positive emotions' to each other and decrease 'negative emotions'.

When there is the introduction of premarital assessment and a counselling manager, Larson (2000), highlighted that supporting the partner, rather than trying to promote change, avoiding criticism and promoting forgiveness is required, in order to improve marital satisfaction. It has been noted that couples functioning would be better determined by the destructive ways of responding to a conflict. The negative emotions that led to a destructive conflict resolution styles are suggested as being more influential than the positive emotions, which are produced by positive conflict management styles.

Hünler and Gençöz (2003), examined the role of perceived marital problem solving abilities, submissive behaviours and marital relationship, on married couples. It has been found that submissive acts during a conflict decrease marital satisfaction. It is, however, suggested that submissive behaviours contribute to the perception of a decreased possibility of finding a resolution to the conflict area and perceived problem solving skills, more than does decreasing the tension during a conflict.

In a study Özen (2006), assessed the actor and partner effects of conflict resolution styles on marital adjustment. The married couples' self-reports of conflict resolution styles, considered as positive, negative, retreat and subordination, were examined. The results of the study have shown that negative conflict resolution styles of both partner's predicted decreased marital satisfaction of the couple. Moreover, husbands predicted significantly lower levels of marital satisfaction with wives,

however, the effects of the conflict resolution styles of wives on predicting the marital satisfaction of husbands, were not significant.

According to the results of the study conducted with married couples, Rosen-Grandon, Myers and Hattie (2004, cited in Renalds, 2012), proposed that respect, forgiveness, romance, support and sensitivity, are all important characteristics of couples, for a satisfying marriage. Cultural diversity was not a focus of the study and it has been highlighted that all couples benefit from these characteristics.

In the study, Sharaievska, and colleagues (2013), examined cultural background influence on marital satisfaction. Korean-American and East European-American couples were included in the study and interviews were conducted, in order to assess the associations between leisure time activities, language proficiency, conflict management style and marital satisfaction. According to the results, even after considering the difficulty in language proficiency, couples reported conflict resolution style still had a negative effect on marital satisfaction. One of the interviewees indicated that her mind-set about how conflicts are expressed was different from Americans and another interviewee outlined the difference in terms of emotional openness during a conflict. The interviewees concluded that, differences in conflict resolution styles are about the culture where they grew up.

Although emotions which may arise during a conflict are universal, they display rules which differ across cultures (Liu and Wittenborn, 2011). Muller (2004) cited Markoff (1977) that western man may prefer to marry a submissive and supportive Asian woman, whereby, he could control the relationship. Johnson (2004), proposed that, openness and self-disclosure were important for a satisfying marriage, in an American sample and that the need for to express intimacy decreases in collectivist cultures. During a conflict, empathy, patience, flexibility and openness traits, would contribute to a successful, close intercultural relationship (Gereis, 2000).

On the other hand, Renalds (2011), suggested that one of the main issues of intercultural conflicts management styles arises from there being individualism or collectivism, due to the focus of the responsibilities and corresponding results varying in individualism and collectivism. Individualists primarily feel responsible for their

own behaviour, needs, and goals, whereas, collectivists are more likely to focus on their own behaviour and the impact of that behaviour on the others, which moderates the conflict management styles. Rohrlich (1988), indicated that self-disclosure and decision making power, are suggested as having a healthy impact on the relationships of culturally diverse couples. In fact, communication habits vary across cultures, with those of a Mediterranean culture displaying more self-disclosure, than do northern Europeans (Renalds, 2011).

Additionally, Bhugra and De Silva (2000), proposed a model for the assessment and planning a couple therapy for treating culturally diverse couples. The results indicated that, self-disclosure is one of the critical issues during an appropriate intervention, for culturally diverse couples.

#### **2.3.1.2.3 Language Skills**

The communication process consists of the ability of sending a message to a partner, which is then received by the other partner and understood (Larson, 2000). Communication is a key for marriages in that, where there is improved communication skills and intelligibility of messages from both sides, when the partners express their thoughts and feelings clearly and with appropriate words, this contributes to resolving conflicts in a way so as to strengthen the relationship. Communication and language skills lead to understanding, so that those skills become more important and a challenging issue for bi-national couples (Renalds, 2011; Waldman and Rubavca, 2005).

Bi-national couples cannot be equal in a dyadic communication, whereas, expressing thoughts and a feeling in a clear manner, is one of the important demands of a marriage. Karlsson (1951, cited in Rohrlich, 1988), suggested three areas for classification of communication adequacy; '(1) Judgmental level of what to communicate (2) inhibitions affecting communication, and (3) degree of semantic inaccuracy'. 'Judgmental level of what to communicate', refers to the content of the communication, and 'inhibitions affecting communication', is related to communication styles.

Communication skills encompass nonverbal and verbal communication, which refers to linguistic skills, flexibility, social skills and the ability to perceive and respond to interactions. Communication competence, which refers to the language skills concept, is essential for effectiveness and appropriateness in interactions, in intercultural marital settings (Chen, 1989, cited in Renalds, 2011). Chen (1989, cited in Renalds, 2011), suggested that, 'personal attributes, communication skills, psychological adjustment and cultural awareness', contribute to effective and appropriate communication. In bi-national marriage circumstances and the language proficiency of the partners play an important role from two aspects with its contribution to marital satisfaction, the first being a clear understanding between couples (Tseng, 2001) and a contribution to the acculturative stress of the immigrated partner (Beiser and Hou, 2001; cited in Çakır, 2009).

Regardless of the direct effect on marital satisfaction, relevant literature reveals several important contributions of language skills to bi-national marital life. First of all, at least one of the partners losing the control over life, may contribute to an imbalance in the power of the relationship. One of the partners can be responsible for financial management, social interactions and institutional processes, i.e. makes much dependence on the husband (Rosenblatt, 2009). Additionally, when the couples adapt one of the partner's native language that puts the non-native speaker partner in a weaker position, especially when they argue (Cools, 2009). Rosenblatt (2009), suggested that the choice of common language have some implicit meanings that give direction to the relationship. In most the cases, couples choose the language of the partner who has more power and some people are less comfortable when they make decisions, plan and display self-disclosure in a second language, which may lead to a communication deficit. Moreover, in time, a partner may need to give up use of own mother tongue, which means letting go of the language-based self of own, for a better relationship with his/her partner. In a study conducted by Frame (2004), a Chinese-American wife and a Caucasian husband reported that they needed to put much more effort into communication, for example, in relation to a joke, as they cannot always understand the humour.

Language competence can be one of the stress resources, as a result of social life. In particular, for the immigrant, language skills can play a protective role against acculturation stress (Çakır, 2009). In a Finnish and non-Finnish sample living in Finland, non-Finnish participants of the study indicated that they feel handicapped, and struggle in following ever-day life (Cools, 2009). Beiser and Hou (2001, cited in Çakır, 2009), indicated that low language proficiency can play a more destructive role for less educated women and more elderly individuals, as a result of acculturation stress. Even after spending 20 years in the host country, non-native speaker partners can have to deal with missing information in conversation and being unable to follow a conversation or misunderstanding one. According to the results, language is the biggest challenge in their life, with its accompanying emotions such as helplessness and frustrations

The role that language skills contribute to integrative acculturation attitude is significant (Dona & Berry, 1994). Language serves as an integration instrument to a host country (Chen, 1990), with low language acculturation leading to negative outcomes. Birman and colleagues (2002, cited in Çakır, 2009), in a sample in Canada, found that language competence increases in the social involvement that may lead to adaptation to host country. In an immigrant population, couples were less satisfied when wives were more acculturated in language than their husband and the researcher concluded that decrease in marital satisfaction is a function of a change in gender roles that is link to the language skills, such as in finding a job (Kisselev, Brown, & Brown, 2010). The result is that, gender role expectations may vary across cultures and there has been no relevant study examining the role of language skills, in bi-national marriage in Turkey.

In all bi-national couples, partners adaptation can be in three different ways; (1) adaptation of one of the partners' native language, (2) adaptation of a third language, (3) a mixture of languages (Cools, 2009; Tseng, 2001) The dynamics and the contribution of adaptation by way of language between partners to marital satisfaction is, however, not well documented. Consistent with the literature, Bhugra and De Silva (2000), suggested that one of the common difficulties in culturally

diverse couples is communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Frequently,, expressions lead to misunderstandings and are perceived as being inappropriate in their own culture, which issue should be handled in an intervention with culturally diverse couples. Among the few studies carried out, Sharaievska, Kim, & Stodolsa (2013), found that, as a result of communication problem differences with respect to language skills, marital satisfaction decreased among Korean-American and East European-American couples.

Renalds (2011), conducted a study with Asian- American intercultural couples, on the effectiveness of language skills on developing intimacy in a relationship and in marital satisfaction. It is proposed that increased language skills enhance communication, which is crucial to intimacy and trust in a relationship and contributes to more satisfying marriages. This had an impact on two aspects firstly, the sense of dependence and autonomy and secondly, misunderstandings lead to magnifying conflict. Language fluency contributes to developing meaningful relationships and increases the chance for engaging in more daily activities as a couple.

Rohrlich (1988), explains why low language skills decrease the marital satisfaction of bi-national (in his terms dual-culture) couples, according to Festinger's Basic Tenet Theory, in which it is suggested that, when individuals encounter a psychological inconsistency, they try to reduce it. According to this theoretical suggestion, bi-national couples encounter a psychological inconsistency, if verbal communication decreases. The problem in accurate communication causes frustration between couples that may lead to psychological inconsistency and increase conflict between couples. The result is that bi-national couples suffer from decreased marital satisfaction, when compared to mononational couples. 'The importance of each of the cognitive elements, the ratio of dissonant to consonant elements, and the amount of cognitive overlap', will function for the magnitude of the dissonance. As a solution, Rorhlich (1988), suggests that couples should increase their listening or language skills. Waldman and Rubalcava (2005), simply explains the fact that impaired language skills lead to misunderstanding, which is a source of conflict.

Although researches clearly indicate that language skills are a vital component, most couples are unaware of this fact and begin a relationship, even if they do not have improved language skills regarding a common language (Rosenblatt, 2009). Family reunion and immigration policies reinforce the improvement in language skills, social life demand, such as caring a child, which makes it hard to accomplish some of the tasks related to improving language skills or courses (Ter Wal et al., 2008).

### **2.3.1.3 Contextual Factors**

Contextual factors refer to situations or environment, in which the spouses and the relationship is embedded (Larson, 2000). Contextual factors related to marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages have four dimensions; demographics, received social support, societal reactions and relations with family of origin.

#### **2.3.1.3.1 Demographics**

The literature findings regarding the relationship between marital satisfaction of mononational and bi-national spouses and demographic variables, including gender, age, education, income, length of marriage, length of settlement, are presented below.

There are contrary findings in the literature regarding the relationship between gender and marital satisfaction. Cihan Güngör (2007), found a gender difference on total scores of marital satisfaction, males being more likely to have higher levels of marital satisfaction than females. Additionally, age was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Çelenk and Vijver (2011), reported no gender difference as regards the marital satisfaction of Turks (living in Turkey) and Dutch (living in The Netherlands). On the other hand, wives of Turkish immigrant couples reported less satisfaction, if they were experiencing more problematic behaviours, such as gambling.

Age is the one of the demographics examined as a predictor of marital satisfaction. Larson (2000), suggested that as people gets older, the possibility of readiness for the marital life situation increases, such as an independent economic status, therefore, age is a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Similarly, Negy and colleagues (2010), found in a Hispanic women immigrant sample, that age is

significantly correlated with marital distress, which decreases marital satisfaction. Moreover, it is implied that marital satisfaction increases as individuals get older, especially after children leave home (Jones & Chao, 1997).

Studies suggest that increased income is correlated with increased marital satisfaction (Renne, 1970, Rho, 1989; Başat, 2004). According to Larson (2000), for a marriage, income and employment status are significant, in order to have independently living experiences. In addition, similarities in educational level and age would enhance marital satisfaction, as these factors would contribute to having similar topics to discuss, overlaps in interest and bring a sense of comfort and compatibility. Additionally Çağ and Yıldırım (2013), explained a significant relation between education and marital satisfaction, whereby, where education increases, emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction increases, as a result of increased emotional intelligence. In addition, socioeconomic status was found to be positive predictor of marital satisfaction, in a homogenous marriage sample living in Turkey (İmamoğlu & Yasak, 1997).

The developmental perspective on marriage and marital satisfaction provided a number of researches with a focus on the length of the marriages. Different scholars identified different stages, according to life transformations. The findings about the stages, thus the length of the marriage and the degree of marital satisfaction, are in conflict. The issue is mostly effected by social norms and expectations through the various stages (Sharaievska et al., 2013). Sharaievska and colleagues (2013), cited that the stage that encompasses the upbringing of a child, is associated with decreased marital satisfaction (Hirschberger, Srivastava, Marsh, Cowan, & Cowan, 2009). Additionally, in cases of bi-national couples, having a child would increase the problems between couples because the conflicts and cultural differences become more explicit concerning life cycle events (Rosenblatt, 2009). Attitudes about nurturing a child, offer a conflict area. Negy and colleagues (2010), found that marital distress is significantly correlated with the length of a marriage, in a Hispanic, immigrant women sample. Contrary, Charnai (2006), indicated that the length of a marriage did not

moderate the relationship among any of the personality traits and the actor's self-reported marital satisfaction.

#### **2.3.1.3.2 Received Social Support**

Received social support is defined as the amount of support that is received from a person (Cohen et. al., 1986) or a number of functions (Copeland & Norell, 2002), from formal or informal social networks. Vaux (1988, cited in Hlebec, et al., 2009), indicated that the social network serve as a social support and it is, 'as a subset of a larger social network to which an ego turns or could turn for assistance'. The collection of individuals who know and interact with individuals or couples, are also identified as social networks (Fisher, 1982; Lauman, 1966; cited in Milardo, 1988). Received social support can also be in a form of tangible and informational support (Cutrona, 1996; Cohen et. al., 1986). Tangible support refers to received assistance with regard to material needs, while informational support indicates received informational help from a social network. The function of social networks may be differ according to the availability, type, amount and timing of the support (Milardo, 1988, p. 19)

According to Milardo (1988), the significance of analysing a social network increases due to the fact of the concept of structural interdependence between personal relationships and supplementary networks. Additionally, it has been highlighted that social network analysis can be applied to family studies, in order to understand the role of support from social network, when necessary. Social network analysis enhances identifying psychological or social psychological events or conditions, which contribute to the development, maintenance and stability of marital relationships.

Social networks may increase the wellbeing of individuals (Hays, 1985; cited in Bird & Melville 1994). As a result of moving to a new place or being in a new setting, individuals may suffer from a loss of significant relationships in a social network (Brehm, 1992; cited in Bird & Melville 1994). Individuals, however, provide a sense of belonging, more than do friends in social networks (Bird & Melville, 1994). Additionally, friends in a social network may function for decreasing anxiety and

depression, allowing involvement in activities, information chances and task assistance. To the contrary, there are several models suggested to explain the effectiveness of social support, indicating that social support does not always promote the wellbeing of the individuals (Rini & Schetter, 2010). It is highlighted that the benefit of the support mostly depends on the situation, needs and motivations. Furthermore, models and the studies focus on social support underlines the buffering role social support provides, especially during times of stress (Rini & Schetter, 2010; Negy et. al., 2010).

The effect of received social support, in forming a satisfying marriage, is demonstrated in various studies (Cutrona, 1996). Cramer (2006), examined the perceived and received social support and conflict resolution styles, as predictors of relationship satisfaction in young adults and clearly stated that all kinds of support, particularly from the spouse, are associated with relationship satisfaction. It is suggested that social support prevents escalating conflict and serves as an indicator of emotional support, as well as a buffer to psychological wellbeing.

Similarly, Sullivan and colleagues (2010), found in a longitudinal study that for all couples, support behaviours from partners predicts marital satisfaction. The findings of the study mainly underlined the function of social support as promoting empathy, validation and caring within a relationship. According to the one-year longitudinal observations, lower levels of positive support behaviours and higher levels of negative support behaviours, significantly increased the display of negative emotions during conflicts.

According to Burleson and Hanasono (2010), there is a gender difference when receiving social support, due to the fact that wives are more sensitive to a husband's responses and feel more deeply, than do husbands. On the other hand, husbands are more affected by the peripheral features of interaction, that they are less likely to the process of a wife's behaviour. , Cutrona (1996), cited that employed women seek more tangible support than men and indicated that there is a gender difference concerning the contribution of tangible support on predicting wellbeing (Vanfossen, 1986).

Lawrence and colleagues (2008), conducted research on married couples living in the US, to compare the effects, amounts and adequacy of received support in relation to an actor-partner interdependence model. According to the results, although the amount of received support did not have a significant effect on predicting the marital satisfaction of husbands, husbands' perception of the adequacy of social support significantly predicted higher levels of their own marital satisfaction. Additionally, in order to increase wives' marital satisfaction, the perception of the amount of support from the husband, played a significant role. Amount was not important for husbands, which view was to the contrary for the wives and the amount of the support was more important for their satisfaction. It is concluded that the increase in wives' marital satisfaction mostly depends on the support from their husband, when needed, than was a spontaneous effort by the husband to provide support.

Identifying the role of the received social support on marital satisfaction increases due to the fact that under the circumstances of bi-national marriages, at least one of the partner emigrates and this is a stressful life event because of a real loss of family, friends and community (Falicov, 2003; Brehm, 1992; cited in Bird & Melville 1994) and the multiple connections that result from language difficulties, plus education differences (Falicov, 2003). On the other hand, in bi-national cases, the role of social support on the international environment is accentuated because an assignment presents both the disruption of established social support networks and the challenge to develop new ones (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Moreover, social networks are significantly associated with coping with uncertainty and change (Herfst et. al., 2008). Copeland and Norell (2002), indicated that, accompanying couples on international assignments need adequate informal and formal social networks and in terms of both the family and friendship networks necessary to reduce the risk of an unsuccessful marriage as a result of an adjustment process.

Given the reason stated above, marrying in a culturally diverse setting is accompanied by a decrease in social skills, which mainly arises from the importance of tangible and informative support (Türker, 2002; Kisselev, Brown, & Brown, 2010).

There is a loss of significant resources, familiar regulation, places, friends, networks and familiar food, in culturally diverse settings (Abuzahra, 2004). Çakır (2009), examined the resiliency of Turkish immigrant women in the UK. The role of perceived discrimination, perceived social support and acculturation attitudes were assessed, as a predictor of resilience, by using a quantitative method. Additionally, qualitative methods were employed. According to the results of the qualitative study, language, accommodation, social network, loneliness and belongingness, plus health problems, serve as a either protective or a risk factor, for Turkish women immigrants' resilience. Additionally, it is found that practical and financial support from the husband plays a protective role in an immigrant wife's wellbeing.

Copeland and Norell (2002) examined the role of social support in a new international environment for wives, which provided a better understanding of the acculturation process. It has been found that, those who have deeper relations with long-distance supporters, such as more frequent distant contact with family and friends, are less likely to adjust to multicultural settings than who try to contact a local network of friendships. The results of the study highlighted the need for an enlarged local social network, for a better adjustment process.

Ter Wal and colleagues (2008), conducted a study with married women who migrated to the Netherland after marriage. It was found that several of the women had suffered from social isolation. Additionally, nearly fifty percent of the women reported that they would recommend newlywed women not to settle in The Netherlands, due to the fact of possible social isolation, loneliness and difficulty in finding a job. Cools (2009), indicated that the lacking of language skills in new social settings increases the dependency of ne partner on the other that leads to a stress.

Negy and colleagues (2010), underlined the importance of social support as a buffering role in an immigrant sample, during times of stress. This was particularly true as regards, information support, ie.taking advice or tangible support, i.e. financial or economic assistance, from available social networks, such as churches and community, which were frequented by the immigrants. Additionally, women who have increased source of social support reported less marital distress.

### **2.3.1.3.2 Societal Reactions**

In the vast literature listed, there are challenges to the view that bi-national marriages have to deal with issues, including dealing with family and friends' reactions to their marriage (Fu, et al., 2001). Bhugra and De Silva (2000) identify societal attitudes as one of the dimensions that separates culturally diverse couples from others. In this study, however, societal reactions are defined according to Larson and Holman (1994), as being the approval or disapproval reactions of the parents and friends in the immediate network that constitutes the 'current context'.

According to the ecosystem perspective, couples do not only have to make an impact on their social systems but they are also affected by the social environment that they experience (Huston, 2005). Regardless of cultural diversity in marital life, therefore, family and friend's approval of a relationship is significantly associated with marital satisfaction. The research results indicated that parental and friendship disapproval are correlated with marital problems (Larson, 2000). In a marriage, approval from family and friends is helpful for several reasons, including being approved increased confidence in the relationship, that the choice of spouse would be validated, a decrease in isolation from family and friends, an increase in support when the spouses need this during marriage and a decrease in the criticisms that spouses would encounter about their spouse or their choice.

Cihan Güngör (2007), examined the role of family and friends' approval on predicting marital satisfaction, without focusing on cultural difference, in a Turkish couples sample. According to the results, increased approval of friends was associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction, while there was no significant effect of approval of family on marital satisfaction.

On the other hand, a bi-national marriage puts the couple more at risk of feeling guilty-regretful about getting married against the wishes of their family and friends, than would be the case with mononational couples. A marriage that consists of cultural differences is more likely not to be approved of by a partner's family and friends (Biever, et al., 1998). In the majority of the literature, studies focus on not only bi-national marriages but also on intermarriage (ethnic, cultural, national),

conceptualised societal reactions such as oppressions, prejudice and reported negative impacts of societal attitudes on marital relationships (Tseng, 2001). According to interviews, reports of interethnic group marriage (Chinese-American) examined by Sung (1990), indicated that, couples who were living in more isolated places reported that they suffer more from negative societal reaction. On the other hand, the pressure of the negative societal reactions tends to decrease for a couple living in big cities.

Additionally, Türker (2002), suggests a similar determination for Turkish-German couples. According to the reports, depending on the daily observations of bi-national couples living in Turkey, wives can face negative reactions in terms of gender role expectancy more in Adana, than those who live in a European city or in Istanbul (a metropolis). Moreover, husbands tended to be ignored by the society, if they accept their wives being alone in public places, such as going shopping alone, or to the cinema with friends. Additionally, it is noted that societal reactions resulted marital discord for Turkish-German couples. Social environment puts an emphasis on a German wife being expected to behave according to the dominance of a male. In cases where the parents of the Turkish partner, whose marriage to a German was disapproved of, the result was that the German partner had to work harder in dealing with marital problems.

Tseng (2001), implies approval of the parents and friends contributes to successful intermarriage. The concerns about cultural differences increase the probability of an unsupportive context for couples. According to the literature review, Tseng (2001), outlines the buffering role of the support of parents, siblings and close friends on daily crises, thus, it is best if the relationship is approved. The attributions to a bi-national marriage by the family of origin and friends can increase feelings of discomfort, so that a partner may feel on the defensive or socially isolated (Rosenblatt, 2009).

When defining unbalanced patterns, there are negative patterns that culturally diverse couples' experience, Falicov (2003), highlighted the negative impact of extended family members' reactions, as a result of an out-group marriage. The impact of the societal reaction on the marital relationship would, however change, depending

on the life stage of the couple. This phenomenon is especially true in the earlier stages, where negative societal reactions result in an imbalance in the relationship for culturally diverse couples.

Families and friends are the third parties, as concerns the potential marital conflict areas (Lee, 2006) and disapproval of those third parties increases marital dissatisfaction (Rosen-Grandon et. al., 2004, cited in Renalds, 2011). Contrarily, Renalds (2011) reported that, according to the observations in an Asian-American couples sample, culturally diverse couples are not always exposed to negative societal reactions or disapproval from society, as a result of having an out-group marriage. Only a few intercultural couples reported negative societal reactions and a challenge as regards family disapproval.

#### **2.3.1.3.4 Relations with Family of Origin**

One of the challenges that bi-national marriages have is to keep close contact with family of origin members (Fu, et al., 2001), particularly for the immigrated spouse. Moreover, depending on the assumption that the scientific findings are universally valid, the relations with the partner's own parents or siblings after marriage is one of the indicators for a successful long-term marriage (Larson, 2000).

According to Georgas and colleagues (2004), in a cross-cultural study that covered 16 different countries, which had both individualist and collectivist societies, the relationships with family of origin did not depict any significant difference among the sixteen countries experiences. In each culture, families tend to preserve a similar amount of frequent contact, by telephone or by visiting. This finding suggests that a partner's need for a relationship with family of origin, is without exception according to nationality. Additionally, İmamoğlu and Yasak (1997), underlined that relationship to kin was found to be related to marital satisfaction, in a sample of homogenous marriages in Turkey. Increased frequency of contact predicts a higher levels of marital satisfaction.

Contrary to this finding, Tseng (2001), indicated that relationships with parents and siblings after marriage might differ according to the culture. This difference may, however, arise as a result of social support expectations, such as financial support

(Bonacci, 1978; cited in Tseng 2001). On the other hand, it is obvious that, in bi-national marriages, the dynamics and structure differ, when compared to homogenous marriages (Tseng, 2001). Although the importance of the relationship with family of origin remains for each partner, the probability of meeting with family of origin members decreases for one partner because of living in another country. It is suggested that the loss of connection with members of family of origin results in an increase in the stress for couples.

Çelenk and Van de Vijver (2013), outlined that, the need for a connection with family of origin will differ between individualistic Western nations and collectivist nations, such as in The Netherlands, where couples preferred to have less communication, contact and visits to the kin of a Turkish couple living in Turkey. Georgas (2006, cited in Celenk & van de Vijver, 2013), supported the implication that Dutch families prefer less social interaction with extended family members, however, relationships with mother-father and siblings still remain important.

On the other hand, migration case studies with both individualistic and collectivistic samples indicate the importance of having social interaction with family of origin (Negy et al., 2010). Family of origin cohesion was significantly correlated with marital distress, in a Latino immigrant women sample in the US. Rosenblatt (2009). supported the idea that, especially for the spouse who lives away from family of origin, losing connection and contact with family of origin members may lead to a feeling of loss and embarrassment, in the relationship with the community.

According to the immigration studies, besides active contact with the host network, having contact with relatives and friends who lives in the home country contributes to increased psychological wellbeing (Jainskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Jaakola & Reuter, 2006). Nonetheless, negative effects could be observed for the acculturation and adjustment process, particularly where a non-native spouse may seek long-distance support, such as family of origin (Copeland and Norell, 2002). With the developing technology, a desire for a face-to-face contact with friends and family can, to an extent, be replaced with technological devices.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

In the following chapter, firstly, information about the participants of the current study is presented. Secondly, the instruments employed in this study are introduced. In the last section, information regarding the application of the study as a procedure and the data analysis procedure, are presented.

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants are couples who live in Turkey, which involve Turkish men who married either German or Russian women and are identified as German-Turkish Couples (GTC or GT) or Russian-Turkish Couples (RTC or RT), through the current study. Participants of this research study were recruited from Istanbul, Ankara and Antalya because of the larger number of German-Turkish and Russian-Turkish marriages there and for the convenience of the researcher.

In order to have a representative sample regarding the research questions, the participants included in the study were selected by a purposive sampling procedure (Boehnke, Lietz, Schreier & Willhelm, 2011). The aim of purposive sampling is to provide a sample that enhances the focus on a population, which is related to the research interest. After setting the criteria according to the purposes of the study, a snowball sampling strategy was employed, in which available individuals were asked to refer possible participants who met the criteria of the study (Boehnke et al., 2011). The following inclusive criteria were applied to the couples, as now listed : (1) in a relationship for at least for 6 months, (2) residence in Turkey for at least 6 months in a yearly period, to ensure the ecosystem factors for the couples, (3) nationality of the wives to be Russian or German and that of the husbands to be Turkish, in order to control the confounding factors, generalising the results of the study and due to the percentage of bi-national marriages, (4) Russian and German wives who had at least

basic Turkish skills, in order to ensure using psychometrically appropriate measurement questionnaires, which were prepared in Turkish.

In this study, the researcher was able to contact 538 bi-national couples, 223 of whom volunteered to participate in the study. 171 of these voluntarily involved couples returned the response envelopes to the researcher thus, the response rate was 76%. 5 of them reported that they thought the questions consisted of 'private' questions, that they preferred not to answer and 1 of the wives found the standardised translation explanations inadequate, thus, 6 of the volunteered couples left the study. 15 of the husband' forms were either blank or had left more than one question unanswered, thus, the couples were excluded from the study.

The studies have indicated that psychological health is associated with marital satisfaction and that psychiatric illness would decrease marital satisfaction (Curran, Totenhagen, & Serido, 2010). Following from this fact 6 couples were recruited for this study because they reported current psychiatric treatment for such as depression or anxiety disorders, that can be confounding factor with regard to the research questions. One couple reported psychiatric treatment, in the form of marital counseling and this couple has been included in the study.

After the control for the criterias, 63 German-Turkish and 81 Russian-Turkish couples, in total 144 couples, 144 women and 144 men, totaling 288 individuals, were included in the study. All of the husbands were Turkish. The age of total sample ranged from 22 to 80, with a mean of 40.49 (SD=12.35). The age of the women ranged from 20 to 74, with a mean of 38.75 (SD=12.31); for German women, the range was 22 to 74 (Mean= 44.92, SD= 14.92) and for Russian women, 20 to 48 (Mean= 33.95, SD= 6.70). The age of men ranged from 23 to 80, with a mean of 42.43 (SD=12.17), for men married to a German, the range was 24 to 80 (Mean= 46.63, SD= 15.16) and for men married to a Russian, 23 to 60 (Mean= 39.16, SD= 7.85). The general characteristics of the sample have been shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

The length of the marriages of the German-Turkish couples ranged from 6 months to 50 years, with a mean of 15.13 (SD=13.17) and Russian-Turkish couples, 6 months to 20 years, with a mean of 6.58 (SD= 4.96).

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics according to gender

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
<b>Age (Mean, SD)</b>	20-74 (38.75, 12.31)	23-80 (42.43, 12.17)
<i>German-Turkish</i>	22-74 (44.92,14.92)	24-80 (46.63,15.16)
<i>Russian-Turkish</i>	20-48 (33.95,6.70)	23-60 (39.16,7.85)
<b>Nationality</b>		
<i>German (%)<sup>a</sup></i>	43.8 % (N=63)	43.8 % (N=63)
<i>Russian(%)</i>	56.3 % (N=81)	56.3 % (N=81)
<b>Place of Birth</b>		
<i>Germany(%)</i>	41.7 % (N=60)	4.2% (N=6)
<i>Russia(%)</i>	56.3 % (N=81)	
<i>Turkey(%)</i>		95.8 % (N=138)
<i>Other (%)</i>	2.1 % (N=3)	
<b>Length of Settlement (Mean, SD )</b>	10.98, 10.20	38.47, 11.77
<i>German-Turkish</i>	13.99, 13.13	39.65, 14.78
<i>Russian-Turkish</i>	8.63, 6.31	37.55, 8.73

*a.4.2% (N=6) of the German women had reported two citizenships, German and Turkish*

**Table 2.** Frequencies and percentages of demographic characteristics, according to the nationality and gender

	<b>Women</b>		<b>Men</b>	
	<b>German</b>	<b>Russian</b>	<b>German</b>	<b>Russian</b>
<b>Longest Settlement</b>				
<i>Germany(%)</i>	77.7 (N=49)		12.7% (N=8)	2.5 % (N=2)
<i>Russia(%)</i>		97.5 (N=79)		
<i>Turkey(%)</i>	22.2 (N=14)	2.5 (N=2)	87.3% (N=55)	97.5% (N=79)
<b>Education</b>				
<i>Primary School(%)</i>	3.2 % (N=2)	1.2 % (N=1)	3.2 % (N=2)	4.9 % (N=4)
<i>High School(%)</i>	30.2 % (N=19)	16.0 % (N=13)	22.2 % (N=14)	32.1 % (N=26)
<i>Vocational School(%)</i>	34.9 % (N=22)	17.3 % (N=14)	17.5 % (N=11)	21.0 % (N=17)
<i>University(%)</i>	22.2 % (N=14)	61.7 % (N=50)	44.4 % (N=28)	34.6 % (N=28)
<i>Masters(%)</i>	9.5 % (N=6)	3.7 % (N=3)	6.3 % (N=4)	6.2 % (N=5)
<i>PhD(%)</i>			6.3 % (N=4)	1.2 % (N=1)
<b>Occupation Status</b>				
<i>Working(%)</i>	34.9% (N=22)	45.7% (N=37)	69.8 (N=44)	92.6% (N=75)
<i>Non-working(%)</i>	65.1% (N=41)	54.3% (N=44)	30.2 % (N= 19)	7.4% (N=6)

4.2 % (N=6) of the men, whose nationality was Turkish, were born in Germany and, are married to a German women. 2.1% (N=3) of the German women was born in

a foreign European country, however, had either German nationality and had grown up in Germany, quite soon after birth.

In total, 72.9 % (N=105) of the couples had at least one child, 39% (N=27.1) had no children. In the Russian-Turkish sample, 35.8% (N=29) of the couples had one child, 25.9% (N=21), of them had two children and 6,2% (N=5) of them, had three children. None of the Russian- Turkish couples had four or more children. 27 % (N=17) of the German-Turkish couples had one child, 28.6 % (N=18) of them had two children, 11.1% (N=7) of them had three children and 1.6% (N=1) of them had four or more children.

Among the Russian-Turkish couples, 92.6% (N=75) of the men reported an employment status and 7.4% (N=6) of them reported non-employment status. Among German-married men, 69.8 (N=44) were employed and 30.2 % (N= 19) were unemployed. 34.9% (N=22) of the German women were employed, whereas, 65.1% (N=41) of them were unemployed. 45.7% (N=37) of Russian women were employed, with 54.3% (N=44) of them being unemployed.

The families' monthly income, according to nationality, ranged between; German-Turkish couples, 1000 to 20000 TL and for Russian-Turkish couples, 1000 to 20000 TL. 33.3% (N=21) of the German-Turkish couples and 24.7% (N=20) of the Russian-Turkish couples, did not report their income.

Among the couples, 63 of the women and 70 of the men had a university or a higher graduation degree. 65.4% of the Russian women, 31.7% German women, 42 % of the Russian-married men, 57% of the German-married men, had a university or a higher graduation degree.

30.2% (N=19) of the husbands among German-married men and 6.2% of the Russian-married men, had lived for at least 6 months abroad. The length of settlement outside Turkey, for German-married men, ranged from 2 to 58 years and for the Russian-married men, from 1 to 28 years. 22.2% (N=14) of the German women and 2.5% (N=2) of the Russian women, had spent their life time abroad, rather than in more than in their motherland.

Among German-Turkish couples, 50.8% (N=32) of the couples spoke German, 39.7% (N=25) spoke Turkish and 9.5% (N=6) spoke another language at home, as their common language. Among Russian-Turkish couples, 67.9% (N=55) spoke Turkish, 18.5% (N=15) spoke Russian and 13.6% (N=11) spoke another language at home, as the common language.

### **3.2 Instruments**

Instruments were planned in four parts; independent variables of individual traits, couple' traits and contextual factors and dependent variables. In the first part, the independent variables of individual traits; personality, perceived social support and acculturation attitudes were measured, by respectively, a Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, a Multiple Source of Perceived Social Support Inventory and an Acculturation Attitudes Scale. The second part consisted of couple' traits, conflict' management being assessed by a Conflict Resolution Style Scale, whereas, cultural distance was by a Cultural Distance Scale and language skills with a Language Proficiency Index. Contextual factors were the third part of the independent variables; Social Network Questionnaire, Tangible and Information Support Questions were the measurements of Received Social Support; a Negative Societal Reactions Index was the measurements of Societal Reactions, a Communication with Family of Origin Index was the measurement of Relations Family of Origin Relations and demographics traits were assessed by a demographic information form (age, sex, length of settlement, longest duration of settlement/country, education, income and duration of marriage). The final part was the dependent variable, Marital Satisfaction, which was measured by a Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Booklets were prepared, which consisted of, in total, 8 scales, 3 indexes and 2 questions, which were randomly shuffled in each booklet.

#### **3.2.1 Individual Traits Assessment Instruments**

Concerning the following psychometric properties, assessment tools for individual traits were introduced. Independent variables of individual traits; personality, perceived social support, and acculturation attitudes, were measured with,

respectively, a Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, a Multiple Source of Perceived Social Support Inventory and an Acculturation Attitudes Scale.

### **3.2.1.1 Personality: Multicultural Personality Questionnaire**

Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001), developed a multidimensional instrument, in order to assess effective personality traits in multicultural settings, this being named the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ). In the original form, MPQ consisted of five dimensions; Cultural Empathy (CE), Open-mindedness (OM), Social Initiative (SI), Emotional Stability (ES) and Flexibility (F). On a 5-point Likert type scale, ranging between (1), not at all applicable and (5), totally applicable, participants rate 18 items of CE, 18 items of OM, 17 items of SI, 20 items of ES and 18 items of F, in a total of 91 items.

Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000), suggest five personality traits which enhance multicultural effectiveness and should be assessed in a multicultural setting, namely cultural empathy, open-mindedness, emotional stability, flexibility and social initiative. An instrument that examines these five traits, in terms of multicultural effectiveness, would be used to as a diagnostic tool for determining the training needs of employees and enhancing the selection of international employees.

*Cultural Empathy refers to the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of members from different cultural groups. Open-mindedness refers to an open and unprejudiced attitude towards outgroup members and towards different cultural norms and values. Emotional Stability refers to a tendency to remain calm in a stressful situation. Flexibility reflects the ability to switch easily from one strategy to another. Social Initiative refers to the ability to establish and maintain contacts and the courage to take an action.*

In the original study of Van de Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000), subscales of MPQ were found reliable; Cronbach alpha coefficients of subscales CE (18 items), OM (18 items), SI (17 items), ES (20 items) and F (13 items) were, respectively, .81, .86, .96, .91 and .80. The discriminative power of the scale was found to be better than a Big Five Basic Traits Inventory on a student sample, in terms of cultural interest and participation in activities (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2001). Emotional

stability was deemed the least associated factor with other factors. According to the results, the social desirability of the questions decreases the validity of Cultural Empathy. The instrument has been successfully used in empirical studies and the results proved that the psychometric properties of the instrument for evaluating multicultural orientation and adaptability were stable across different cultures (Leone, Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Perugini & Ercolani, 2005). Additionally, MPQ has been found to be a suitable tool for discriminating among university students, with and without explicit international inspirations (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven (2001).

#### **3.2.1.1.2 Psychometric Studies of MPQ**

In this section the adaptation studies of MPQ into Turkish is presented. First translation procedure is introduced. Secondly, participants of the adaptation study is presented. Thirdly, validity studies are introduced. Lastly, the reliability studies are explained and the results are presented.

##### **3.2.1.1.2.1 Translation Studies of MPQ**

In order to translate MPQ into Turkish and conduct an adaptation study, permission was requested and granted from Van de Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000). A translation and back-translation procedure was followed (Savaşır, 1994). A committee, consisting of three bilingual clinical psychologists and two interpreter graduates in American Literature and Language, translated 91 items of MPQ t from English into Turkish. Furthermore, back translation was carried out, independently, by a bilingual clinical psychologist and an English-Turkish interpreter. Lastly, the committee revised the translated items and reached a consensus on each item.

Finally, the translated items of MPQ and a socio-demographic information form consisting of questions concerning age, gender, occupation, educational level, marital status and income, was prepared. All of the participants read the informed consent; if accepted, they participated in the study; responded to the socio-demographic information form and the questionnaire and returned the forms in an envelope.

### **3.2.1.1.2.2 Participants of Turkish Adaptation of MPQ**

A snowball sampling procedure (Boehnke et al., 2011) was employed for the adaptation study of the Turkish version of MPQ. It was given to the 209 men, 241 women, in total 450 individuals, living in Ankara and Antalya. The age of the total participants ranged from 18 to 67 years ( $M= 30.28$ ;  $SD= 9.15$ ); and with an average of age for men of 31.26 years ( $SD = 10.15$ ); and 29.39 years ( $SD = 8.20$ ), for women. 310 (68.9%) of the participants were single and 140 (31.1%) of the participants were married. More than half of the participants reported that they had a Bachelor's degree (69.8%) and they belonged to the middle SES (69.8%). Those participants who had spent their life in a village represented (2.4%,  $N=11$ ), town (15.6%,  $N=70$ ), city (26.2%,  $N=118$ ) and metropolitan area (55.8%,  $N=251$ ). 5 (1.3%) of the participants had had a primary education, 54 (12%) had a high school qualification, 314 (69.8%) of the participants had a university degree and 77 (17.1%) of the participants had a post-graduate degree.

### **3.2.1.1.2.2.3 Validity Studies of MPQ**

In this section, the results of the construct validity of MPQ were introduced. Firstly, the results of the Exploratory Factor Analyses were presented. Secondly, the modification for the MPQ in Turkish was examined and introduced as a Short-Form of MPQ.

#### **3.2.1.1.2.2.3.1 Construct Validity**

Prior to the analyses, the main data were examined for accuracy of data entry and missing values. The original form of MPQ has five factors, thus, the Turkish adapted form of MPQ was expected to have five factors. The construct validity of the MPQ was assessed, by means of Exploratory Factor Analyses. Exploratory Factor Analyses, with varimax rotation, was run on 91 items of MPQ. There were almost 5 cases for each variable and KMO and Bartlett's test gave the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy as .81, thus, the sample size was found sufficient and the factorability of R assumption was satisfactory.

The results of the Exploratory Factor Analyses, with varimax rotation, indicated that the Turkish adapted version of MPQ supported a 5-factor structure. The first

factor, namely Open mindedness, explained 15.08% of the variance; the second factor, namely Cultural Empathy, explained 7.19% of the variance; the third factor, namely Social Initiative, explained 5.16% of the variance; the fourth factor, namely Flexibility, explained 3.94% of the variance and the final and fifth factor, namely Emotional Stability explained, 3.66 % or the variance. Five factors accounted for 35.03% of the total variance.

The items that had factor loadings of under .40 were deleted from the original scale. Factor loadings for OM, CE, SI, Flx, ES, respectively, ranged from .62 to .42; .72 to .41; .71 to .42; .68 to .40; .69 to .40. The factor loadings were indicating high moderate factor loadings. There were items with cross-loadings that indicated a modification was necessary for the scale.

According to the results, a satisfactory the construct validity of the scale is supported by 63 items. The underlying structure of the scale is valid, in Turkish, however, the original form consisted of 91 items and in the current form, there is a significant decrease in the number of items considered. According to the factor loadings a modification of the scale was suggested, the construct validity was tested with a 63-item form and possible modifications were evaluated, which is presented in the following section.

### **3.2.1.1.2.2.3.2 Construct Validity of MPQ-Short Form**

In order to observe construct validity and the required modifications for the MPQ- Turkish Form, a confirmatory factory analyses was performed. A confirmatory factor analysis enables a direct examination of the underlying structure (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006). The Dimensionality of the 63-item-MPQ was tested through Lisrel 8.80 Version (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006), using the generated covariance matrix from twenty-five items.

According to the first study of validity, a modification in the MPQ, as a short form, is suggested. A confirmatory factory analyses was performed, in order to assess the five factor structure of the MPQ, with a 5--item model.

The initial model was suggested to have five factors; Cultural Empathy (items 14, 31, 36, 51, 61, 63, 68, 70, 71, 80, 86, 89), Emotional Stability (items 3, 5, 15, 23,

46, 53, 55, 67, 69, 72, 75, 85), Open-mindedness (10, 12, 20, 21, 27, 28, 35, 48, 54, 58, 62, 66, 73, 74, 78, 84, 90), Social Initiative (items 4, 7, 9, 24, 25, 34, 38, 39, 40, 47, 50, 65) and Flexibility (11, 16, 22, 29, 37, 43, 76, 83, 91), with a total of 63 items.

Initial measurement of the model was specified by Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) and according to the chi-square index, the observed data was significant ( $\chi^2$  (285, N=398) = 1267.73,  $p < .05$ ). Since, the chi-square is sensitive to sample size and has a bias to give a significant result in a sample size of greater than 200, X/df ratio and fit statistics were examined. Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness-of-Fit (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit (AGFI) and Norm Fit Index (NFI), were used. RMSEA=.10 acceptable, additionally NFI (NFI=.76), CFI (CFI=.80), GFI (GFI=.77) and AGFI (AGFI=.73), indicates an acceptable fit.

The model with 63 items was acceptable, however, an improvement was required, therefore, a 5-item model, which consisted of 5-items in each dimension was proposed as a short form of MPQ for testing the five-factor structure of the MPQ. A 5-item model, with the factors Cultural Empathy (items 68, 70, 71, 80, 86), Emotional Stability (items 46, 55, 67, 69, 72), Open-mindedness (10, 35, 58, 62, 90), Social Initiative (items 4, 9, 25, 34, 40) and Flexibility (11, 16, 37, 43, 83), was tested.

MLE results indicate that, the observed data was significant- ( $\chi^2$  (285, N=398) = 4344.32,  $p < .05$ ). The model was found to be a reasonably acceptable fit, with RMSEA equal to .10 and  $\chi^2$  /df was below 1/5, CFI suggesting a good fit (CFI=. 81). The other indicators suggest a moderate fit of the model, with values of around .62-.76 (NFI= .76, GFI=.64, AGFI=.62), which indicates a better fit than the 63-item model

There was a moderate correlation between open-mindedness and cultural empathy (.58) and a low correlation between open-mindedness and social initiative (.38). The Social initiative factor had a low correlation with cultural empathy (.29) and emotional stability (.30). The correlations between factors, except for the four path, ranged from -.03 to .19.

Generally factor loadings varied between .56 to .89, items of Cultural Empathy loadings being between .80-.58, Emotional Stability loadings were between .72-.56,

Social Initiative were between .74 and .64, Open-mindedness were between .82 and .51; and Flexibility were between .74 and .52. All loadings were significant and this indicates structural validity. Although modifications were suggested for the items, for the applicability of the scale, the model with a 5-item model was accepted. The results of the confirmatory factor analyses were shown in Figure 6.

#### **3.2.1.1.2.2.4 Reliability and Validity Studies of MPQ-Short Form**

In this section firstly, the participants of Reliability and Validity Studies of MPQ-Short Form, secondly the measurements of the studies, lastly criterion validity and reliability studies are introduced.

##### **3.2.1.1.2.2.4.1 Participants and Procedure of Studies of Short Form of MPQ**

The participants in the studies of MPQ- Short Form (SF) comprised 64 women, 42 men, in total, 106 individuals, ages ranging from 20 to 76 (M=27.12, SD=7.72). A snowball sampling (Frey et al., 2000) procedure applied in this study.

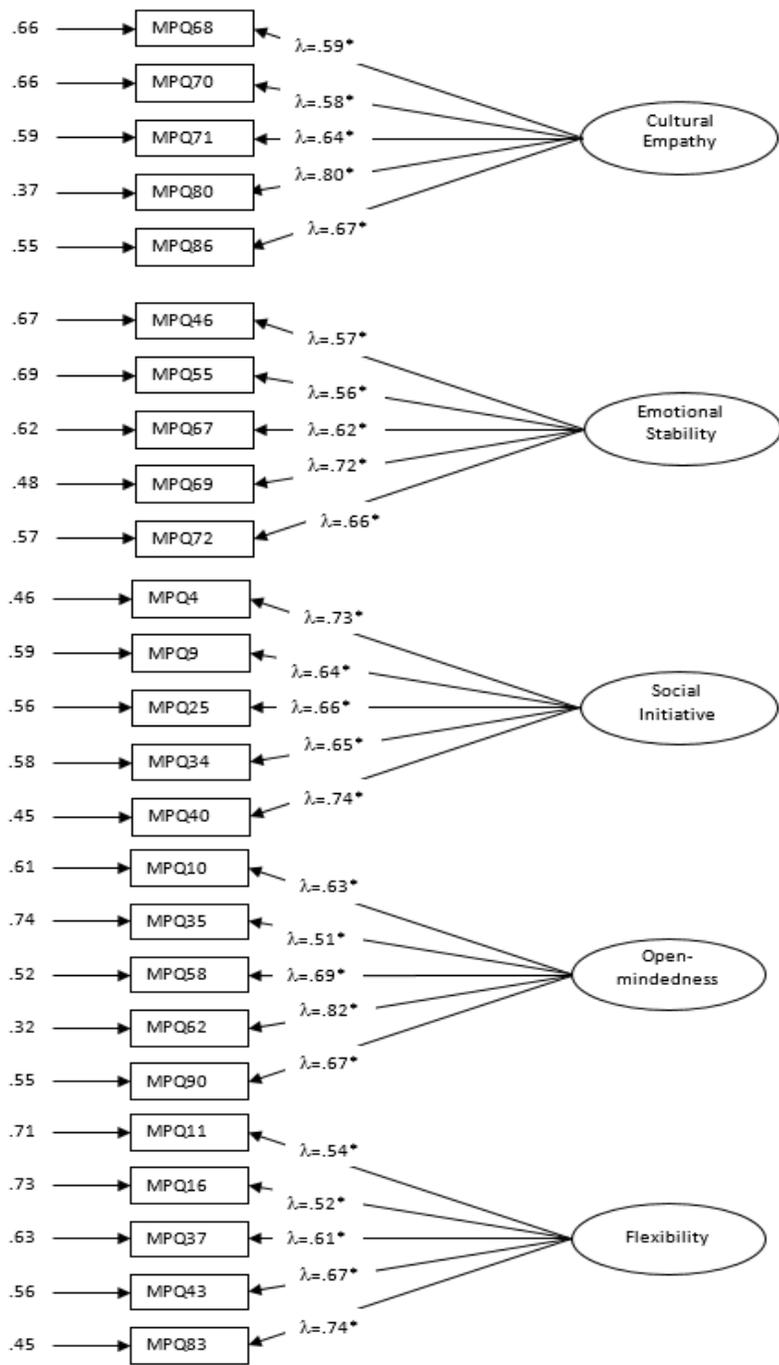
All participants were asked to complete three forms, consisting of a demographic form, Multicultural personality Inventory and Basic Personality Traits Inventory. Participants were informed that the aim of this study concerned adapting a personality questionnaire to Turkish requirements.

##### **3.2.1.1.2.2.4.2 Measures of Studies of Short Form of MPQ**

*Demographic form.* A demographic form, which has been prepared by the researcher, consists of the information concerning age, gender, education, employment status and income.

##### *Basic Personality Traits.*

Öncül and Gençöz (2012), developed the Basic Personality Traits Inventor (BPTI), in order to examine personality factors in Turkish culture. The inventory assesses six personality factors namely, *Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Openness to experience and Negative valence*, on a 5-point scale. In total, 45 person-descriptive adjectives, as items, are required to rate for assessment; 8 items on *Extraversion*, 8 items on *Conscientiousness*, 8 items on *Agreeableness*, 9 items on *Neuroticism*, 6 items on *Openness to experience* and 6 items on *Negative Valence*.



**Figure 6.** Item loadings and factor structure of MPQ

### **3.2.1.1.2.2.4.3 Criterion Validity of Short Form of MPQ**

In this study, in order to test criterion validity, Basic Personality Traits was used. The zero-order correlations of MPQ with the Basic Personality Traits factors were analysed, in order to assess the construct validity of the short form of MPQ.

Cultural Empathy had the highest correlation with Agreeableness, .34,  $p < .001$ . The correlation coefficients observed between MPQ and Basic Personality Traits Inventory factor are significant for; Emotional Stability and Neuroticism (-.55,  $p < .001$ ); Open-mindedness and Openness to experience (.20,  $p < .05$ ); Social Initiative and Extraversion (.78,  $p < .001$ ); Flexibility and Conscientiousness (-.49,  $p < .001$ ).

The findings are consistent with Leone and colleagues (2005) that Social Initiative displayed the highest correlation with Extraversion, Emotional Stability with Neuroticism and Open-mindedness with Openness to experience, Cultural Empathy with Agreeableness and Flexibility with Conscientiousness. Correlation coefficients were not high, except for Social Initiative with Extraversion, however, they were acceptable for a concurrent validity.

### **3.2.1.1.2.2.4.3 Reliability Studies of Short Form of MPQ**

In order to test reliability of the five sub scales of the MPQ Cronbach Alpha scores were calculated. Cronbach's Alpha for the Cultural Empathy, Social Initiative, Emotional Stability, Open-mindedness and Flexibility were .80, .82, .63, .70 and .69 respectively. The high internal consistencies were high for Cultural Empathy and Social Initiative. A moderate, acceptable internal consistency were observed for Emotional Stability, Open-mindedness and Flexibility.

### **3.2.1.2 Perceived Social Support: Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support**

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), a self-reporting measure of subjectively, assesses three different sources of support. The original form of the scale was developed by Zimet, Dahlen, Zimet & Farley (1988). Three sub-scales, each addressing a different source of support, consist of (a) Family, (b) Friends, and (c) Significant Others. Each sub-scale of the 7-point likert type scale has 4 items, in total, 12 items. An assessment is obtained through the scores of three

sub-scales and the total score. Increased scores address increased perceived social support for the person from a particular source or in general.

The adaptation of the Turkish form of MSPSS was studied by Eker and Arkar (1995) and Eker, Arkar and Yıldız (2001). In the Turkish version of MSPSS, there was a factorial validity (Eker and Arkar, 1995) and it was able to distinguish psychiatric patients and non-patient groups, plus, decreased scores of UCLA Loneliness Scale, Beck Depression Inventory and Symptom Check List, were all associated with increased scores of MSPSS, thus, MSPSS demonstrated a high criteria validity (not: sayısal değerleri ve yöntemini ekle) (Eker, Arkar and Yıldız, 2001). The Turkish version of MSPSS has high internal consistency, Cronbach Alpha values for total .89, family subscale .85, friend subscale .88 and significant other .92.

### **3.2.1.3 Acculturation: Acculturation Attitudes Scale**

Acculturation attitudes was measured according to the model suggested by Berry (1976, cited in Ataca, 1998), by the Acculturation Attitudes Scale (Ataca, 1998). According to the model, a scale is arranged for four dimensions of acculturation attitudes; separation, assimilation, integration and marginalisation. 11 subjects, regarding Turkish community life in Canada, were determined by Ataca (1998), these being friendship, life style, social activities, food, holiday, celebrations, use of language, decoration, newspaper readership children's values, children's moving out and child-rearing styles. Ataca (1998), transposed the scale into Turkish in Canada, for Turkish immigrants. Four sub-scales were used, consisting of four dimensions and accordingly, the model assessed eleven topics, friendship, life style, social activities, food, holiday, celebrations, use of language, decoration, newspaper readership children's values, children moving out, as well as child-rearing styles. Participants were asked to evaluate their attitudes on 44 first person singular worded statements, on a 5-point Likert type scale, '(1) – strong disagreement' and '(5) - strong agreement'. Each sub-scale consisted of 11 statements. Bektaş (2004), revised the scale for Turkish students living in USA, by removing questions concerning child-rearing styles. In total, 36 questions were used in that study. Internal consistency coefficients of the sub-scales were integration .84, separatim. 89, assimilation .83 and marginalization .78.

This study participants were either German citizens living in Turkey, Russian citizens living in Turkey or Turkish citizens lived in Germany or Russia. The result was that, the questions of Acculturation Attitudes Scale were arranged according to the target participant, thus, four different forms were prepared, simply by changing the name of the country in the statements and in the instructions. The Internal consistency coefficients of sub-scales integration, separation, assimilation and marginalisation were respectively, in Russian wives from .75, .66, .85, .84; in German wives from, .70, .80, .78, .64; in Turkish husband's from for German culture, .70, .79, .77, .73 and in Turkish husbands, from for Russian culture; .81, .73, .81, .73.

### **3.2.2 Couple Traits Assessment Instruments**

In the following psychometric properties, the assessment tools for couple traits were introduced. Independent variables of couple' traits; conflict resolution style, cultural distance and language skills were measured with, respectively; Conflict Resolution Style Scale, Cultural Distance Scale, and Language Proficiency Index.

#### **3.2.2.1 Conflict Management: Conflict Resolution Style Scale**

In order to examine the couples' reactions towards conflicts, a Conflict Resolution Style Scale (CRSS), developed by Özen (2006), was employed. On a 6-point likert type between, '1= totally disagree' and '6=totally agree', self-reporting scale, with four different conflict resolution styles, namely positive conflict resolution style, negative conflict resolution style, subordination and retreat, are assessed. Thus, the scale consists of 4 sub-scales and 25 items, a score for each sub-scale is calculated for each couple and there is no total score; higher scores on a particular sub-scales indicate the conflict resolution style of the partner.

Split half reliability analysis results indicated between high and moderate internal consistency, between .74 - .55. Internal consistency was also evaluated with Cronbach Alpha scores. Reliability scores of the sub-scales of CRSS for positive conflict resolution style; .80, negative conflict resolution style .82, subordination .74, and retreat .73.

The four-factor construct of the scale explained 52% of the variance and confirmed the construct validity. Sub-scales of the CRSS showed significant

correlations with Kurdek's Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI), conflict engagement (from CRSI) and negative conflict resolution style (from CRSS) .75, positive problem solving (from CRSI) and positive conflict resolution style (from CRSS) .61, withdrawal (from CRSI) and retreat (from CRSS) .45, compliance (from CRSI) and subordination (from CRSS).39, for supporting criterion validity (Özen, 2006).

### **3.2.2.2 Cultural Distance: Cultural Distance Scale**

The perceived cultural differences between couples were measured by the Cultural Distance Scale (CDS) (Bektaş, 2004). Ward and Rana-Deuba (1999) Bektaş (2004), adapted CDS from The Acculturation Index, developed by).

The original form of The Acculturation Index (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999), consisted of 21 items, which assess the experience and similarities on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The scale assess cognitive perspective, as well as behavioural factors as regard clothing, pace of life, general knowledge, food, religious beliefs, material comfort, recreation activities, self-identity, family life, accommodation/residence, values, friendship, communication styles, cultural activities, language, employment activities, perceptions of co-nationals, perception of host nationals, political ideology, world view and social customs.

Bektaş (2004) adapted twelve items, these being clothing, communication style, religious, family life, values, friendship, language, food, customs, world view, social activities and life standards. The similarities of the dimensions were to be rated on a 5-point scale, ranging between, '*1=very similar*', to '*5=very different*'. Higher scores on the scale indicated greater perceived cultural distance. Internal consistency, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found .81, in the original study.

In this study, the instruction was changed according to the partners' nationality. Turkish partners were evaluated on their perceived cultural difference to either German or Russian culture, depending on their wife's nationality. Russian and German partners were asked to evaluate their perceived cultural difference from Turkish culture. Internal consistency coefficients of the scale was found for Turkish

partner-German culture, instructed from was .89, Turkish partner-Russian culture instructed from was .93, Russian partner from was .89, German partner from was .89.

### **3.2.2.3 Language Skills: A language skills index**

A language skills index was created, according to the study of Ataca and Berry (2002). A self-report language skills index of, ‘understanding, reading, writing, speaking’, skills on daily language was developed by a commission, consisting of three psychologists and a psychological counselor.

At first, partners were asked to evaluate their language skills, depending on their partner’s mother language. In the second part, they evaluated their partner’s skills concerning their own language. If they spoke a common language, apart from one of the partner’s mother language, partners evaluated their skills based on the common language. The reports were scored on 5-point scale, ranging between, ‘(0) no knowledge’ and ‘(5) very good’. A total self-report score was calculated by adding partner-reported index score and own evaluation, higher scores indicating improved proficiency in language.

### **3.2.3 Contextual Factors Assessment Instruments**

Contextual factors were the third part of the independent variables; *Social Network Questionnaire*, *Tangible and Information Support Questions* were the measurements of Received Social Support, *Negative Societal Reactions Index* was the measurements of Societal Reactions, *Communication with Family of Origin Index* was the measurement of Relations Family of Origin Relations and demographics traits were assessed by a *demographic information form* (age, sex, length of settlement, longest duration of settlement/country, education, income, duration of marriage).

#### **3.2.3.1 Received Social Support**

In the literature, received social support concept was proposed in two classification; social network and supportive behaviours (Cohen et. al., 1986). Supportive behaviours either can be instrumental or informational, thus, two different assessment tools were used to evaluate the received social support: Social Network Questionnaire and tangible and informational support questions.

### **3.2.3.1.1 Received Social Support: Tangible and Informational Support**

#### **Questions:**

Cohen and his colleagues (1986) defined;

- (1) Information support; an actual assistance that is available when a person needs any knowledge or advice, is information.
- (2) Tangible support; actual assistance that is available when a person needs any financial or material support.

In order to assess the resource and the quantity of support, participants were asked to report whether they received any financial support and resources of informational and financial support, when need be.

“Do you receive any financial support?”

“When you need any informational support, to whom do you ask?”

“When you need any financial support, to whom do you ask?”

Participants could report more than one source for each question on a list comprising, ‘myself, my partner, my family of origin, my partner’s family of origin, institutions and other’. The source of the support was noted for the results, additionally, more source indicated receiving more support.

### **3.2.3.1.2 Received Social Support: Social Network Questionnaire:**

Social network refers to the existence and quantity of the social relationship and the Social Network Questionnaire consists of six questions that assess the number of individuals who met under certain conditions. In each question, participants reported a number of individuals from, ‘None’ to 16 +’ on a 7-point likert-type scale. Higher numbers on the scale indicated an extensive social network.

Arkar and his colleagues (2004), first used the six questions in their study, however, the reliability of the scale was assessed by Tezer and Arkar (2013). In order to examine the internal consistency of the scale, a Cronbach alpha coefficient was used and found .79.

### **3.2.3.2 Societal Reaction: Negative Societal Reactions Index**

In order to assess societal reaction, the items of, ‘Negative Societal Reactions Index’ of the PREP-M questionnaire, which was developed by Holman, Busby and

Larson (2001), was used. The items were translated into Turkish by the researcher. The perceived degree of approval of their relationship received from own father, mother, friends, father-in-law, mother-in-law, husband's/wife's friends, were assessed on a 5-point likert-type scale, ranging between, '(1) totally not approved' and '(4) totally approved' and '(5) I don't know'. 'I don't know', answers were excluded from the scoring. An average of the total score was calculated separately for husbands and wives.

### **3.2.3.3 Relations with Family of Origin: Communication with Family of Origin Index**

An index named, Communication with Family of Origin Index, with two questions prepared according to the literature that immigrants may lose their social network and contacts (Ataca ve Berry, 2002; Copeland & Norell, 2002). The frequency of face-to-face and other types of (via phone, Internet) social contact with members of family origin was assessed. Participants were asked to evaluate the frequency of the contact on a 4-point scale, ranging between, 'none, often, sometimes, always'. The questions were:

1. I still have face-to-face contact with my origin of the family
2. I still have contact with my family via phone, Internet etc.

Higher numbers indicated more frequent contact with members of family of origin.

A total score was established for the frequency of communication.

### **3.2.3.4 Demographic Information Form**

A Demographic Information form was developed by the researcher, to obtain demographic information about some demographic characteristics of the partners and information concerning their experiences, led by nationality and language differences. In order to obtain demographic information, details as regards age, gender, education level, employment status, total income, total number of children, and length of marriage and previous the psychiatric treatment/problems, were requested are asked. Information was requested regarding experiences and characteristics, led by nationality differences was obtained concerning citizenship, mother tongue, length of settlement, longest length of settlement, and commonly used language at home.

### **3.2.4 Dependent Variable**

In the following a Dyadic Adjustment Scale was introduced as the assessment tool, for dependent variable, marital satisfaction.

#### **3.2.4.1 Marital Satisfaction: Dyadic Adjustment Scale**

A Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), one of the more widely used assessment tools for evaluating the quality of a relationship and marital satisfaction, was developed by Spainer (1976) and was employed in this study. DAS consists of 32 items and four sub-scales; namely dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and affectional expression.

Two items were included in a “yes-no” format, other items for response being on a 5-point, 6-point and 7-point likert-type scale. The total score of the scale ranged between 0-151, with higher scores indicating more satisfaction with the relationship.

DAS was adapted into Turkish by Fıfılođlu and Demir (2000). The internal consistency of the scale in the Turkish sample was found to be .92, and Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the sub-scales of dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus and affectional expression, were respectively, .83, .75, .75 and .80. A Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test was used to evaluate criterion validity and it was found significantly correlated, .82 that is, indicating high criterion validity.

### **3.3 Data Collection Procedure**

A battery of questionnaires was prepared, consisting of Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, Acculturation Attitudes Questionnaire, Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale, Conflict Resolution Style Scale, Cultural Distance Scale, Language Proficiency Index, Social Network Questionnaire, Tangible and Information Support Questions, Received Social Support, Negative Societal Reactions Index, Communication with Family of Origin Index, Dyadic Adjustment Scale and demographic information form (age, sex, length of settlement, longest duration of settlement/country, education, income, duration of marriage). According to the culturally determined independent variables, German-Turkish and Russian-Turkish pairs of batteries of questionnaires were prepared, in total, with 8 scales, 3 indices and 2 questions, which were randomly shuffled for each battery. As a result of there being

more than one questionnaire, the researcher randomly changed the sequence of the questions in the batteries, in order to control the sequential effect. The batteries of questionnaires were placed in separate envelopes for the husbands and wives, then two envelopes were each placed in one bigger envelope. Each envelope had pair numbers for matching dyads.

A series of announcements was made at meetings of friendship organisations, associations, and in publications of the associations. After obtaining institutional permission, Turkish courses for the foreigners and several agencies, which mostly employ foreigners, were visited by the researcher. Lastly, by contacting the managers of the buildings, the aim of the study was explained in detail, the scientific purpose of the study being highlighted, in asking for support and cooperation. Couples referred to the researcher that fitted the criteria of different nationalities, length of marriage and who had volunteered to participate in the study, were contacted for participation. An appointment was made with each couple, to meet privately and at an appropriate location.

Couples were approached by the researcher and given a basic explanation of the study, confirming that it was a doctoral dissertation study of how bi-national couples have built a satisfying marriage and assuring them that the result would only be used for scientifically purposes. They understood that, if chosen to be part of the study, they would be asked to complete a self-report questionnaire, taking about half an hour and they could terminate their participation at any time. Couples were asked to complete questionnaires individually and to place their questionnaires in the envelope, without looking at their partner's answers.

Meetings with the participants consisted of a few warm up questions and discussion, to build trust and alliance. The participants were informed about the statistical importance of the dyadic assessment and about the logic of how similar responses have a corruptive effect on statistical results. In order to ensure that husbands and wives do not see or copy their individual responses, they were asked to fill out the form in separate areas, such as in separate rooms or at separate tables.

The researcher accompanied the German and Russian participants, in case they had any questions regarding vocabulary because the questionnaires were in Turkish. Standardised explanations were prepared by a bilingual psychologist and a professional translator (interpreter) in both Russian and German, thus allowing a partner's questions to be answered according to explanations in their mother language. On the other hand, husbands were allowed to fill out their form alone and if so desired, to take the questionnaire somewhere else, such as the workplace, later returning the booklet. In order to prevent blanks or misunderstandings in the booklets, husbands were asked whether they understood all of the questions and had answered each question.

Language skills effected the duration of the study for the German and Russians. The duration varied from 30 minutes to 90 minutes. Husbands were able to fill out the forms in about 30 to 40 minutes, as indicated in the informed consent.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Procedure**

Prior to the analyses, the accuracy of the main data was examined by controlling data entry, missing values and assumptions of multivariate analyses. Due to the limited participant numbers, blanks were substituted by the mean values. Nonetheless, some cases left one aspect unanswered, these cases being excluded from analysis, by pairwise deletion. For the multivariate analysis, Mahalanobis distance was employed and no cases were identified as multivariate outlier.

The descriptive characteristics of the measures and the main effects, were examined prior to examining the unique contributions of the independent variables and APIM, for several reasons. In the first step, mean scores, standard deviations, minimum and maximum ranges and correlations were examined, in order to describe the characteristics of the measure.

Secondly, in order to observe the accuracy of the data for Actor-Partner Interdependence Model analysis, the correlations and the main affect of the variables, differences between husbands' and wives' and differences between husbands and wives of German-Turkish Couples and husbands and wives of Russian-Turkish Couples, were tested; 2x2 Between Subjects Factorial Design ANOVA analysis tested by using a

SPSS 15.00 statistical programme. Kenny, Kashy and Cook (2006), suggested controlling main effects when assessing interactional effects because if the actor and partner similarities can be confounding, that results can be significant.

Due to the fact that there are insufficient literature findings as regards composing and examining a model for bi-national marriages, an explanatory strategy is followed. Thus, thirdly, in order to identify the best predictors of marital satisfaction at each level, stepwise regression analyses were performed separately for individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, for actors and partners. A stepwise multiple regression analysis make it possible to statistically eliminate independent (predictor) variables, according to their predictive role on dependent (criterion) variables (Tabachnic & Fidell, 2001).

Forth, actor-partner effects (APIM) were examined by a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, which was employed by using predictors of both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction.

Lastly, analyses were extended by examining the predictive role of the level similarities on particular variables, according to the hypothesis. The similarity effects were examined for individual traits, such as personality, acculturation attitude, and perceived social support; couple traits as conflict resolution style, cultural distance and language skills, and contextual factors as demographics (age, gender, education) and received social support (social network). Prior to the analyses, absolute differences values for each variable were calculated, by subtracting husbands' score from wives' scores. Similar to the previous analyses, explanatory strategy stepwise regression analysis and APIM test are planned.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of the statistical findings of the current study. First descriptive statistics and main effects are introduced. Secondly, correlations of the study variables are presented. Thirdly, actor-partner and interaction effects are introduced.

#### 4.1 Descriptive Characteristics

Mean, standard deviation and minimum-maximum range were computed for all study variables, separately for husbands and wives and for German-Turkish Couples' (GTC) wives and Russian-Turkish Couples' (RTC) wives, GTC husbands and RTC husbands.

The assumptions were controlled regarding the unequal variances and confounding factors. Both husbands and wives were asked to complete the same scales, in order to avoid confounding factors. Additionally, SDs were acceptable, with the largest difference between husbands' and wives' being 2.87 for language skills, followed by the difference between integration attitudes, at .99. Additionally, multicollinearity was not concerned, according to the correlation results (See Table 3).

#### 4.2 Correlations

In this section firstly the correlations between actor's own scores for dependent variables, secondly the correlations between dependent variables and independent variable for both husbands and wives are presented. Results of the correlation analysis are depicted in Table 3.

##### 4.2.1 Correlations between Actor's Own Scores

###### 4.2.1.1 Husbands' Correlations

The correlation scores were observed between husband's own score on the scales and sub-scales of the IVs and DVs. With the correlations between the sub-scales of the same IV, significant correlation coefficients were between low and moderate, ranging between .17 and .43 .

**Table 3.** Correlations within actor variables, correlations between spouses IVs and DV

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Personality	1.CE	<b>.30***</b>	.08	.51***	.24**	-.00	.10	.07	.15	.08	.24**	-.08	-.14	-.17*	.17*
	2.ES	.12	<b>.08</b>	-.06	.05	.36***	.02	.07	-.16	.05	-.00	-.15	.00	-.11	-.12
	3.OM	.40***	.05	<b>.37***</b>	.39***	.01	.16	.13	.26**	.27**	.28**	.01	-.06	-.00	.20*
	4.SI	.17	.22**	.38**	<b>.08</b>	-.05	.25**	.19*	.17*	.16	.09	-.05	.02	.08	.15
	5.FLX	-.20	.34***	-.03	-.10	<b>.09</b>	.05	.04	.02	.11	.04	.08	-.17	-.10	-.19**
MSPSS	6.Fam.	.23**	.16	.18*	.03	.03	<b>.45***</b>	.57***	.17*	.51***	.25**	-.14	-.13	-.03	.18*
	7.Fri.	.16	.18*	.26**	.14	.02	.55***	<b>.33***</b>	.28**	.56***	.22**	-.12	.08	-.16	.21*
	8. Sig. Ot.	.20*	.06	.13	.11	.06	.23**	.51***	<b>.22**</b>	.42***	.09	-.04	-.06	.04	.08
	9.Total	.25**	.17*	.25**	.13	.04	.68***	.83***	.76***	<b>.76***</b>	.21*	-.06	-.12	-.13	.15
Acculturation	10. Intg	.42***	.14	.43***	.15	-.03	.24**	.30***	.23**	.32***	<b>.14</b>	-.02	-	.14	.17*
	11.Mar	-.10	-.22**	.14	-.10	-.14	-.06	.01	.03	.03	.05	<b>.26**</b>	.06	.23**	.03
	12. ReJ	-.10	-.09	-.06	.06	-.09	-.05	-.05	-.08	-.10	-	-.03	<b>-.02</b>	-	-.01
111 Conf.Mang.	13. Assim	-.18*	-	-.01	-.23**	-.21*	-.19*	-.12	-.04	-.09	.08	.49***	-.14*	<b>.08</b>	<b>.14</b>
	14. Pos	.25**	.03	.18*	.20*	-.08	.25**	.17*	.15	.23**	.21*	-.01	-.06	-.12	<b>.17</b>
	15. Neg	-.28**	-	.00	-.03	-.10	-.20*	-.15	-.08	-.18*	-.24**	-.00	.33***	.07	-.15
	16. Sub	.22*	-.17*	.17*	.10	-	.15	.12	.08	.14	.05	-.07	.21*	-.04	.43***
	17. Ret	.02	-.25**	.01	.00	-.12	-.21*	-.16	-.12	-.17*	-.15	-.02	.20*	.02	-.12
Lang. Prof.	18. Lhus	-.06	.00	.04	.18*	-.13	.08	.15	-.03	.04	.06	-.03	-.12	-.03	.05
	19.Lwom	.03	.10	.11	.11	-.02	.18*	.07	-.01	.10	.05	-.20*	.04	-.14	.24**
CD	20.CD	.21*	.13	.18*	.14	-.06	.29***	.35***	.21**	.31***	.23**	.14	-.03	.02	.10
Social Net.	21. SN	.09	.30***	.13	.30***	.09	.26**	.39***	.24**	.36***	.16	-.27**	.08	-	.08
Tangible	22. TS	.07	.16	.20*	.01	.06	.29***	.25**	.11	.26**	.18*	-.09	-.04	-.06	.17
Informa	23. IS	.09	.16	.15	.04	-.01	.26**	.18*	.13	.21*	.07	-.11	-.07	-.09	.06
SR	24. SRHus	.16	.04	.08	.04	-.07	.27**	.26**	.21*	.27**	.06	-.07	.11	.04	.05
	25. SRWife	.32***	.06	.12	.12	-.05	.27**	.29**	.17*	.27**	.14	-.07	-.01	-.01	.21*
RFO	26. Visit	.11	.10	.13	-.02	.14	.33***	.18*	.10	.25**	.07	-.09	.03	-.08	-.03
	27.Contact	.06	.11	.16	.01	.15	.43***	.23**	.11	.28**	.18*	-.22**	-.02	-.09	.04
Marital Satis	28. MS	.37***	.25**	.24**	.15	-.05	.51***	.30***	.05	.32***	.37***	-.08	-.20*	-.06	.22**

**Note:** Diagonal correlations show cross-spouses correlations. Correlations below the diagonal depicts husbands' correlations, and above wives' correlations

**Table 3.** (continued) Correlations within actor variables, correlations between spouses IVs and DV

		15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Personality	1.CE	.02	.02	.04	.03	-.15	.24**	.15	.17*	.08	.10	.13	-.00	.17*	.18*
	2.ES	.11	.11	.18*	-.15	-.03	.09	-.10	-.07	-.08	.01	.03	-.07	-.02	.05
	3.OM	.15	-.08	-.02	.16	-.03	.22**	.18	.12	.05	.18*	.17*	.02	.11	.12
	4.SI	.43***	-.13	-.07	.04	.07	.08	.32***	-.02	-.08	-.01	.10	.12	.03	.07
	5.FLX	.03	.10	.13	.02	-.01	.12	-.02	.07	.00	.06	.08	.03	.08	-.01
MSPSS	6.Fam.	-.14	-.01	-.16	.15	.08	.11	.21*	.04	.03	.40***	.42***	.18*	.27**	.43***
	7.Fri.	-.04	-.01	-.14	.06	.13	.02	.35***	.13	.10	.38	.25**	.20*	.23**	.18*
	8. Sig. Ot.	-.01	.03	.03	.11	.05	.09	.21*	.13	.05	.13	-.02	.30***	.08	.09
	9.Total	-.04	.12	.02	.08	.11	.10	.26**	.12	.12	.26**	.27**	.30***	.20*	.25**
Acculturation	10. Intg	.00	.27**	.04	-.05	.18*	.26**	.09	.10	-.01	.14	.14	.04	.11	.21*
	11.Mar	.19*	-.05	-.04	.01	-.03	.12	-.07	-.15	-.08	-.19*	-.11	.00	-.15	-.23**
	12. ReJ	.18*	-.20*	.01	.05	-.10	-.24**	-.15	-.10	-.12	-.03	-.14	-.15	-.10	-.20*
	13. Assim	.09	.34***	.19*	.22**	.15	.30***	-.08	-.15	-.16	-.04	.00	-.04	.30***	-.01
Conf.Mang.	14. Pos	-.01	.02	-.24**	.18*	.15	.09	.22**	.11	.23**	.10	.13	.04	.04	.11
	15. Neg	.30***	-.15	.01	-.14	-.02	-.03	-.13	-.21*	-.19*	-.14	-.15	-.09	-.14	-.29**
Lang. Prof.	16. Sub	-.09	.28**	.56***	-.01	.17*	.24	-.05	-.06	-.11	-.02	.04	-.11	-	.14
	17. Ret	.14	.31***	.12	-.03	.01	.05	-.14	-.04	-.13	-.12	-.09	-.14	-.17*	.01
	18. Lhus	-.04	.00	.02	1	-.10	-.01	.09	.06	.13	.16	.15	.13	.08	.11
	19.Lwom	-.10	.15	-.03	-.10	1	.11	.10	-.06	-.01	.05	.05	.01	-.00	.08
CD	20.CD	-.07	.04	-.13	.24**	.11	.25**	.05	-.02	-.10	.09	.04	-.02	-.04	.19*
Social Net.	21. SN	-.17*	.14	-.07	.14	.10	.11	.20*	.23**	.26**	.09	.08	.17*	.20*	.17*
Tangible	22. TS	-.18*	.14	-.23**	.06	.06	.09	.26**	.30***	.62***	.17*	.10	.07	.11	.01
Informa	23. IS	-	.11	-.13	-.06	.07	.01	.26**	.60***	.30***	.15	.10	-.01	.09	.01
SR	24. SRHus	-.07	.11	-.10	.16	.05	.12	.26**	.17*	.21*	1	.61***	.04	.13	.27***
	25. SRWife	-.15	-.18*	-.03	.16	.05	.14	.12	.14	.24**	.61***	1	.09	.21*	.29***
RFO	26. Visit	-.05	-.00	.03	.03	.16	.22**	.23**	.27**	.27**	.34***	.26**	.08	.38***	.16
	27.Contact	.01	.02	-.06	.04	.16*	.16	.21*	.28**	.25**	.33***	.32**	.75**	.24**	.18
Marital Satis	28. MS	-	.14	-.21	.23**	.10	.33***	.19	.21*	.15	.28**	.28**	.20*	.22**	.63***

(CE= Cultural Empathy, ES= Emotional Stability, OM= Openmindedness, SI=Social Initiative, FLX=Flexibility, Fam.= Perceived Social Support from Family, Fri.= Perceived Social Support from Friends, Sig.Ot.= Perceived Social Support from Significant Other, Total= Perceived Social Support Total Score, Intg=Integration, Mar=Marginalisation, Rej= Rejection, Assim= Assimilation, Pos= Positive Conflict Resolution Style, Neg= Negative Conflict Resolution Style, Sub= Subordination Conflict Resolution Style, Ret= Retreat Conflict Resolution Style, LHus= Language Skills of Husband, LWife= Language Skills of Wife, CD= Cultural Distance, SN=Social Network, TS=Tangible Support, IS= Information Support, SRHus= Societal Reactions of Husband, SRWife= Societal Reactions of Wife, RFO-Visit= Relations with Family of Origin-Visit, RFO-Cont= Relations with Family of Origin-Contact, MS= Marital Satisfaction)

The highest correlations were observed between open-mindedness and integration attitudes ( $r = .43, p < .001$ ); perceived social support and relations with family of origin through contact ( $r = .43, p < .001$ ). The correlations were acceptable for the analyses, particularly between IVs of the same level.

Husbands' marital satisfaction is positively correlated with husbands' Cultural Empathy, Emotional Stability, Open-mindedness, Perceived Social Support from Family, Friends and total scores, integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, positive conflict-resolution styles, husbands' language skills, cultural distance, tangible support, societal actions of both husbands' and wives', relations with family of origin, through visiting and distant contact. The observed correlations have correlation coefficients ranging between low and moderate (.20 and .51), with the lowest correlation for relations with family of origin through visiting and the highest correlation with perceived social support from family. A moderate negative correlation is observed between husbands' marital satisfaction and own negative conflict resolution styles ( $r = -.34, p < .001$ ). The results are interpreted as indicating that husbands who had high scores for Cultural Empathy, Emotional Stability, Open-mindedness, Perceived Social Support from Family, Friends and total scores, for integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, positive conflict resolution styles, husbands' language skills, cultural distance, tangible support, societal actions of both husbands' and wives', relations with family of origin through visiting and distant contact, also had high scores in terms of marital satisfaction. Contrarily, husbands who had high scores in relation to marital satisfaction, had low scores as regards negative conflict resolution style.

#### **4.2.1.2 Wives' Correlations**

The correlation scores were observed between wives' own score on the scales and sub-scales of the IVs and DVs. When there were correlations between the sub-scales of the same IV, significant correlation coefficients were between low and moderate, ranging between .17 and .40. The highest correlation was observed between perceived social support from family and information support ( $r = .40,$

$p < .001$ ). The correlations were acceptable for analyses, particularly between IVs of the same level.

Positive correlations were observed between wives' marital satisfaction and wives' own scores on Cultural empathy, perceived social support from family and friends and total score, integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, cultural distance, social network, and for the societal reactions both of husbands' and wives'. Positive correlations ranged between .17 and .43, from low to moderate. Wives' marital satisfaction is negatively correlated with own marginalisation attitudes ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and negative conflict resolution style ( $r = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Wives who had high scores on marital satisfaction also had high scores on Cultural empathy, perceived social support from family, friend and total score, integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, cultural distance, social network, as well as societal reactions both of husbands' and wives'. Contrarily, wives who had high scores on marital satisfaction had low scores on marginalisation attitudes and negative conflict resolution style.

#### **4.2.2 Correlations between Spouses' IVs and DV Scores**

The correlations between husbands and wives were observed and the significant correlation coefficients ranged from .20 to .76. Only positive correlations were observed between husbands' scores and wives' scores on cultural empathy ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), open-mindedness ( $r = .37$ ,  $p < .001$ ), perceived social support from family ( $r = .45$ ,  $p < .001$ ), perceived social support from friends ( $r = .33$ ,  $p < .001$ ), perceived social support from significant others ( $r = .22$ ,  $p < .01$ ), total perceived social support ( $r = .76$ ,  $p < .001$ ), marginalisation attitudes ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < .01$ ), negative conflict resolution styles ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), subordination ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ ), cultural distance ( $r = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ), social network ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ), tangible support ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), information support ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), societal reactions ( $r = .61$ ,  $p < .001$ ), relations with family of origin through distant contact ( $r = .24$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and marital satisfaction ( $r = .63$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The results of correlations between husbands' and wives' scores are interpreted as indicating that, high husband' scores were on cultural empathy, open-mindedness, perceived social support from family, perceived social support from

friend, perceived social support significant other, total perceived social support, marginalisation attitudes, negative conflict resolution styles, subordination, cultural distance, social network, tangible support, information support, relations with family of origin through distant contact and marital satisfaction, were associated with high wives' score on the same variable. The correlations between husbands and wives is noteworthy, in that it provides evidence of the interdependence of husbands and wives.

### **4.3 Main Effects**

This study mainly assesses the hypothesis based on gender differences, however, the sample of this study consists of two different samples, based on nationality. According to the APIM assumptions, similarities in the indicator variables can be a confounding factor (especially for the interaction effects), therefore, the main effects of the DVs should be controlled before the further analysis. In order to compare spouses and spouse, based on nationality, 2x2 Between Subjects Factorial Design ANOVA analysis is employed, by using SPSS 15.00, the spouses being classified as, Russian-Turkish (RT) and German-Turkish (GT). First, a series of 2x2 Between Subjects Factorial Design ANOVA were conducted, to compare spouses in terms of personality variables such as, cultural empathy, social initiative, open-mindedness, emotional stability and flexibility. The results of the 2x2 Between Subjects Factorial Design ANOVA analysis, were depicted in Table 4.

According to the ANOVA results that compare cultural empathy scores, there was a significant difference between husbands and wives,  $F(1, 288)=12.27$ . Wives ( $M = 18.57$ ,  $SD = 2.77$ ) had significantly higher scores on cultural empathy than did husbands ( $M = 17.45$ ,  $SD = 2.95$ ). There was no significant difference between Russian- Turkish and German-Turkish couples, however, the interaction effect was significant,  $F(1,288)=4.34$ . According to the results, as RT wives ( $M = 18.20$ ,  $SD = 2.94$ ) having significantly higher scores than RT husbands ( $M = 17.72$ ,  $SD = 2.91$ ) and also, GT wives ( $M = 19.03$ ,  $SD = 2.50$ ) had significantly higher scores than their husbands ( $M = 17.71$ ,  $SD = 2.91$ ).

When the couples were compared in terms of social initiative, there was a significant difference between husbands and wives,  $F(1, 288)=14.28$ . Wives ( $M = 17.11, SD = 3.57$ ) had significantly lower scores on social initiative than did husbands ( $M = 18.32, SD = 3.48$ ). Moreover, there was a difference based on couples, which was significant,  $F(1,288) =5.35$ . RT couples ( $M=18.34, SD=3.64$ ) had significantly higher scores than GT couples ( $M=17.38, SD= 3.52$ ).

Husbands and wives did not significantly differ on open-mindedness scores. Similarly, the difference between RT couples and GT couples was not significant in terms of open-mindedness. The interaction effect between RT couples and GT couple was, however, significant,  $F(1,288) =5.32$ . GT wives ( $M=19.27, SD=2.83$ ) had significantly higher scores than RT wives ( $M=17.52, SD=3.70$ ). Additionally, GT wives had significantly higher scores than their husbands ( $M=18.08, SD=3.75$ ) and RT wives had significantly lower scores than their husbands ( $M=18.32, SD=3.93$ ).

The differences in emotional stability scores were significant for both husbands and wives,  $F(1,288) =29.04, p<.001$ . Husbands ( $M=17.67, SD=4.18$ ) had significantly higher scores on emotional stability scale than did wives ( $M=15.03, SD=4.61$ ). The couple main effect was also significant,  $F(1,288)=7.78, p<.05$ , indicating that RT couples ( $M=16.99, SD=4.60$ ) had higher scores than GT couple ( $M=15.58, SD=4.45$ ). The difference between husbands and wives, according to couple classification, was that the interaction effect was significant  $F(1,288)= 7.78, p<.05$ . The difference, according to couple classification moderated by gender, indicated that GT wives ( $M=13.48, SD= 4.13$ ) had significantly lower scores than their husbands ( $M=17.68, SD=3.74$ ) and similarly, RT wives ( $M=16.33, SD= 4.61$ ) had significantly lower scores than their husbands ( $M=17.67, SD=4.53$ ). Additionally, GT wives had significantly lower scores than RT wives.

Only the differences between husbands and wives were found significant for flexibility,  $F(1,288) =11.79, p<.001$ . Husbands ( $M=16.77, SD=4.10$ ) had significantly higher scores than wives ( $M=15.15, SD=3.94$ ). There was no difference between RT couples and GT couples.

Among the acculturation attitudes dimensions, the only difference between husbands and wives was observed in terms of separation attitudes. The difference between husbands and wives was significant,  $F(1,288) = 4.56, p < .05$ , indicating that husbands show more separation attitudes ( $M=33.85, SD=7.66$ ) than wives ( $M=31.74, SD=7.02$ ). Additionally, the difference between RT couples and GT couples was significant  $F(1,288) = 5.72, p < .05$ . RT couples had higher scores ( $M=33.96, SD=7.38$ ) than GT couples ( $M=31.64, SD=7.31$ ). The interaction effect was also significant  $F(1,288) = 7.34, p < .05$ . RT wives ( $M=31.62, SD=7.18$ ) had significantly lower scores than their husbands ( $M=35.77, SD=7.04$ ) and GT husbands ( $M=31.40, SD=7.79$ ) had significantly lower scores than RT husbands.

Among the perceived social support dimensions, the only difference between husbands and wives was observed as regards perceived social support from significant other dimension. The difference between husbands and wives concerning their MSPSS significant other score was significant,  $F(1,288) = 4.24, p < .05$ . Husbands ( $M=16.01, SD=7.82$ ) had significantly higher scores than wives ( $M=13.69, SD=8.65$ ). Couple classification had no significant effect, however, the interaction effect of gender and couple classification was significant. The results indicated that, RT wives ( $M=11.74, SD=8.43$ ) had significantly lower scores than RT husbands ( $M=16.35, SD=7.63$ ), while there was no significant difference between GT wives and husbands.

There was a significant effect between RT and GT couples, as regards negative conflict resolution styles  $F(1,288) = 4.39, p < .05$ . RT couples ( $M=18.35, SD=7.38$ ) had significantly higher scores on negative conflict resolution style than did GT couples ( $M=16.64, SD=6.16$ ). The difference between husbands and wives was not significant.

The difference between husbands and wives pertaining to subordination conflict resolution styles was,  $F(1,288) = 6.51, p < .05$ . Husbands ( $M=23.20, SD=5.66$ ) had significantly higher scores than wives ( $M=21.29, SD=6.67$ ). The difference between GT couples and RT couples was also significant  $F(1,288) = 8.48, p < .05$ . The results indicated that, RT couples ( $M=23.18, SD=6.22$ ) had higher scores on subordination CRS than did GT couples ( $M=21.06, SD=5.97$ ). Among the CRS, no

significant differences were observed in terms of gender and couple classification differences on positive and retreat dimensions.

**Table 4.** Mean differences between husbands and wives, Russian-Turkish (RT) and German-Turkish (GT) couples

Variables	Couple	Wives		Husbands		Total		Factor	df	F
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
<b>Personality</b>										
<i>Cultural Empathy</i>	RT	18.20	2.94	17.72	2.91	17.96	2.92	gender	1	12.27**
	GT	19.03	2.50	17.71	2.91	18.08	2.90	couple	1	.12
	Total	18.57	2.77	17.45	2.95			Inter.	1	4.34*
<i>Social Initiative</i>	RT	17.42	3.80	19.28	3.22	18.34	3.64	gender	1	14.28***
	GT	16.73	3.24	18.03	3.69	17.38	3.52	couple	1	5.35*
	Total	17.11	3.57	18.72	3.48			Inter.	1	.45
<i>Open-mindedness</i>	RT	17.52	3.70	18.32	3.93	17.92	3.83	gender	1	.20
	GT	19.27	2.83	18.08	3.75	18.67	3.67	couple	1	3.06
	Total	18.29	3.45	18.21	3.84			Inter.	1	5.32*
<i>Emotional Stability</i>	RT	16.33	4.61	17.67	4.53	16.99	4.60	gender	1	29.04**
	GT	13.48	4.13	17.68	3.74	15.58	4.45	couple	1	7.61*
	Total	15.03	4.61	17.67	4.18			Inter.	1	7.78*
<i>Flexibility</i>	RT	15.23	4.27	16.54	3.94	15.88	4.15	gender	1	11.79**
	GT	15.06	3.51	17.06	4.29	16.06	4.03	couple	1	.14
	Total	15.15	3.94	16.77	4.10			Inter.	1	.51
<b>Acculturation</b>										
<i>Separation</i>	RT	31.62	7.18	35.77	7.04	33.69	7.38	gender	1	4.56*
	GT	31.89	6.86	31.40	7.79	31.64	7.31	couple	1	5.72*
	Total	31.74	7.02	33.85	7.66			Inter.	1	7.34*
<i>Assimilation</i>	RT	28.77	7.69	25.96	7.54	27.36	7.71	gender	1	3.31
	GT	26.09	6.49	25.78	6.89	25.94	6.67	couple	1	2.77
	Total	27.60	7.27	25.88	7.24			Inter.	1	2.10
<i>Integration</i>	RT	42.51	7.35	40.63	8.47	41.57	7.96	gender	1	2.21
	GT	43.01	6.23	42.29	6.95	42.65	6.58	couple	1	1.53
	Total	42.73	6.87	41.35	7.86			Inter.	1	.43
<i>Marginilisation</i>	RT	23.69	7.93	29.60	8.16	24.65	8.08	gender	1	1.65
	GT	26.03	7.45	26.52	7.88	26.28	7.64	couple	1	3.03
	Total	24.71	7.79	26.01	8.03			Inter.	1	.58

**Table 4.** (Continued) Mean differences between husbands and wives, Russian-Turkish (RT) and German-Turkish (GT) couples

Variables	Couple	Wives		Husbands		Total		Factor	df	F
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
<b>Perceived Social Support</b>										
<i>MPSS Total</i>	RT	58.42	15.19	59.84	15.48	59.13	15.30	gender	1	.02
	GT	60.19	16.16	59.27	15.93	59.73	15.99	couple	1	.10
	Total	59.19	15.59	59.59	15.63			Inter.	1	.40
<i>MPSS Family</i>	RT	23.36	6.02	23.38	5.70	23.37	5.85	gender	1	.01
	GT	23.08	5.58	23.16	5.85	23.12	5.69	couple	1	.13
	Total	23.24	5.81	23.28	5.75			Inter.	1	.00
<i>MPSS Friend</i>	RT	21.37	6.41	20.73	5.80	21.05	6.10	gender	1	.57
	GT	21.00	6.18	20.54	6.22	20.77	6.18	couple	1	.15
	Total	21.21	6.29	20.65	5.97			Inter.	1	.01
<i>MPSS Significant Other</i>	RT	11.74	8.43	16.35	7.63	15.89	8.20	gender	1	4.24*
	GT	16.21	8.34	15.57	8.10	14.04	8.34	couple	1	3.66
	Total	13.69	8.65	16.01	7.82			Inter.	1	7.38*
<b>Conflict Resolution Style</b>										
<i>Negative</i>	RT	19.13	8.03	17.59	6.65	18.35	7.38	gender	1	.36
	GT	16.37	6.21	16.92	6.15	16.64	6.16	couple	1	4.39*
	Total	17.90	7.38	17.30	6.42			Inter.	1	1.62
<i>Positive</i>	RT	24.85	5.35	25.67	5.45	25.26	5.40	gender	1	.31
	GT	25.78	5.81	24.21	6.12	25.00	5.99	couple	1	.15
	Total	25.26	5.55	25.03	5.77			Inter.	1	3.13
<i>Subordination</i>	RT	22.05	6.44	24.28	5.83	23.18	6.22	gender	1	6.51*
	GT	20.33	6.65	21.79	5.14	21.06	5.97	couple	1	8.48*
	Total	21.29	6.57	23.20	5.66			Inter.	1	.29
<i>Retreat</i>	RT	21.28	6.29	21.17	5.53	21.23	5.90	gender	1	.04
	GT	20.11	7.41	20.53	5.96	20.32	6.70	couple	1	1.45
	Total	20.76	6.81	20.89	5.71			Inter.	1	.12
<b>Language Skills</b>										
<i>Total Score</i>	RT	32.58	5.69	24.27	9.11	28.43	8.64	gender	1	18.07**
	GT	30.90	7.98	31.11	6.07	31.01	8.51	couple	1	7.34*
	Total	31.85	6.81	27.26	9.68			Inter.	1	19.95**
<b>Cultural Distance</b>	RT	38.90	11.37	37.20	10.65	38.05	11.01	gender	1	.29
	GT	36.30	9.08	36.68	9.57	36.49	9.29	couple	1	1.62
	Total	37.76	10.47	36.97	10.16			Inter.	1	.72
<b>Social Support</b>										
<i>Social Network</i>	RT	19.33	5.99	21.90	6.77	20.61	6.50	gender	1	7.50*
	GT	20.97	7.08	22.87	7.76	21.92	7.46	couple	1	2.55
	Total	20.05	6.52	22.33	7.21			Inter.	1	.16
<i>Source of Tangible Support</i>	RT	1.83	.94	1.67	1.05	1.75	1.00	gender	1	5.77*
	GT	2.19	1.06	1.79	.93	1.99	1.01	couple	1	4.06*
	Total	1.99	1.01	1.72	.99			Inter.	1	.89

**Table 4. (Continued) Mean differences between husbands and wives, Russian-Turkish (RT) and German-Turkish (GT) couples**

Variables	Couple	Wives		Husbands		Total		Factor	df	F
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
<i>Source of Informational Support</i>	RT	2.06	1.24	1.58	1.03	1.82	1.16	gender	1	18.54**
	GT	2.43	1.12	1.75	1.15	2.09	1.18	couple	1	3.88*
	Total	2.22	1.20	1.65	1.09			Inter.	1	.55
<b>Relations with Family of Origin</b>										
	<i>Visit</i>									
<i>Visit</i>	RT	2.61	.75	3.30	.73	2.95	.81	gender	1	44.89**
	GT	2.89	.86	3.43	.75	3.15	.85	couple	1	5.13
	Total	2.73	.31	3.35	.74			Inter.	1	.68
<i>Distant Contact</i>	RT	3.46	.67	3.46	.74	3.46	.70	gender	1	.22
	GT	3.52	.69	3.44	.73	3.48	.70	couple	1	.11
	Total	3.47	.68	3.45	.74			Inter.	1	.22
<b>Societal Reaction</b>	RT	3.57	.56	3.56	.61	3.56	.58	gender	1	.34
	GT	2.41	.64	3.50	.63	3.45	.64	couple	1	2.23
	Total	3.49	.60	3.53	.62			Inter.	1	.55
<b>Marital Satisfaction</b>	RT	107.97	16.44	110.41	14.55	109.1	15.53	gender	1	1.86
	GT	106.98	17.22	109.49	12.11	108.2	14.88	couple	1	.28
	Total	107.54	16.74	110.01	13.50			Inter.	1	.00

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

There was a significant difference observed between husbands and wives concerning language skills,  $F(1,288) = 18.07, p < .001$ . Wives had more improved language skills in their husband's language ( $M = 31.85, SD = 6.81$ ), than did husbands' language skills in their wife's language ( $M = 27.26, SD = 9.68$ ). There was also a significant difference between RT couples and GT couples,  $F(1,288) = 7.34, p < .05$ . RT couples ( $M = 28.43, SD = 8.64$ ) had lower scores than GT couples ( $M = 31.01, SD = 8.51$ ). Gender and couple classification interaction was significant, indicating that GT husbands had significantly higher language skills scores than did RT husbands. RT wives had significantly higher scores than their husbands

The final significant difference was found between husbands and wives regarding relations with family of origin as visits,  $F(1,288) = 44.89, p < .001$ . Husbands

( $M=3.35$ ,  $SD=.74$ ) had significantly more frequent visits to their family of origin than did wives ( $M=2.73$ ,  $SD=.31$ ).

There were no significant differences between husbands and wives and between RT and GT couples, on societal reactions and marital satisfaction scores.

#### **4.4 Regressions**

A series of stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed, in order to assess the unique contributions of IVs. A stepwise multiple regression analysis makes it possible to statistically eliminate independent (predictor) variables, according to a predictive role on the dependent (criterion) variable. The stepwise regression analysis produces an equation that predicts the dependent variable and at the each step, only predictive IVs are counted in the equation. At each step, a squared multiple correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) and a standardised regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ) are calculated.  $R^2$  indicates the explained percentage of variance by the combined effects of the independent variables in the dependent variable.  $\beta$  enables observing the impact of independent variables on dependent variable separately, then compares the relative effects of the independent variable (Tabachnic & Fidell, 2001).

The sample size is limited for increased independent variables, therefore, only the total scores are used in analysis. In the analysis were conducted on;

- individual' traits consist of personality (CE, ES, OM, SI, Flx), acculturation attitudes (separation, assimilation, integration, marginalisation), perceived social support (Sub-scales of MSPSS; family, friends, significant others and total score),

- couple' traits consist of cultural distance, conflict resolution style (positive, negative, subordination, retreat) and language skills (according to analysis husband's or wife's scores are used),

- contextual' factors consist of demographics (age, length of settlement, longest duration of settlement/country, education, income, duration of marriage), received social support (Social Network Questionnaire total score, tangible and informational support total source scores), family of origin relations (Total frequency of

communication with family of origin) and societal reactions (according to analysis husband's or wife's Total score of Negative Societal Reactions Index are used).

#### **4.4.1 Actor' effects on Actor's Dyadic Satisfaction**

First, the actor' effects were examined, thus, three separate, stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed, utilising husbands' marital satisfaction as the criterion and individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors of husbands, as the predictors. Additionally, three separate, stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed, utilising wives' marital satisfaction as the criterion and individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors of wives, as the predictors. The analyses were performed using SPSS 15.0.

In the first stepwise multiple regression, the predictive role of husbands' individual traits were examined. Sequentially, personality, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support, totally 13 IVs, were added to the analysis. In the first step, the log of perceived social support from family was found to be significant  $F(1, 139) = 53.80, p < .001$ . According to adjusted  $R^2$ , perceived social support from family accounted for 28% of the variability. In the second step, integration attitudes were added to the equation and with addition of the square root of integration attitudes, with perceived social support from family, results in a significant increment in  $R^2$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 138) = 14.33, p < .001, R^2 = .35$ . In the third step, the change in  $R^2$  was found significant, with addition of the square root of cultural empathy,  $F_{inc}(1, 137) = 6.46, p < .05, R^2 = .38$ . Perceived social support from family, integration attitude and cultural empathy, accounted for a 38% total variance. As indexed by its  $\beta$  value of .53,  $p < .001$ , perceived social support from family was the strongest predictor of the dyadic adjustment score. Table 5 displays the results of the stepwise multiple regression analyses for the relationship between husbands' marital satisfaction and husbands' individual traits. High levels of perceived social support from family, high scores on cultural empathy and integration attitudes, predict high levels of marital satisfaction.

Next, stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed, in order to examine the predictive role of husbands' couple traits on husbands' marital

satisfaction. Conflict resolution style, cultural distance and husbands' language skills, totaling 7 IVs, were logged off to the equations, respectively. Two equations were performed in the last step, the full model  $R^2$  being found significant, with the entry of negative conflict resolution style and cultural distance. In the first step, with the log of negative conflict resolution style in the model, was significant,  $F(1, 141) = 18.69$ ,  $p < .001$ . The first step explained 12% of the variance. In the second step, the addition of the square root of cultural distance to the equation, with negative conflict resolution style, results, indicated a significant increase in  $R^2$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 17.05$ ,  $p < .001$ . The model, negative conflict resolution style and cultural distance, accounted for 21% of the total variance. Negative conflict resolution style,  $\beta = -.30$ ,  $p < .001$  and cultural distance,  $\beta = -.34$ ,  $p < .001$ , had a similar impact on the dyadic adjustment scores, however, in a different direction. Using less negative conflict resolution style and finding himself more similar to his wives' culture, predicted higher levels of husbands' dyadic adjustment.

In order to assess the predictive role of husbands' contextual factors on husbands' marital satisfaction, demographics (age, duration of marriage, income, education, duration of settlement), received social support (total score of social network, tangible and informational support), total score of relations with family of origin and total score of societal reactions, totaling 10 IVs, were examined by stepwise multiple regression analysis. In the one model, the log of societal reactions significantly predicted husbands' dyadic adjustment,  $F(1, 141) = 8.82$ ,  $p < .05$ . The equation explained 8% of the variance. The impact of societal reactions was significant with  $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .05$ . More positive societal reactions predict higher levels of dyadic adjustment scores of husbands'.

**Table 5.** Predictive husbands' individual traits on husbands' marital satisfaction in three-levels, according to Stepwise Regression Analyses

			Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients			
Model			B	Std. Err	Beta	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>
Individual	1	Constant	80.80	4.07				
		MSPSS Family	1.24	.17	.53	7.34**	.53	.28
	2	Constant	65.27	5.65				
		MSPSS Family	1.09	.17	.47	6.58**	.59	.35
		Integration	.46	.12	.27	3.79**		
	3	Constant	56.59	6.51				
		MSPSS Family	1.03	.17	.44	6.24**	.61	.38
		Integration	.34	.13	.19	2.60*		
		CE	.88	.35	.19	2.54*		
Couple	1	Constant	122.45	3.08				
		Negative CRS	-.72	.17	-.34	-4.32**	.34	.12
	2	Constant	106.34	4.87				
		Negative CRS	-.67	.16	-.32	-4.25**	.46	.21
		Cultural Distance	.41	.10	.31	4.13		
Contextual	1	Constant	88.03	7.10				
		Societal Reactions	5.92	1.99	.28	2.97*	.29	.08

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

In order to examine the unique contributions of wives' individual traits on wives' marital satisfaction, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed on wives' personality traits, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support as predictors and wives' dyadic adjustment scores as the criterion. In the first step, with the log of Perceived social support from family in the equation, first model was significant,  $F(1, 140) = 28.64, p < .001, R^2 = .17$ . In the second step, the model included marginalisation, with perceived social support from family, the equation significantly improving  $R^2, F_{inc}(1, 139) = 4.11, p < .05$ . The model explained 19% of the total variance. Perceived social support from family was the strongest predictor of dyadic adjustment score,  $\beta = -.41, p < .001$ . Wives' high scores on perceived social support

from family and low scores on marginalisation predicted high scores on dyadic adjustment of wives.

**Table 6.** Predictive wives' individual traits on wives' marital satisfaction in three-levels, according to Stepwise Regression Analyses

Level	Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients			
			B	Std. Err	Beta	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>
Individual	1	Constant	79.94	5.35				
		MSPSS Family	1.19	.22	.41	5.35**	.41	.17
	2	Constant	89.71	7.15				
MSPSS Family Marginalisation		1.28 -.34	.22 .17	.39 -.16	5.07** .2.03*	.44	.19	
Couple	1	Constant	119.56	3.52				
		Negative CRS	-.66	.18	-.29	-3.64**	.29	.09
	2	Constant	108.77	5.99				
		Negative CRS Cultural Distance	-.65 .28	.18 .13	-.29 .18	-3.63** 2.21*	.34	.12
Contextual	1	Constant	79.54	7.96				
		Societal Reactions	8.00	2.24	.29	3.57**	.29	.08

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

In order to examine the unique contributions of wives' individual traits on wives' marital satisfaction, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed on wives' personality traits, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support as predictors and wives' dyadic adjustment scores as the criterion. Table 6 shows the stepwise regression analysis results for predicting wives' marital satisfaction. In the first step, with the log of Perceived social support from family in the equation, the first model was significant,  $F(1, 140) = 28.64$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .17$ . In second step, the model included marginalisation with perceived social support from family, the equation significantly improved  $R^2$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 4.11$ ,  $p < .05$ . The model explained 19% of the total variance. Perceived social support from family was the strongest predictor of dyadic adjustment score,  $\beta = -.41$ ,  $p < .001$ . Wives' high scores on perceived social support from family and low scores on marginalisation, which predicts high scores on the dyadic adjustment of wives.

The next stepwise regression analysis was performed, in order to analyse the predictive role of wives' couple traits on wives' marital satisfaction. Conflict resolution style, cultural distance and language skills of wife, were added to the equation. In the first model, negative conflict resolution style significantly predicted dyadic adjustment score,  $F(1, 141) = 13.23, p < .001, R^2 = .09$ . In the second step, cultural distance was added to the model, with negative conflict resolution style significantly increased  $R^2, F_{inc}(1, 140) = 4.88, p < .05$ , accounted for the 12% of total variance. Wives' scores on negative conflict resolution style had more impact on wives' dyadic adjustment,  $\beta = -.29, p < .001$ . The lower scores of wives' on negative conflict resolution style and increased cultural similarity, predicted higher levels of wives' dyadic adjustment.

The unique contributions of wives' contextual factors on wives' marital satisfaction; demographics (age, duration of marriage, income, education, duration of settlement), received social support (total score of social network, tangible and informational support), total score of relations with family of origin and total score of societal reactions, totaled 10 IVs added to the stepwise regression equation, as predictors and dyadic adjustment as criterion. The model concerning negative societal reactions significantly predicted dyadic adjustment,  $F(1, 141) = 17.42, p < .001$ , accounted for the 15% of total variance. As indexed by  $\beta$  value of .28, societal reactions was shown to have a significant relationship with the wives' dyadic adjustment score, with more positive societal reactions predicting wives' higher marital satisfaction.

#### **4.4.2 Partner effects on Actor's Marital Satisfaction**

Six different stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed, in order to examine the predictive role of partner's individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, on an actor's marital satisfaction. Thus, three stepwise multiple regression analyses were examined, in order to determine the predictive role of wives' individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, on husbands' marital satisfaction. The next three stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed utilising wives' marital

satisfaction as the criterion and husbands' individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, as the predictors. Analyses were performed using SPSS 15.0.

In the first analysis, wives' personality traits, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support were examined, as predictors of husbands' dyadic adjustment score. The regression analysis results for partner effects on husbands' marital satisfaction are shown in Table 7. In total, 13 IVs were included in the analysis and in the first step the model, with perceived social support significantly predicting husbands' dyadic adjustment score,  $F(1, 140) = 38.83, p < .001, R^2 = .22$ . In the next step, the model was significant with the addition the log of the cultural empathy,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 8.35, p < .05$ . The last model explained a 26% of variance. Among individual traits predictors, wives' perceived social support had the strongest relation with husbands' dyadic adjustment score, according to  $\beta$  index,  $\beta = .46, p < .001$ . The more perceived social support and increased cultural empathy scores, the higher levels of husbands' marital satisfaction there were.

In order to assess predictive role of wives' couple traits on husbands' marital satisfaction, wives' conflict resolution style, cultural distance and language skills were examined by stepwise regression, as predictors of the husbands' dyadic adjustment score. The stepwise multiple regression analysis included a total of 6 IVs; positive, negative, retreat and subordination conflict resolution style, cultural distance and wife's language skills. The analysis produced only one model, with the log of negative conflict resolution style in the equation to predict the husbands' dyadic adjustment score and it was found significant,  $F(1, 140) = 5.98, p < .05$ . Negative conflict management style explained 4% of the total variance and indicated a significant relation with husbands' dyadic adjustment,  $\beta = -.20, p < .05$ . An increase in the wives' usage of negative conflict management styles predicts lower levels of dyadic adjustment in husbands.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis were performed utilising husbands' marital satisfaction as the criterion and wives' contextual factors, demographics (age, duration of marriage, income, education, duration of settlement), received social

support (total score of social network, tangible and informational support) and the total score of relations with family of origin, as the predictors. The model with negative societal reactions significantly predicted husbands' dyadic score,  $F(1, 102) = 11.40$ ,  $p < .05$ . The model explained 10% of the total variance and indicated a significant relation with husbands' dyadic adjustment,  $\beta = -.20$ ,  $p < .05$ . An increase in negative societal reactions predicts lower levels of dyadic adjustment in husbands.

**Table 7.** Partner effects on Husbands' Marital Satisfaction in three-level

Level	Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		R	R <sup>2</sup>
			B	Std. Err	Beta	t		
Individual	1	Constant	84.78	4.19				
		MSPSS Family	1.09	.17	.47	6.23**	.47	.22
	2	Constant	66.94	7.40				
MSPSS Family		1.04	.17	.45	6.09**	.51	.26	
Cultural Empathy		1.02	.35	.21	2.89*			
Couple	1	Constant	116.73	2.91				
		Negative CMS	-.37	.15	-.20	-2.45	.20	.04
Contextual	1	Constant	87.93	6.43				
		Societal Reactions	6.31	1.81	.28	3.48*	.28	.08

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

The unique contribution of husbands' individual traits on predicting wives' marital satisfaction was examined by stepwise regression analysis, personality, acculturation attitudes and perceived social support as predictors and wives' dyadic adjustment score as the criterion. The regression analysis results for partner effects on wives' marital satisfaction are shown in Table 8. In total, 13 IVs, were added to the analysis and in the first step, husbands' perceived social support from family was found significant for predicting wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $F(1, 140) = 22.97$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .14$ . In the second step, integration attitudes were added to the equation with perceived social support from family, which significantly increased  $R^2$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 9.94$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $R^2 = .20$ . In the third step, a model including husbands' perceived social support from family, integration attitudes and social initiative, significantly

predicted wives' dyadic adjustment score  $F_{inc} (1, 138) = 7.19, p < .05, R^2 = .24$ . After the fourth step, with the square root of the husbands' assimilation attitudes added to the prediction of the wives' dyadic adjustment score, the model explained 27% of the total variance and an increase in  $R^2$  was found significant,  $F_{inc} (1, 137) = 4.73, p < .05$ . Husbands' perceived social support had the strongest relation with the wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $\beta = .38, p < .001$ . Higher scores of husbands' perceived social support from family, integration attitude, social initiative and assimilation attitudes, predicted higher scores of wives' dyadic adjustment.

In order to assess the predictive role of husbands' couple traits on wives' marital satisfaction, a stepwise regression analysis was performed by log of conflict resolution style, with cultural distance and husbands' language skills as predictors and wives' dyadic adjustment score as the criterion. In the first model, husbands' negative conflict resolution style was a significant predictor of wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $F (1, 141) = 7.14, p < .05, R^2 = .05$ . Next, with the log of husbands' subordination conflict management style added to the equation with husbands' negative conflict resolution style, the model explained 7% of the total variance and an increase in  $R^2$  was found significant,  $F_{inc} (1, 140) = 4.01, p < .05$ . In the last model, husbands' negative, subordination and retreat conflict resolution style significantly predicted wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $F_{inc} (1, 139) = 6.41, p < .05$ , which explained the 11% of total variance. Husbands' negative conflict resolution style had the strongest relation with wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $\beta = -.22, p < .05$ . Lower scores on husbands' negative and retreat conflict management styles and higher scores on subordination conflict management style, significantly predicted higher levels of wives' dyadic adjustment score.

The unique contributions of husbands' contextual factors on predicting wives' marital satisfaction, totaled 9 IVs, namely demographics, received social support; relations with family of origin were examined, as predictor on wives' dyadic adjustment score by a stepwise regression analysis. The model, husbands' societal reactions was a significant predictor of wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $F (1, 101) =$

6.77,  $p < .05$ . The model explained 6% of the total variance and societal reactions had moderate relations with wives' dyadic adjustment,  $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .05$ . Husbands' more positive societal reaction significantly predicted higher scores of wives' dyadic adjustment scores.

#### **4.4.3 Interaction effects**

Prior to analysis, in order to assess the degree of similarities in the variables, the mean scores of the scales, Multicultural Personality Questionnaire, Conflict Resolution Styles Scale, Acculturation Attitudes Questionnaire, Cultural Distance Questionnaire, Social Network Questionnaire and Perceived Social Support, were calculated. Since the difference between the wives' and husbands' scores would indicate the degree of similarities and differences, the absolute values of the scales were computed. To a degree, absolute values increase the congruence of the couple decreasing, on the other hand, as absolute values decrease the congruence of the couple increases. Thus, 0 indicates a complete congruence between couples.

In a series of regression analyses, the unique contribution of the similarities of the couple scores of demographic characteristics, personality traits, conflict management styles, acculturation attitudes, social network and perceived social support, were examined. Firstly, the role of demographic characteristics consisting of age and educational status were examined. The results of the regression analysis indicating that similarities in demographics does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction.

A stepwise regression analysis was performed, in order to examine the predictive role of personality traits on husbands' marital satisfaction and wives' marital satisfaction. Cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness and flexibility were entered into the equation, to predict husbands' marital satisfaction. The model with open-mindedness was significant,  $F(1,138) = 4.21$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\beta = -.17$ , that means the similarity between husbands and wives significantly predicts husbands' dyadic adjustment score.  $R^2$  indicated that .03 of the variance was explained uniquely by similarities in open-mindedness. In the second regression

equation, the criterion was wives' dyadic adjustment score and the predictive role of cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness and flexibility, was examined. The result indicated that R was significantly different from zero, with the model that consists of cultural empathy,  $F(1,138) = 9.81, p < .05$ . The similarities in cultural empathy significantly predicted wives' dyadic adjustment score,  $\beta = -.26, p < .05$ , accounted for 7% of the total variance. As the differences increase in terms of cultural empathy traits between couples, the marital satisfaction of wives decreases.

**Table 8.** Partner Effects on Wives' Marital Satisfaction in three-level

Level	Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		R	R <sup>2</sup>	
			B	Std. Err	Beta	t			
Individual	1	Constant	81.65	5.52					
		MSPSS Family	1.10	.23	.38	4.79**	.38	.14	
	2	Constant	63.84	7.78					
		MSPSS Family	.93	.23	.32	4.07**	.45	.20	
		Integration	.52	.17	.24	3.15*			
	3	Constant	48.14	9.61					
		MSPSS Family	.94	.22	.32	4.18**	.49	.24	
		Integration	.46	.17	.22	2.78*			
	4	Constant	.98	.37	.20	2.68*			
		Constant	34.17	11.45					
		MSPSS Family	1.04	.23	.36	4.60	.51	.27	
		Integration	.40	.16	.19	2.42			
Couple	1	Constant	117.46	3.96					
		Negative CMS	-.57	.21	-.22	-2.67*	.22	.05	
	2	Constant	105.56	7.12					
		Negative CMS	-.54	.21	-.20	-2.07*	.27	.07	
		Subordination CMS	.49	.24	.16	2.00*			
	3	Constant	112.36	7.49					
		Negative CMS	-.44	.21	-.17	-2.07*	.34	.11	
		Subordination CMS	.69	.25	.23	2.75*			
	Contextual	1	Constant	81.15	7.92				
			Societal Reactions	7.45	2.21	.27	3.38*	.27	.07
			Retreat CMS	-.63	.25	-.22	-2.53*		

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

The unique contribution of similarities of conflict management styles, in predicting husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction was assessed by stepwise regression analysis. Firstly, the regression analysis was between positive conflict resolution style, negative conflict resolution style, subordination conflict resolution style and retreat conflict resolution style, as the independent variables and husbands' dyadic adjustment score as the dependent variable. None of the conflict resolution styles was found significant and added to an equation for predicting husbands' dyadic adjustment score. Thus similarities or differences in conflict resolution styles did not have any contribution to the husband's marital satisfaction. The second stepwise regression analysis was performed between positive conflict resolution style, negative conflict resolution style, subordination conflict resolution style and retreat conflict resolution style, as the independent variables and wives' dyadic adjustment score, as the dependent variable. Similarly, score similarities of husbands and wives in rating conflict resolution styles were not added to the equation for predicting wives' dyadic adjustment score, which did not significantly predict wives' marital satisfaction. The implication of the aforementioned was that similarities in conflict resolution styles were not significantly associated with wives' marital satisfaction.

In order to assess the predictive role of the value similarities of acculturation attitudes concerning predicting husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction, two stepwise regression analysis were performed. The first analysis was performed, as assimilation, integration, marginalisation and separation attitude scores were independent and wives' dyadic adjustment score was dependent. None of the independent variables contributed significantly to the prediction of the wives' dyadic adjustment score and that the similarity scores of assimilation, integration, marginalisation and separation were not added to any equation for predicting wives' dyadic adjustment score. The second stepwise regression analysis was performed to examine the unique contribution of the score similarities of assimilation, integration, marginalisation and separation ratings, as regarded predicting husbands' dyadic adjustment. Only the similarity of assimilation attitudes score was added to the

equation for predicting husbands' dyadic adjustment score and R was significantly different from zero,  $F(1,142) = 4.85, p < .05$ . 3% of the variability in the husbands' dyadic adjustment was significantly predicted similarities of assimilation attitudes ratings,  $\beta = -.19, p < .05$ . The increase in difference in assimilation attitudes ratings of couples decreased the husbands' marital satisfaction.

#### **4.5 Actor-Partner Effects**

An Actor-Partner Interdependence Model was tested by using a structural equation modeling (SEM) programme in LISREL (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993). APIM is suggested to be tested, depending on the theoretical background (Cook & Kenny, 2005). This is, however, an explanatory study and most of the IVs suggested according to the unique contributions and bi-directional analysis, have not yet been determined. Bi-directionality is supported when both actor and partner effects the latter are notable significant predictors over outcome variable. In the regression analysis, independence is not violated thus, according to theoretical suggestions with multiple stepwise regression analysis, they were performed to determine the actor and partner effects. Thus, bi-directional IVs were eliminated, so that interpersonal influence or interdependence on the IVs could be tested. In this study, bi-directional relations were found for, 'Perceived social support from family (MSPSS Family), Negative Conflict Management Style and Societal Reactions', separately, at three levels. Regression analysis is limited to comparing the effect size of the actor and partner effects (i.e. actor effect can be larger in predicting marital satisfaction than partner effect). According to the interaction effect analysis, none of the analysis were significant, indicating that there is no 'actor-moderated' or 'partner-moderated' effect of IVs in this study.

In APIM, actor effect referring to that person's own score is a predictor of own outcome variable and partner effect referring to that person's own score is a predictor of partner's outcome variable (Kenny, et al., 2006). APIM model enables testing the unique contributions of actor's and partner's for both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. The illustration of the conceptual models, as actor's and partner's effect on

marital satisfaction, separately for individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, are presented respectively in Figure 7, Figure 8 and Figure 9.

The proposed models consisted of dyads, as married bi-national couples and distinguished according to the gender. According to Kenny and Cook (1999), husbands' marital satisfaction ( $E_h$ ) and wives' marital satisfaction ( $E_w$ ), were the outcome disturbances, interdependent and added to the model as unobserved variables, they are correlated. The first proposed model should be saturated, therefore, no restrictions allowed and all paths vary freely (Chi-square of the model would be 0). Three different levels (individual traits, couple traits, contextual factors), totaling six different domains, were tested according in this model

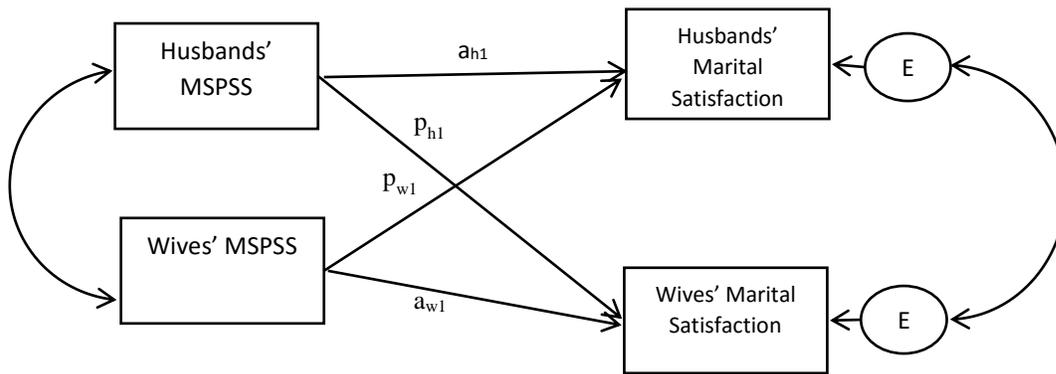
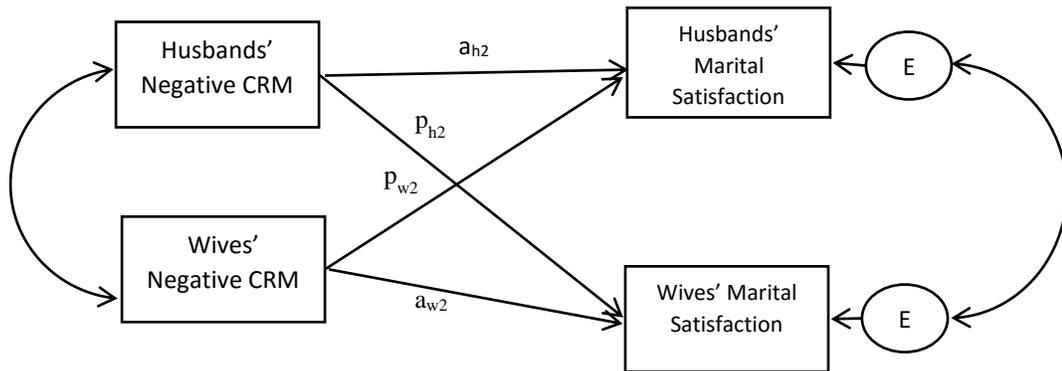
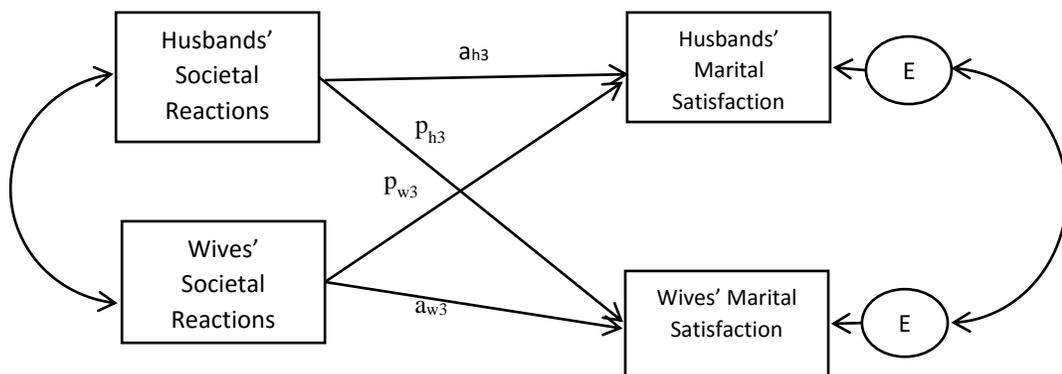


Figure 7. The conceptual model for Individual Traits

In order to test the unique contributions of the actor and partner effect and their equivalence on the outcome variable, equality constraints were imposed on the actor and partner paths concerning the gender effect (According to Figure 7;  $a_{h1} = p_{w1}$ ;  $a_{w1} = p_{h1}$ ; Figure 8,  $a_{h2} = p_{w2}$ ;  $a_{w2} = p_{h2}$ ; Figure 9,  $a_{h3} = p_{w3}$ ;  $a_{w3} = p_{h3}$ ). The chi-square difference between the constrained and unconstrained models was employed, in order to examine model significance and compare the predictive affect of actor and partner on marital satisfaction. If the models do not significantly worsen (chi-square difference is not significant), the results would suggest that there is no significant actor and partner difference.



**Figure 8.** The conceptual model for Couple Traits



**Figure 9.** The conceptual model for Contextual Factors

#### 4.5.1 Predicting Marital Satisfaction

Firstly, the model with actor and partner effects of MSPSS Family was tested and the saturated model yielded significant effects, as seen in Figure 10. Actor and partner effects were significant as regards the marital adjustment scores of both spouses. Wives high in MSPSS Family reported high levels of marital adjustment score ( $t= 4.89, p<.05$ ) and same was true for their husbands' marital adjustment scores ( $t= 3.71, p<.05$ ). Similarly, high levels of MSPSS Family of husbands' predicted high scores of dyadic adjustment for their own ( $t= 3.80, p<.05$ ) and wives ( $t= 2.65, p<.05$ ). Husbands' ( $a_{h1}$ ) and wives ( $p_{w1}$ ) scores on MSPSS Family explained the 33% of the

variance of husbands' marital satisfaction. Husbands' ( $p_{h1}$ ) and wives ( $a_{w1}$ ) scores on MSPSS Family explained the 21% of the variance of wives' marital satisfaction.

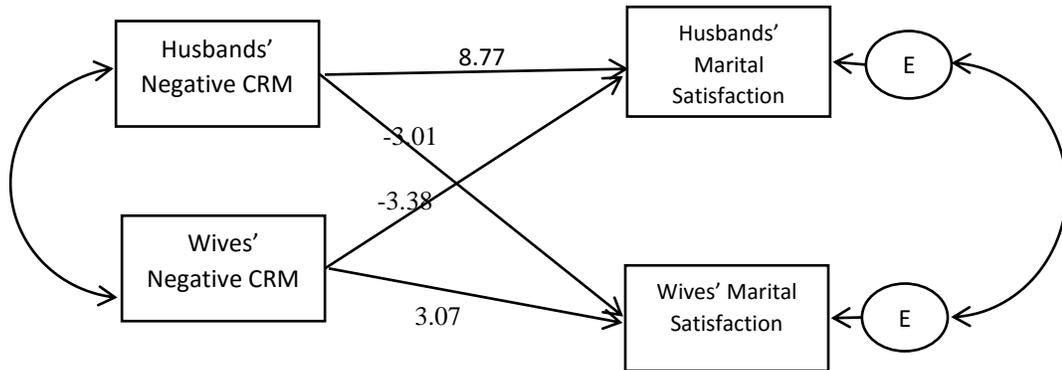


**Figure 10.** The saturated model for Individual Traits

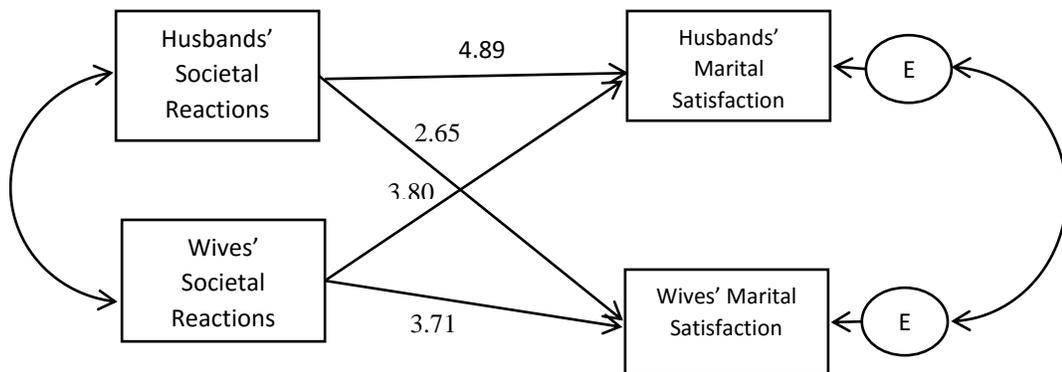
Secondly, the saturated model for testing actor and partner effects of Negative CRS over wives' and husbands' marital satisfaction, was significant. Actor and partner effects were significant concerning the marital adjustment scores of both spouses. Wives low on Negative CRS ( $t = -3.38, p < .05$ ) and husbands high on Negative CRS ( $t = 8.77, p < .05$ ), reported high levels of dyadic adjustment scores for husbands. Contrarily, high scores of wives on [Negative, perhaps-‘Negative’?] CRS ( $t = 3.07, p < .05$ ) and low scores of husbands on Negative CRS ( $t = -3.01, p < .05$ ), predicted high levels of wives' dyadic adjustment score. Husbands' ( $a_{h2}$ ) and wives ( $p_{w2}$ ) scores on Negative CRS explained 43% of the variance of husbands' marital satisfaction. Husbands' ( $p_{h2}$ ) and wives ( $a_{w2}$ ) scores on MSPSS Family, explained 14% of the variance of wives' marital satisfaction (See Figure 11).

Thirdly, the results of the saturated model for testing actor and partner effects of Societal Reactions over wives' and husbands' marital satisfaction, was significant. High levels of societal reactions for both wives ( $a_{w3}$ ) ( $t = 3.71, p < .05$ ) and husbands ( $p_{h3}$ ) ( $t = 2.65, p < .05$ ) predicted high levels of dyadic adjustment score of wives. Similarly, husbands ( $a_{h3}$ ) ( $t = 4.89, p < .05$ ) and wives ( $p_{w3}$ ) ( $t = 3.80, p < .05$ ) high societal reaction scores reported high dyadic adjustment. Husbands' ( $a_{h3}$ ) and wives ( $p_{w3}$ ) scores on Negative CRS explained 32% of the variance of husbands' marital

satisfaction. Husbands' ( $p_{h2}$ ) and wives ( $a_{w2}$ ) scores on MSPSS Family explained 21% of the variance of wives' marital satisfaction (See Figure 12).



**Figure 11.** Saturated Model for Couple Traits



**Figure 12.** Saturated Model for Couple Traits

#### 4.5.2 Testing Equality of Actor and Partner Effects

In order to compare the size of the actor and partner effects, it is suggested to force two parameters to be equal, with a constrained model (Cook & Kenny, 2005). Following this suggestion, three different models were tested, where the actor and

partner effects were set separately equal and chi square differences were observed. If, in the constrained model, chi-square difference significantly differs, the constrained model worsened the fit of the model (Cook & Kenny, 2005). Thus, chi-square difference was employed for the analysis.

Firstly, at the individual level, actor and partner effects of MSPSS Family was compared to predicting the marital satisfaction of both husbands and wives. After setting actor and partner effects to equal first for predicting husbands' marital satisfaction and second for wives' marital satisfaction, the chi-square difference test was conducted. The difference between the saturated model and the constrained model was not significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = .41$   $p > .05$ ), indicating that actor and partner effects can be treated as equal. The actor effects and partner effects of predicting husbands' marital satisfaction were equal. Next, actor effects and partner effects over predicting wives' marital satisfaction were set as equal. Similarly, the constrained model was worsened, however, the chi-square difference was not significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = .40$   $p > .05$ ). Thus, the actor and partner effects of MSPSS can be treated as equal, when predicting the marital satisfaction of wives.

Secondly, at the couple level, the actor and partner effects of Negative CRS were compared to predicting marital satisfaction of both husbands and wives. Firstly, the actor and partner effects of Negative CRS on predicting husbands' marital satisfaction were tested. The difference between the saturated model and the constrained model was significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = 35.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that actor and partner effects cannot be treated as being equal. Husbands' Negative CRS would have increased effect on predicting own marital satisfaction. Next, the actor and partner affects of Negative CRS on predicting wives' marital satisfaction were tested. The difference between the saturated model and the constrained model was significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = 16.40$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that actor and partner effects cannot be treated as equal. Wives' Negative CRS would have increased effect on predicting own marital satisfaction.

Lastly, the question as to whether the actor's and partner's societal reactions had equal impact on marital satisfaction examined. After setting actor and partner affects to equal first for predicting husbands' marital satisfaction, the chi-square difference test was conducted. The difference between the saturated model and the constrained model was not significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = 0.40, p>.05$ ), indicating that actor and partner effects can be treated as equal. Secondly, the equivalence of the actor and partner effects for wives' marital satisfaction was assessed. The difference between the saturated model and the constrained model was not significant ( $\chi^2\Delta(1, 144) = 0.40, p>.05$ ), indicating that actor and partner effects can be treated as equal.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

In this section, firstly the findings of the study were discussed in light of the previous literature. The findings are discussed sequentially for descriptive statistics and main effects, correlations, actor affects, partner affects, APIM results and interaction affects. Secondly, limitations and suggestions for future studies were discussed. Lastly, the implications of the study are suggested.

#### 5.1 Descriptive Statistics and Main Effects

This study was conducted on 144 couples, 81 Russian-Turkish couples and 63 German-Turkish couples, the wives were of non-Turkish nationality, while the husbands were Turkish. Although the study was not designed on nationality difference, the significant mean differences might indicate a confounding factor for the analysis. As a result, the significant main affects were examined and considered, when interpreting the predictive role of the individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors.

The German-Turkish sample consisted of older couples than was the Russian-Turkish sample and as a result of a possible correlation, more German wives (22.2%) had spent a longer life time in Turkey, than had Russian wives (2.5%). 65.7% of Russian wives, 31.7% of German wives, 42% of the RT husbands and 67% of the GT husbands, had a university or higher degree. 34.9% of the German wives and 45.7% of the Russian wives, were reported to be employed, when they participated in the study. Among the GT couples, 39.7% reported they spoke Turkish as their common language and 50.8% spoke German as their common tongue. 67.9% of RT couples reported Turkish as being their common language, with 18.5% of them communicating in Russian. Those descriptives were significant for the study, whose aim is to understand possible cultural difference affects on marital satisfaction. Hence,

according to the literature, both the length of settlement, education level, and employment status, would contribute to acculturation attitudes (Çakır, 2009; Ataca & Berry, 2002), which mainly determine the relationship with new cultures, especially for wives.

In addition, the main effects of the scales and sub-scales were examined. Among the individual traits, significant differences were observed on personality, such as Cultural Empathy, Social Initiative, Open-mindedness, Emotional Stability, Flexibility, acculturation attitudes as Separation attitudes and perceived social support from significant other dimensions. Personality traits were assessed by a culturally sensitive tool, therefore, the results may be interpreted regarding adaptation skills. Considering the cultural empathy dimension, there was a significant difference between husbands and wives, the wives having higher scores than their husbands. Depending on the phenomenon that wives were the immigrants, they would need more improved skills on understanding the feelings, thoughts and behaviours, in a diverse cultural setting. It was not, however, hypothesised but husbands would also need similar skills, according to the interviews conducted with bi-national couples. The couples reported that they would need to be understood.

On the Social Initiative Dimension, there was a significant difference between husbands and wives and also between GT couples and RT couples. Husbands had higher scores than wives and RT couples had higher scores than GT couples. The differences between husbands and wives was significant for emotional stability, wives having a significantly lower scores on emotional stability. Considering the findings that acculturation stress has a negative impact on psychological wellbeing, this finding can be specifically mentioned as being found as a result of the sampling. The sample consists only of non-Turkish wives, therefore, all of the wives had an immigration history, which may decrease the emotional stability scores. Moreover, a significant difference between husbands and wives was observed on flexibility dimension, husbands having higher scores than wives. The results can be interpreted as indicating that husbands also had adaptation skills for culturally new environments. These results

should, however, be reconsidered, depending on the gender differences within a mono-national population and the social desirability of the scale, which is reported as being high.

There were significant affects between husbands and wives, in terms of separation attitudes, which indicates husbands having higher scores than wives. These results can be interpreted as demonstrating that husbands are more likely to maintain their own cultural identity and characteristics and less likely to maintain a relationship with their wives' culture. Nevertheless, the acculturation theory suggests that acculturation attitude changes when individuals meet with a new culture (Berry & Kim, 19889, wives being more exposed to the main Turkish culture than were husbands exposed to the main Russian or German cultures. Additionally, RT had significantly higher scores than GT couples, however, there was a significant interaction affect. RT husbands had higher scores than GT husbands and RT wives. Similarly, according to the descriptives, there were more GT husbands spending a longer period in Germany, than did RT husbands and that more GT husbands had been exposed to the main German culture. This finding can be suggested the difference would increase the variance within husbands, which would have a positive impact on regression analyses.

Among the couple traits, significant differences were observed regarding such conflict resolution styles as Negative and Subordination and language skills. There was a significant difference between GT couples and RT couples, RT couples having significantly higher scores than GT couples. This finding suggests that further analyses should be interpreted carefully, due to the main nationality effect. Subordination conflict resolution styles had a significant difference between husbands and wives and additionally, between RT couples and GT couples. Husbands had higher scores pertaining to subordination scores than did wives. Similarly, RT couples are more likely to report subordination conflict resolution styles, than are GT couples, which should be considered in the actor-partner analysis.

There was a significant difference between husbands and wives, when they were compared in terms of language skills. Wives had greater increased Turkish language skills than their husbands had concerning wives native language. This result can be a result of the main culture effect that wives are living in Turkey, where they may need to use more Turkish skills in their daily life. Moreover, this can be a result of the sample characteristics, due to the fact that the non-Turkish sample of the study was chosen from among wives who had at least basic Turkish language skills, with which to fill the scales. On the language skills dimension, there was a significant couple affect and interaction affect. GT husbands' language skills moderated the couple effect, in that they had a higher score than RT husbands.

Received social support indicators presented a significant difference between husbands and wives, in that wives had higher scores on social network, more source of tangible and information support. The results supported Burleson and Hanasono (2010), wives would be more sensitive and more available for receiving social support. Inconsistency was observed for the studies which suggested that immigrant wives suffer from decreased social network and received social support. It can, however, be interpreted that the researcher had contact with participants through associations, which can be suggested as being a significant source of received social support.

## **5.2 Correlations**

Correlations were examined, in order to observe multi-collinearity of the criterion variables, separately for husbands and wives. The correlations coefficients of husbands' variables were between low and moderate, ranging between .17 and .43, indicating that this is acceptable for the analysis. Similarly, wives' correlations ranged between .17 and .40, indicating low and moderate correlations between wives' variables.

Furthermore, the associations between criterion variables and outcome variables were examined prior to the analysis. The associations between husbands' criterion variables and husbands' marital satisfaction and wives' criterion variables

and wives' marital satisfaction, were all examined. The increased levels of husbands' marital satisfaction is positively correlated with high scores as regards Cultural Empathy, Emotional Stability, Open-mindedness, Perceived Social Support from Family, Friends and total scores, integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, positive conflict resolution styles, husbands' language skills, cultural distance, tangible support, societal actions of husbands', relations with family of origin through visit and distant contact also had high scores on marital satisfaction. Contrarily, husbands who had high scores on marital satisfaction had low scores on negative conflict resolution style. The husbands who have increased ability to interpret and empathise feelings, thoughts and behaviours of individuals from different cultures, are more open to new experiences, norms and values and can stay calm under heightened stress situations, had higher marital satisfactions scores. Despite there being no direct empirical observation between personality traits and marital satisfaction, the result can be suggested as being consistent with the literature, suggesting that culturally sensitive personality skills increase the adaptation process and the results of this study suggest this adaptation is associated with marital satisfaction (Negy et al., 2010),. Additionally, husbands who had higher levels of integration attitudes, which means they are more likely to maintain their cultural identity but at the same time, be open to have contact and develop positive relations with diverse culture, had higher scores on marital satisfaction. The findings concerning the association between integration attitudes and marital satisfaction, was mostly based on studies conducted with immigrant samples, indicating that increased levels of integration attitudes is associated with higher marital satisfaction of their own. The correlation results indicated consistency with the previous studies but also suggest a new finding, in that there is a possible relation with marital satisfaction and integration attitudes, in a sample who were living in their mainstream culture. Husbands, however, who are more likely to maintain their own cultural heritage and less likely to be interested in developing relationships with the new culture, which refers to a high separation attitude, also had high levels of marital satisfaction. This finding is a new observation,

that the studies based on the interviews with couples mainly report a correspondence in interest of each other's culture as being reported to be associated with marital satisfaction. Unless further analysis is employed, however, it is not possible to evaluate that difference with literature and it is suggested to observe the complementary and similarity effects of the acculturation attitudes.

Consistent with the literature, an association between high scores on positive conflict resolution styles, low scores on negative conflict management styles and high levels of husbands' marital satisfaction, suggest the universality of the observations. Husbands' increased skills on their wives' language is significantly correlated with increased levels of husbands' marital satisfaction. The literature findings suggest that a decrease in misunderstandings may be correlated with marital satisfaction (Renalds, 2011; Waldman and Rubavca, 2005; Tseng, 2001). Similarly, consistent with literature, husbands' low levels of cultural distance are associated with high levels of marital satisfaction. Among received social support, having a more tangible support source is associated with high levels of marital satisfaction. This finding is interesting, in that husbands' social network has no significant association with husbands' marital satisfaction. More positive societal reactions towards husbands' marriage are positively correlated with high levels of husbands' marital satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Larson (2000), that societal reactions are not only associated with but also a predictor of, marital satisfaction. Additionally, it is a crucial finding for the association between contextual factors and marital satisfaction, confirming what Tseng (2001) underlines, in terms of the contributions of societal approval to a successful intercultural marriage. Lastly, more frequent face-to-face contact and distant contact is positively correlated with increased levels of husbands' marital satisfaction.

The associations between wives' criterion variables and wives marital satisfaction are examined. According to the findings, low to moderate positive correlations are observed between wives' marital satisfaction and wives' own scores on Cultural empathy, perceived social support from family, friend and total score,

integration attitudes, rejection attitudes, cultural distance, social network, plus, societal reactions and wives'. Positive correlations are ranged between .17 and .43, from. Wives' marital satisfaction is negatively correlated with own marginalisation attitudes and negative conflict resolution style. Wives' increased ability and intent to understand culturally specific thoughts, behaviours and values, are associated with increased levels of wives' marital satisfaction. Similarly with husbands' findings, cultural empathy is one of the suggested personality traits, which enhances adaptation to culturally diverse situations. Although literature implies that increased adaptation skills are crucial for a better marital relationship, this study is significant in that, it is one of the few studies which specifically assesses the association between culturally sensitive personality traits and the marital satisfaction of immigrant wives. Only the cultural empathy dimension had a significant association, as the cultural empathy increased the marital satisfaction of their own increased. Consistent with the literature, higher perceived social support from various sources as family, friends and all sources together, are significantly correlated with high levels of wives' marital satisfaction. Among the acculturation attitudes, high scores on integration and separation attitudes and low scores on marginalisation attitudes associated with high levels of wives' marital satisfaction. Wives' higher levels of marital satisfaction are associated with their attitude to maintaining their own culture but also open to create positive relationships with the new culture. On the other hand, wives' attitudes to maintain their own culture and a decreased interest towards the host culture, also significantly correlated with high levels of marital satisfaction. Contrarily, high levels of marginalisation attitudes, such as regretting own cultural identity and the positive extending relations with the new culture, are associated with low levels of wives' marital satisfaction. As mentioned before, integration attitudes are expected to be correlated with marital satisfaction, according to the studies conducted with immigrant wives. Additionally, marginalisation attitude and separation attitude are suggested as being due to the interference of developing positive relations with the new cultural environment, psychological distress and sociocultural difficulties increases, which

contribute negatively to marital satisfaction. The finding is, therefore, new for the literature, in terms of the positive association between separation attitudes and marital satisfaction. Following on from Türker's (2002) study, wives' may be expected to adapt assimilation attitudes, therefore, it can be suggested to assess the significant association, whether this is a result of a defensive response or not.

Lastly, this study depended on the idea of non-independence of the partners, thus, associations between actor and partner variables were observed. The correlation coefficients between husbands' and wives' scores indicated low to high positive correlations on cultural empathy, open-mindedness, perceived social support from family, perceived social support from friend, perceived social support significant other, total perceived social support, marginalisation attitudes, negative conflict resolution styles, subordination, cultural distance, social network, tangible support, information support, relations with family of origin through distant contact and marital satisfaction, were all associated with high wives' score on the same variable. The associations between husbands and wives suggested evidence for the interdependence of husbands and wives.

### **5.3 Actor Effects on Marital Satisfaction**

*H1: Personality traits of the actor are expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

According to the stepwise multiple regression results, among personality traits, only Cultural Empathy was the significant predictor of husbands' marital satisfaction. This result can be interpreted as suggesting that husbands who are more interested and open to contact with new cultural norms, values and habits, are predicted to have higher degrees of marital satisfaction. On the other hand, wives' personality traits did not have a significant predictive role on their own marital satisfaction. According to this result, there was a gender difference on concerning the predictive role of the cultural empathy trait, on an actor's marital satisfaction.

The literature highlighted that openness (Charnai, 2007) and conscientiousness (Güngör, 2009), significantly predict spouses' own marital satisfaction. Additionally, decreased emotional stability was expected to predict marital dissatisfaction (Larson,

2000), however, the result of this study did not supported these findings. More specifically, openness was identified as improving the marital satisfaction of culturally diverse couples, yet this study did not empirically support those findings. Moreover, although higher cultural empathy traits suggested as a significant, positive contribution to marital satisfaction in a new cultural setting (Chen, 1990), only the actor effect of husbands were significant. Contrary findings can be the result of using a culturally sensitive assessment tool, as suggested by Ashton (1988), whereas, most studies depend on general personality factors.

On the other hand, previous studies were based on interviews or practical observations, which highlighted the associations between the personality traits and marital satisfaction. The correlations had more similar results with interviews, however, the causality is not supported, particularly for the wives. There are also studies that suggest personality traits may differ for individuals who prefer to marry interculturally. Attitudes and behaviours may, thus, be similar within a population which includes basic skill, for a better marriage. The main effects supporting this idea are that, mean difference was most observed between husbands and wives, when the nationality difference did not indicate a significant difference as regards most of the dimension of personality traits

*H2: Acculturation attitudes of the actor are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Husbands' integration attitudes predicted husbands' marital satisfaction, however, wives' marginalisation attitudes had a negative significant predictive role on wives' marital satisfaction. The results suggest that, especially for husbands positive relations with wives, cultural background would enhance developing a better marital relationship, as result of their attitude that validates a partner. The affect of husbands' integration attitude on his marital satisfaction is consistent with the idea that learning about spouses culture would increase marital satisfaction (Sharaievska et al., 2013).

Although the actor effects of integration attitudes were highlighted for both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction in the literature, particularly for wives who

are immigrants, as a result of their experiences in the host culture (Negy & Snyder, 2000), the finding of this study did not support the previous suggestion. On the other hand, marginalisation attitudes were considered to have a negative effect on marital satisfaction, due to the fact of the increased psychological distress, which is associated with more sociocultural difficulty (Ward & Kenny, 1994). The findings of this study support the suggestion regarding the contribution of marginalisation. The contrary finding could be interpreted as indicating that there is another underlying factor for improving couples' marital life, than the individual validation of own and other culture as an integration attitude. According to the Ward and Kenny (1994) and Negy and colleagues (2010), own psychological distress is suggested as having a moderation role on own marital satisfaction.

*H3: Perceived social support of the actor is expected to add to an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Among the perceived social support dimensions, own perceived family support scores was a significant predictor of own marital satisfaction for both husbands and wives. Increased degrees of perceived family support significantly, contributed to increased marital satisfaction for both. The findings were consistent with the findings that perceived social support is a primary process for intimate relationships (Carr et al., 2014, Cutrona, 1996).

In particular for the bi-national couples, it is suggested that the importance of perceived family support increases in culturally diverse settings, as a result of dependency on the partners and increased need of the partner who belongs to the host culture (Cools, 2008). Additionally, bi-national couples are more likely to be exposed to stress than mononational couples, therefore, the buffering role of perceived family support during stressful events plays a crucial role in predicting marital satisfaction (Scheidler, 2008). Regardless of cultural difference, however, the role of perceived family support is conceptualised, depending on the idea that responsiveness of the partner is necessary in building a satisfying marriage. An explanation of the findings could be considered in light of the further APIM results, due to the fact that one of the

partners is an immigrant and assumed that they would be exposed to decreased social networks and suffer from language inadequacy.

*H4: Conflict resolution styles of the actor are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

The finding on conflict resolution dimension was consistent with the researcher's expectancy that the negative conflict resolution styles of both husbands' and wives', predicted their own marital satisfaction. Increased, negative conflict resolution styles result in a decrease in their own marital satisfaction. Baucom and colleagues (2010), indicated that, during a conflict, partners may focus on the own reactions, which is consistent with the results of this study. This result can be interpreted under the attachment studies, that negative reactions can be associated with negative emotions, which results in a decrease in marital satisfaction (Johnson, 2003).

*H5: Cultural distance of the actor is expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

Husbands' and wives' cultural distance significantly predict their own marital satisfaction. Increased cultural differences significantly decrease marital satisfaction, which indicates consistency with the literature (Daneshpour, 2009; Larson, 2000; Crohn, 1995). The vast literature suggests that, cultural differences are the source of stress in bi-national marriages. This finding would be interpreted as this stress contributing to barriers to improve their own marital satisfaction, to the degree that, however much they perceive themselves as different from their partner, they tend to be less satisfied in their relationship. Falicov's (1995) balanced view highlighted focusing on similarities, to develop a healthy and satisfying marriage, which is consistent with this finding. Moreover, cultural differences that lead to misunderstandings (Waldman and Rubalcava, 2005) decrease marital satisfaction.

*H6: Language skills of the actor are expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

Language skills were expected to be a significant predictor of marital satisfaction, however, contributions of language skills to explaining the variance of both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction were not significant. This result can be interpreted according to Rorhlich (1988), cognitive dissonance explanation, that

decreased communication skills can cause discomfort to a degree, until the basic skills are developed. When the spouses have basic language skills, the significant contribution of language skills may decrease.

Rosenblatt (2009) suggested that, intercultural marriages differ from other marriages because of the power relationships. Language is one of the significant indicators of the power relationship, due to the fact that one spouse's increased skills, which gives them an advantage during a conflict or in social life. Nonetheless, according to the results of this study, it can be suggested that imbalance in power would not always lead to a dissatisfying marriage. Additionally, the literature about language skills suggests that decreased language skills lead to an acculturative stress, which would be a barrier to a healthy marital relationship (Cools, 2008; Tseng, 2001). Contrary to this suggestion, basic skills could help to overcome the destructive role of any possible acculturation stress, however, the findings should be reexamined in more detail, with non-speaker groups.

*H7: Demographics (age, gender, length of settlement, length of marriage, income, education) characteristics of the actor, are expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

None of the actor's demographic variables was a significant predictor of their own marital satisfaction, for both husbands and wives. Income is extracted from the analysis because missing reports were significant.

There are contrary findings about the predictor role of demographic variables on marital satisfaction. Larson (2000) indicated that the predictive role of age, income and employment status, mostly related to being ready to manage a household individually, however, contrary findings suggested that age and income are not significant predictors of marital satisfaction. Similarly, educational level is not always reported as a predictor of marital satisfaction. Contrarily, as a result of an increase in emotional intelligence led by educational level, a graduation degree could be a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. It is, however, a new finding in the

literature that actors' contextual factors, such as age, income and educational level, are not significant predictors of partners' marital satisfaction.

Literature suggests bi-national couples suffer from increased conflict, more than do mononational couples and the adjustment process of the bi-national couples would be more stressful (Negy, et al., 2010). In particular, for this study, due to the possible correlations with acculturation stress and marital distress, length of marriage and length of settlement were expected to significantly contribute to actors' marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages, however, the effects were not significant. This study consists of the marital couples who have been married for at least six months, therefore the generalisation of the results can be problematic.

*H8: Received social support of the actor is expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

Received social support has three subcategories, these being information support, tangible support and social network, none of the subcategories having a significant effect on predicting the marital satisfaction of husbands and wives own marital satisfaction.

In particular, depending on the idea that immigrants would suffer from decreased social ties, lost connections and decreased ability to communicate with institutions, the contextual factor of social support would promote marital satisfaction. The findings, however, were inconsistent with the idea that one of the partners of this study is an immigrant. This contrary finding could be affected by the sample characteristic because immigrant wives in this study significantly had higher degrees of social support than did husbands. On the other hand, Norris and Kaniasty (1996) suggested that received social support is more significant during stressful life events. Although no other contribution to an acute stress was not investigated, the couples in this study were married for at least six months, which would suggest that they may have already had some solutions to the conflicts that they have faced, therefore, they may experience less stressful life events.

Moreover, especially for the immigration cases, as a result of decreased social provision, dependency on the native partners increased (Copeland & Norell, 2002). This study assess the received social support in a general manner, in that a number of sources were identified more as social support sources, than identifying the husbands' role in giving actual support. It is, however, a new finding for the literature for the binational marriage cases, previous studies indicated received social support sources may not improve marital satisfaction as much as perceived social support from family (Lawrence et al., 2008).

*H9: Societal reactions of the actor are expected to actor's marital satisfaction.*

Negative societal reactions of both husbands and wives had a significant effect on predicting their own marital satisfaction. Husbands and wives, who do not feel that their relationship is approved of by family members and friends, had significantly decreased marital satisfaction. The effects of approval received from family and friends on marital satisfaction are not limited to bi-national couples (Cihan-Güngör, 2007; Larson, 2000), however, the literature suggested that bi-national couples suffer from decreased approval more than do mononational couples, as a result of oppression and prejudice on out-group marriages (Biever, Bobele & North, 1998). The findings were consistent with the suggestions of a negative effect of decreased approval.

*H10: Relations with family of origin of the actor, is expected to have an impact on an actor's marital satisfaction.*

The index of relations with family of origin of the actor did not have a significant effect on an actor's (both husbands' and wives') marital satisfaction. Despite this, it is suggested that, in all cultures, individuals seek contact with their family of origin (Georgas et al, 2010) and in the prior studies, the effect of frequency of contact on their own marital satisfaction are not assessed. Only it has been suggested that, particularly for immigrant partners as a result of a decrease in social network, social ties and feeling of loss in their relationships, contact with family of origin would promote marital satisfaction (Negy et. al., 2010). Additionally, contacts with the family of origin would buffer acculturation stress, thus, enhancing developing

a satisfying relationship. This is, however, the first study in which this contextual factor is not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. The previous studies were mostly based on qualitative techniques, such as interview. There may be still an association between family relations and marital satisfaction hence, the present study suggests there is no causal effect. This contrary result could be reassessed with the use of more sensitive assessment tools.

#### **5.4 Partner Effects on Marital Satisfaction**

*H11: Personality traits of the partner are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

The stepwise regression results indicated that wives' cultural empathy traits significantly predicted husbands' marital satisfaction, while husband's social initiative traits predicted wives' marital satisfaction.

Çelenk and Van de Vijner (2013) suggested partners' personality traits are more important in predicting an actor's marital satisfaction, in culturally diverse settings. Consistent with this finding, both partner's personality traits predicted the actor's marital satisfaction. Despite the fact that, the literature suggested the actor's emotional instability and extraversion traits predict a partner's marital satisfaction (Charnai, 2007), there was a gender difference in the predictors of marital satisfaction, rather than supporting a general result. This contrary finding could be interpreted according to the immigration circumstances and cultural diversity. Firstly, the assessment tool was a culturally sensitive tool, which is suggested to be able to distinguish more specific traits in multicultural settings (Ashton, 1998). Additionally, most of the husbands participating in this study did not have immigration experience and were natives and it was the wives who were immigrants. According the results, the cultural empathy traits of the wives do not significantly contribute to their own marital satisfaction, however, the importance of which partner they are increases, when it is sought to improve husbands' marital satisfaction. Similarly, [possibly --- whether the husband assumes the leading role, which indicates an increase in social interaction and thus, an increase in social initiative trait of husbands, as the latter try to

protect social ties, become more important for improving wives' marital satisfaction in an immigrant wife cases. The results are suggested to be new findings for the literature.

*H12: Acculturation attitudes of the partner are expected to predict actor's marital satisfaction.*

According to the stepwise regression results, husbands' integration and assimilation attitudes significantly predicted wives' marital satisfaction. None of the wives acculturation attitudes had a significant role in predicting husbands' marital satisfaction. Increased integration and assimilation attitude scores predict increase wives' marital satisfaction. The difference between genders, in terms of integration, would be explained by the power effect on the relationship. In this study, wives were immigrants, that giving the husband more power as a result of him being a citizen of the host nation. Husbands who are more sensitive about learning their partner's culture, create a more balanced relationship, when his wife could feel more validated. This result is consistent with the case reported by Türker (2002), where the husband became more sensitive to his wife's cultural background, the couple reporting an improvement in their life. Additionally, a husband's tolerance contributes to his wife's psychological well-being.

Moreover, high assimilation attitudes scores predicts increased wives' marital satisfaction. The finding could be understood in light of the Marfoff (1977, cited in 2004), which suggests that partners' preferences may be differ according to the culture. Nonetheless, this finding is consistent with Falicov's (1995), balance theory, that the partners should minimise their focus on differences, in order to increase marital adjustment in culturally diverse settings.

On the other hand, in this study, being immigrant wives would heighten acculturation stress and the majority literature suggests that integration attitude would decrease acculturation stress (Negy et al., 2010), as a result of integration attitude having a buffering role on marital satisfaction. These findings suggest that understanding a partner's culture, especially for the immigrant partner, is more

important than acculturation stress, when predicting immigrant partner's marital satisfaction.

*H13: Perceived social support of the partner is expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Among the perceived social support sources, perceived family support of both husbands' and wives', significantly predicted their partner's marital satisfaction. Increased perceived family support of both partners, significantly contributed to increased mutual marital satisfaction. This finding can be interpreted as not only indicating that unsupportive spouses decrease their spouse's marital satisfaction (Frazier et al., 2003) but also the degree of how much they feel supported is significant, to their partners' marital satisfaction.

These findings could be understood by two explanations regarding the function of perceived social support. The models of perceived social support highlight that perceived social support increases the fact that individuals feel validated in the marital relationship, which determines the partner's responsibility. On the other hand, the studies with culturally diverse couples underlined the effect of perceived social support on personal wellbeing, therefore, the wellbeing of the individuals would promote a better marital relationship. Consistency with literature findings can be interpreted as the universality of the findings, when predicting marital satisfaction.

*H14: Conflict resolution styles of the partner are expected to predict the actor's marital satisfaction.*

Negative, retreat and subordination conflict resolution styles of husbands, were significant predictors of wives' marital satisfaction. Increased negative and retreat conflict resolution styles of husbands significantly resulted in decreased wives' marital satisfaction, whereas, increased subordination conflict management styles lead to increased wives' marital satisfaction. Additionally, only wives' negative conflict resolution style significantly predicted husbands' marital satisfaction.

Consistent with the literature, the results indicated that actors' negative conflict management style significantly contributes to a decrease in partners' marital

satisfaction. In addition, more specifically, Gottman and Silver (1995) opined that negative resolution styles contribute to decreased marital satisfaction, more than any other conflict resolution style. Negative conflict resolution styles can be the most destructive barrier to promoting a healthy relationship, which suggests the universality of couples.

There is, however, a gender difference with regard to retreat and subordination conflict resolution styles. Similarly, concerning negative resolution styles, husbands' retreat conflict resolution styles contribute to destructive results on wives' marital satisfaction. This gender difference regarding predictive partner effect of a subordination trait on wives' marital satisfaction can be interpreted that, as a result of cultural differences, expectations and rules can be different across cultures (Liu & Wittenborn, 2011). German and Russian wives would expect more self-disclosure from their spouses, than staying silent or refusing discussion. Rohrlich (1988), underlined the importance of self-disclosure in setting a healthy relationship for culturally diverse couples. Moreover, Rohrlich (1988), indicated decision-making power during a conflict is essential for a healthy marriage, in culturally diverse couples. Subordination conflict management styles indicate that husbands accepting their partners request without justification promotes a decision making power for the immigrant partner. However, this finding is, however, new in literature and should be compared in a mononational couple sample.

Özen (2006), reported retreat is associated with relationship satisfaction, however, did not indicate a causal relationship. Although there is still there is a need for assessing the partner effects on more culturally heterogeneous samples, the results of the current study may be indicating a more destructive role in using retreat styles for immigrant partners. Due to the fact that power may be unbalanced, the contribution of negative conflict resolutions, such as negative conflict resolution style and retreat, become sensitive.

*H15: Cultural distance of the partner is expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Although it was hypothesised that an actor's cultural distance significantly predicts a partner's marital satisfaction, no significant relationship was observed for predicting husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. This result would indicate that however much they perceive themselves as being different from their partner, this only contributes to their own stress or acculturation stress. The actors' perception of a decreased pool of shared values, customs and habits, can still contribute to misunderstandings (Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005), hence, who the partner culturally is, does not always contribute to partner marital dissatisfaction, which conflicts with the studies indicating the importance of cultural differences in bi-national couples. Depending on the idea that, partners are do not always suffer from the differences and can learn to be more tolerant towards differences (Tseng, 2001), cultural differences would not predict marital satisfaction. According to the findings of the present study, an actor's marital satisfaction relies more on how the partners solve conflicts, than how much conflict the couples face, as the level of cultural differences may increase the conflict areas.

*H16: Language skills of the partner are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Increased fluency of partners' language skills, as regards their spouses, was expected to predict actors' marital satisfaction, however, the findings of this study did not supported this hypothesis. Although literature suggests that effective usage of each other's language is one of the challenges for bi-national couples, this challenge would not contribute to explaining the variance of both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction.

This study consisted of different partners, who speak Turkish or use another language at home, therefore, only the actor's language skills impact on partner's language was assessed. There were husbands who had limited language skills in their partner's language. It is suggested that partners could feel validated if their spouses learn their language, however, the results of this study can be interpreted that lack of language

skills does not always lead to partners' feeling less validated and having decreased marital satisfaction.

H17: Demographics (age, gender, income, education) characteristics of the partner are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.

Similarly, none of the demographics, as contextual factors, had a significant contribution to partners' marital satisfaction. As prior mentioned, due to the missing values, income is extracted from the analysis. This study is the one of the first studies that empirically analysed the effect of contextual factors for both actors' and partners' marital satisfaction, the literature on bi-national marriage studies being mostly based on interviews and clinical observations. According to this, study it is suggested that the age, gender and educational level of actors would not only not contribute to an immigrant partners' marital dissatisfaction but this would also apply to partners who are the citizens of a host culture.

*H18: Received social support of the partner is expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Particularly as regards immigrant wives, the researcher expected a significant contribution concerning received social support dimensions, due to the contributions of increased individual wellbeing in immigrant samples. None of the three dimensions of tangible support, information support and social network of actors, proved to be a significant predictor of both husbands and wives. As already mentioned, the immigrant wives had more increased social network than their husbands, therefore, generalisation of the results would be more suitable, only after examining the effect of the variables with an immigrant wives or husbands sample, these having decreased social networks. H19: Societal reactions of the partner are expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.

Similar to the actor affects, partners' negative societal significantly predicted actors' marital satisfaction, for both husbands and wives. These findings suggest a strong evidence for supporting the importance of family and friends approval, for a satisfying marriage.

*H20: Relations with family of origin of the partner, is expected to predict an actor's marital satisfaction.*

Although the literature suggests family of origin relations are a significant predictor of marital satisfaction, partner effect is not observed as regards the actor's marital satisfaction. The researcher had expected that, for the immigrant partners, due to the decrease in possible contacts and feelings of loss, relations with family of origin would significantly contribute to partners' marital satisfaction. Considering the effect of perceived social support from family, the results can be interpreted as indicating that the primary source for the couples' marital satisfaction is their relationship with own partners, rather than with extended family relationships.

### **5.5 Actor and Partner Effects on Marital Satisfaction**

This was an explanatory study, which examined the predictors of marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages. In order to test, APIM bidirectional relationships should be observed, therefore, in a prior analysis, bi-directional predictors were determined at three levels. Perceived social support from family at the individual level, negative conflict resolution style in couple traits and negative societal reaction in contextual factors, supported the bi-directionality assumption. The impact of individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, were separately tested by APIM analysis.

The overall findings supported the expectation that, each three-level model was significant in predicting husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. At the individual level, husbands' perceived social support from family significantly predicted both husbands' and wives' and wives' perceived social support from family significantly predicted both husbands' and wives', which would suggest evidence for employing an ecosystem framework for bi-national marriage research and applications.

The findings concerning gender differences regarding three-level yield indicated significant variations at the couple traits level, whereas, the contributions of husbands' and wives' variables had an equivalent impact on individual traits and contextual factors.

The importance of perceived social support increases during times of stress and most literature on the characteristics of binational marriages indicate s that these couples are more exposed to more heightened stress, as a result of changing social environment and adaption to new cultural factors. According to models of perceived social support, it could, therefore, be suggested that for immigrant women in binational marriages, the affect would increase. Having asid that, the equivalence of the affect size for both genders supports that perceived social support from family is important for partners, bot those who are migrated and those who are not. Thus, the models focused on responsiveness of the partners are suggested as explaining the role of family support in bi-national marriages and that it is more crucial than buffering stress. This finding is consistent with the interviews conducted with bi-national couples, who t report that, feeling validated improves marital satisfaction.

The pooled effect of negative conflict resolution styles on predicting actor's and partner's marital satisfaction was significant, however, actor affects had an increased impact in explaining their own marital satisfaction. This finding is new in literature and it could be interpreted that, according to Johnson (2004), depending on the degree to which actors perceive their partners as a threat, they tend to use more negative conflict resolution styles, which reinforces a vicious circle.

Negative societal reactions had a significant affect on predicting actor's and partner's marital satisfaction and there were also no gender differences. This finding suggests strong evidence for the importance of the approval from both partner's immediate relationships. Moreover, the context of the relationship should not be ignored.

### **5.6 Interaction effects on Marital Satisfaction**

Considering the complementary and similar nature of the findings and emphasising the cultural similarities about bi-national couples, the interaction of actor-partner effects is tested and hypothesised as follows;

Similarities in personality traits, integration attitudes, perceived social support, positive conflict resolution style, cultural distance, language skills, demographics (age,

gender, education) characteristics, received social support (social network) and societal reactions of the actor, are expected to predict actor's and partner's marital satisfaction.

Similarities on open-mindedness traits significantly predicted husbands' marital satisfaction. Moreover, similarities in cultural empathy traits, were positive predictors of wives' marital satisfaction. Literature suggests that similarities in being talkative, energetic, friendly, cooperative and open to new experiences predicts, increased levels of marital satisfaction. There is, however, a gender difference among predictive personality traits. Considering the difference is not only gender-based but also, the wives were immigrants, the results can be interpreted as indicating that couples needs may differ according to their experiences.

Contrary to expectations, assimilation attitudes were a positive significant predictor of husbands' marital satisfaction. Nonetheless, assimilation attitudes indicate that individuals have more positive relations with their partners' cultural values, habits, than preserving their own cultural background. This finding can be understood with the suggestion that, if the partners validate the others' culture, this may result in increased marital satisfaction. On the other hand, there was a gender difference; husbands are suggested as being more sensitive to this impact, therefore, for generalisation of the results, it would be better to test the finding with an immigrant' husbands sample.

### **5.7 Limitations**

There are three limitations identified in the current study. First of all, there are some notions about the sampling and generalisation of the study. This study gave a priority to condering a foreign wife and a Turkish husband, according to the distribution of the couples in the population because of the possible confounding factors and the convenience of the couples. This may, however, be a possible limitation for the generalisation of the study.

Two other issues regarding limitations about sample are concerned with language difficulty and convenience. In order to use proper assessment tools, with

acceptable reliability and fulfill the assumptions of examining, the similarities scales were only in the Turkish language. The German and Russian participants already had Turkish language skills, to the degree that they could understand the questions. According to the literature, language skills are a significant variable for acculturation attitudes (Ataca & Berry, 2002), thus, the participants of this study could have had increased integration attitudes.

On the other hand, the researcher could have selected couples through some associations or institutions, which provide a significant social network and social support to the participants. Similarities in the social network and the social support of the participants, could have affected the predictive role of some contextual factors.

Although the analyses of this study are significant and have an acceptable power for assessment, the pooled effect of the three levels could be more suitable for differentiation purposes, however, the decreased number of participants hindered assessing the pooled effect of the total variables, in an APIM analysis.

### **5.8 Future Research**

The literature findings and the suggestions based on the experience with bi-national and intercultural marriages, suggested a moderation effect of acculturation stress. Although the degree of cultural distance can be suggested, that would be an indicator of the degree to which individuals were exposed to a stress and a more detailed assessment would be much healthier. Thus, examining the moderator role of acculturation stress in marital satisfaction and the significant predictors of this study, would enhance the opportunity to understand the nature of the bi-national marriages.

Additionally, as indicated in the limitations, the participants of this study consisted of a foreign wife and a Turkish husband, therefore, the suggested model can also be tested in a foreign husband and Turkish wife sample. Moreover, with an enlarged sample, examining the three-level constructs and predictive role of the constructs in a pooled analysis, would contribute to the testing significance of ecological perspective.

As the findings suggest, researchers should not ignore the contributions of contextual factors, when working with bi-national families and marriages. In particular, depending on the observations, such as, decreased number of returned booklets and participation acceptances to this study, couples might feel uneasy and wary. Moreover, it might prove beneficial to avoid asking for certain personal information, such as income. Building a good rapport with the participants is a crucial part of the studies with bi-national marriages.

Although this study suggested some predictors of the marital satisfaction of both partners and actors that could be specifically assessed for bi-national couples, i.e. acculturation, the final APIM analysis can be replicated in a mono-national sample. Thus, the significance of a working model with bi-national couples could be examined.

### **5.9 Clinical Implications**

Due to the fact that the assessment procedure followed an analysis of, both individuals, such as a spouse and individuals as a couple and the contexts in which the spouses embedded, additionally evaluated the individual contributions to their own marital satisfaction, spouse's marital satisfaction and the comparison of the individual contributions to both spouse's marital satisfaction; several implications could be suggested in a large spectrum. Thus, several clinical implications, contributions to researches and policy-making implications are possible to suggest, in accordance with the results of this study. A summary of the implications is given in Table 9.

The assessment of marital satisfaction was employed as an indicator for a healthy marriage (Brandbury et al., 2000) and for the stability of the marriage (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Despite the fact that bi-national marriages are suggested to have an increased divorce rate (Kalmijn, 2005), the theoretical background of bi-national or intercultural couples is mostly based on clinical observations, with relatively few quantitative or qualitative researches being conducted, in order to understand the nature of the marital satisfaction in bi-national marriages. One of the clinical significances of this study, is to provide quantitative

data for clinicians, as well as the universality of the particular variables. The findings of this study could provide a guide for increasing marital satisfaction in nationally diverse couples.

The information regarding the causality of the relationship between actor's and partner's traits and their own and partner's marital satisfaction, would suggest a focus on particular aspects on couple intervention for bi-national couples. Additionally, an ecosystem perspective increases the understanding of assessment on possible contributing levels. Nonetheless, as Tseng (2001) noted, each culturally diverse marriage has different dynamics. Thus, the current study mostly suggests information for bi-national marriages in which one of the spouses is native and the other is immigrant, which enables a discussion on the contributions of each partner in the current dynamics. Moreover, by assessing the actor and partner affect on marital satisfaction, the present findings would provide clinicians with a focus for each component in the intervention, such as eliminating the possible traits that require consciousness raising at each level.

In the psychoeducational model of it identified four components, these being awareness and consciousness raising, identifying cultural identities, acknowledging the skills and culture specific problem solving and conflict resolution. According to the results of the current study, consistent with Ibrahim and Schoeder (1990), increasing awareness is suggested to be a crucial component for the interventions with binational spouses. Binational couples would benefit from psychoeducational model, in particularly, a focus would be given to husbands' and wives' cultural empathy traits, husbands' social initiative traits, cultural distance and negative societal reactions.

According to the results of the current study, in a treatment process, each of the levels, individual traits, couple traits and contextual factors, may contribute to improvement in a marital relationship. The causality were observed on perceived social support, acculturation attitudes, conflict resolution styles and cultural distance which can be improved by a learning process. The contributions of personality traits were limited, additionally contextual factors would not a play a role on improvement

for marital satisfaction. Interventions would be more open for change and the change being more likely in a short time. This is especially true, when partners' have basic language skills, as advanced levels would not suggest increased marital satisfaction. Thus, during an intervention or a therapy process, clinicians would not need a detailed assessment nor to gain improvement in personality dimensions, however, when any impairment is observed, the results suggest more individual treatment on the basis that, personality affects their own marital satisfaction or increases the awareness of the contributions of personality traits.

Actor effects have indicated that, for both wives and husbands, cultural distance and acculturation attitudes such as integration, are significant predictors of their own marital satisfaction. Several studies indicated the need for greater adjustment, therefore, it is proposed to given more attention to differences and how they adjust the difference offered, as an issue of culturally different couples. According to the findings, however, cultural differences are only significant for partners' own satisfaction, therefore, more than seeking a balance, increasing awareness of the individual partners may help more, in a couple intervention process. Thus, clinicians may consider assessing the partners' individual states. Training material for a psychoeducational intervention or a premarital intervention, would not need to cover each aspect of the personality traits and information regarding cultural empathy traits would be a better focus during the intervention.

According to the results, only societal reaction was significant at contextual level; it is interpreted that the partners would not always have to suffer from negative social context, thus, during an intervention, only assessment of the social reactions at the beginning would be necessary. For both partners, increasing awareness of the contributions of societal reactions is proposed as being crucial. Additionally, the findings suggest an implication, not only for a treatment process but also for premarital counselling interventions; psychoeducation about the contribution of societal approval would increase awareness for a healthy marriage. According to the

**Table 9.** Study Variables, Predictors and Suggested implication

<b>Category of factor</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Predictors of Husbands</b>	<b>Predictors of Wives</b>	<b>Implications for practice</b>
Individual traits	<i>Personality</i>	Husbands' Cultural Empathy; Wives' Cultural Empathy	Husbands' Social Initiative	Assess personality traits; Increase awareness about positive contributions of personality traits
	<i>Perceived Social Support</i>	Both Husbands and Wives; MSPSS Family	Both Husbands' and Wives; MSPSS Family	Encourage developing supportive relationships and seeking spousal support
	<i>Acculturation</i>	Husbands' Integration Attitude	Husbands' Integration and Assimilation Attitude, Wives' Marginalisation Attitude	Discuss positive and negative contributions of attitudes, encourage developing positive relations with new cultural environment and interest towards each others' culture
Couple traits	<i>Conflict Resolution Style</i>	Husbands' and Wives' Negative Conflict Resolution Styles	Husbands' Negative, Subordination and Retreat Conflict Resolution Styles	Assess conflict resolution styles, trainings for ways to resolve disagreements
	<i>Cultural Distance Language Skills</i>	Husbands' cultural distance	Wives' cultural distance	Discuss expectations and positive contributions
	Contextual Factors	<i>Demographics</i>		
<i>Received Social Support</i>				
<i>Societal Reaction</i>		Husbands' and Wives' Negative Societal Reactions	Husbands' and Wives' Negative Societal Reactions	Encourage seeking approval, discuss contributions of approval, increase awareness for policy makers
	<i>Relations with Family of Origin</i>			

findings and consistent with premarital studies literature, marital satisfaction can be effected by societal reactions. Thus, this may put couples at risk, even before they marry, thus, clinicians whose studies focus on premarital training could consider the contextual effects.

According to the phenomenon suggested by Falicov (2003), which suggest that there are extended negative reactions and impact family members' reactions, as a result of an out-group marriage, the results would suggests that binational couples would be in a risk for suffering decreased marital satisfaction. On the other hand, binational couples are not always exposed to negative societal reactions or disapproval from society (Renalds, 2011). Prejudice may affect the degree of the approval from family and friends, therefore social policies can be produced according to this effect.

The clinicians and scholars implied that the reason for the problems are the discord and differences in values, beliefs, attitudes and habits thus it is suggested focusing on similarities and differences in therapy Sullivan and Cottone (2006). However, in order to promote marital satisfaction, it is suggested to not to focus on the problems, putting a more emphasize on how to solve problems for binational mariaggess. According to the actor and partner affects, only perceived social support, negative conflict management styles and societal reactions predicted both husbands' and wives' their own and partners marital satisfaction. The actor and partner affects did not differ in terms of perceived social support and societal reactions, however, the actor effects of negative conflict resolution styles were more effective than wetre partner affects on husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction, when the partners' contributions were still significant. The result is that, in a case with nationally diverse partners, it is proposed to focus on the positive contributions of social support and societal reactions. Encouraging both partners for developing supportive relationships and increasing awareness about the contextual system in which they live would be necessary. On the other hand, encouraging partners to develop more positive conflict resolutions styles is suggested as being more effective.

### **5.10 Conclusion**

The results of this study suggest that an ecosystem framework is necessary for understanding the nature of bi-national marriages, where there are significant predictors of actors' and partners' marital satisfaction at all three levels. Bi-directional effects were observed only for perceived social support from family, negative conflict resolution styles and societal reactions, which mainly suggests the universality of the couples. On the other hand, observed gender differences on predicting actor's and partner's marital satisfaction suggest specific affects of cultural diversity. In particular, acculturation attitudes and cultural distance and culturally sensitive personality traits had significant contributions in explaining marital satisfaction.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A. Informed Consent

#### Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu

Bu araştırma, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, Psikoloji Bölümü, Klinik Psikoloji Bütünleşik Doktora programı kapsamında, Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıçıoğlu danışmanlığında Nihan Tezer Yörük tarafından yürütülen bir tez çalışmasıdır. Bu çalışmada çift uluslu ailelerde evlilik doyumunu yordayan etkenler hakkında bilgi toplamak amaçlanmaktadır.

Mümkün olduğunca çok kişiden elde edilecek olan bilgiler topluca değerlendirileceğinden ve genel sonuçlar çıkarılacağından, ad-soyad ve kimlik belirleyici bilgiler istenmemektedir. Çalışmaya katılım gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır ve kişinin soruları yanıtlarken katılmadan vazgeçme hakkı vardır. Sorulara vereceğiniz yanıtlar sadece çalışma kapsamında kullanılacak ve saklı tutulacaktır.

Çalışmadan güvenilir sonuçlar elde edilmesi açısından samimi cevaplar vermeniz önemlidir. Soruları yanıtlarken yanıtlanmamış madde bırakmaya özen gösterin. Bilgilerinizin gizliliğini korumak için, ölçekleri doldurmayı tamamladıktan sonra, size verilen zarfın içerisine koyup, zarfı kapatınız. Bu zarf sadece araştırmacı tarafından açılacaktır.

Yürütülen bu çalışma evlilik ilişkiniz hakkında sadece bilgi toplamaya yönelik olup, yardım amaçlı değildir. Çalışma hakkında bilgi almak için Nihan Tezer ile [e159668@metu.edu.tr](mailto:e159668@metu.edu.tr) adresinden iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

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

## APPENDIX B. Feedback Information Form

Bu çalışma daha önceden de belirtildiği gibi, ODTÜ, Psikoloji Bölümü, Klinik Psikoloji Bütünleşik Doktora programı kapsamında, Prof. Dr. Hürol Fıfılođlu danışmanlığında Nihan Tezer Yörük tarafından yürütölen bir tez çalışmasıdır.

Bu çalışma alanda yapılan az sayıdaki çalışmalardan birisi olma özelliđini göstermektedir ve paylaşılan kültürel deđerler farklılaştığında evlilik doyumunun ne yönde ve nasıl etkilendiđini incelemektedir. Bu amaçla, çalışmada Türk-Alman ailelerde evlilik doyumunu yordayan etkenler araştırılmaktadır. Çalışmada katılımcılara bireysel özellikleri, çiftin birlikte gösterdiđi özellikler ve sosyal çevre hakkında sorular yöneltilerek bilgi toplanmaya çalışılmaktadır. Sonuçların, çiftlerin birlikteliklerini güçlendiren ve zorlayan özelliklerinin belirtilerek sunulması planlanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmadan alınacak ilk verilerin Haziran, 2014 sonunda elde edilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Elde edilen bilgiler sadece bilimsel araştırma ve yazılarda kullanılacaktır, aile psikolojisi ve aile terapileri alanına katkı sağlayacağı düşünölmektedir.

Çalışmada genel sonuçlar çıkacağından bireysel sonuçlar hakkında bilgi verilmemektedir. Bireysel destek ve bilgi almak isterseniz profesyonel bir yardım almanız rica olunur. Çalışmanın genel sonuçlarını öğrenmek ya da bu araştırma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak Nihan Tezer'e [e159668@metu.edu.tr](mailto:e159668@metu.edu.tr) adresinden başvurabilirsiniz. Bu araştırmaya katıldığınız için tekrar çok teşekkür ederiz.

## APPENDIX C.Demographic Information Form

### Demografik Bilgi Formu

**Cinsiyetiniz?**

Kadın  Erkek

**Yaşınız:.....**

**Uyruğunuz:.....**

**Doğduğunuz Ülke:.....**

**İkamet ettiğiniz ülke:..... Kaç yıldır?: .....**

**Hayatınızda en çok yaşadığınız ülke:..... Kaç yıl?:.....**

**En son mezun olduğunuz okul:**

İlköğretim  Lise  Yüksek Okul  Üniversite  Yüksek Lisans   
Doktora

**Çalışıyor musunuz? Evet  Hayır**

**Mesleğiniz:**

**Aylık ortalama geliriniz (Ev toplamı):**

**Kaç yıldır evlisiniz?.....**

**Çocuğunuz var mı?**

Evet

Hayır

***Cevabınız evet ise yanıtlayınız?***

***Kaç çocuğunuz var? .....***

**Anadiliniz nedir? .....**

**Ev içerisinde çoğunlukla hangi dili kullanırsınız?**

Eşimin Anadili: .....  Benim Anadilim: .....  Ortak dil:  
.....

**Herhangi psikolojik bir tedavi aldınız mı? Alıyor musunuz? Evet**

**Açıklayınız:.....**

Hayır

## APPENDIX D. Multicultural Personality Questionnaire

### Coklu Kùltür Kişilik Ölçeđi

Sample Items

	Hiç uygun değil	Az uygun	Bazen uygun	Çok uygun	Tamamen uygun
1. Kolay iletişim kurarım.					
2. Geri planda kalırım.					
3. Diğer kùltürler ilgimi çeker.					

## APPENDIX E. Acculturation Attitudes Scale For Russian

### Ruslar için Kültürlenme Ölçeği

Sample Items

Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne de Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum	
1	2	3	4	5	
1. Rus bayramlarından çok Türk bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ruslar'dan çok Türklerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Hem Türk hem Rus bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Türkler'den çok Ruslar'la biraraya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. "Bayram" bana birşey ifade etmiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hem Ruslar'la hem Türkler'le bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Türk bayramlarından çok Rus bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kimlerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirdiğime aldırım.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Çocuklarımın hem Rus hem Türk tarzlarına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Evde Rus yemeklerinden çok Türk yemekleri yemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Evimde Ruslar'a özgü süslemelerden çok Türklere özgü süslemelerin olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Yakın arkadaşlarımdan Türkler'den çok Rus olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Evde ne çeşit yemek yediğime aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Çocuklarımdan Rus tarzından çok Türk tarzına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Hem Türk hem Rus gibi yaşamaktan hoşlandığımı söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Ne tür gazete okuduğuma aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX F. Acculturation Attitudes Scale For German

### Almanlar için Kültürlenme Ölçeği

Sample Items

Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne de Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum	
1	2	3	4	5	
1. Alman bayramlarından çok Türk bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Almanlar'dan çok Türklerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Hem Türk hem Alman bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Türkler'den çok Almanlar'la biraraya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. "Bayram" bana birşey ifade etmiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hem Almanlar'la hem Türkler'le bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Türk bayramlarından çok Alman bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kimlerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirdiğime aldırım.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Çocuklarımın hem Alman hem Türk tarzlarına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Evde Alman yemeklerinden çok Türk yemekleri yemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Evimde Almanlar'a özgü süslemelerden çok Türklere özgü süslemelerin olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Yakın arkadaşlarımın Türkler 'den çok Alman olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Evde ne çeşit yemek yediğime aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Çocuklarımın Alman tarzından çok Türk tarzına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Hem Türk hem Alman gibi yaşamaktan hoşlandığımı söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Ne tür gazete okuduğuma aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX G. Acculturation Attitudes Scale For Turkish-German

### Türkler için Kültürlenme Ölçeği

Sample Items

Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne de Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum	
1	2	3	4	5	
1. Türk bayramlarından çok Alman bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Türklerden çok Almanlarla bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Hem Türk hem Alman bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Almanlar'dan çok Türkler'le biraraya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. "Bayram" bana birşey ifade etmiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hem Almanlar'la hem Türkler'le bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Alman bayramlarından çok Türk bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kimlerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirdiğime aldırım.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Çocuklarımın hem Alman hem Türk tarzlarına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Evde Türk yemeklerinden çok Alman yemekleri yemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Evimde Türklere özgü süslemelerden çok Almanlara özgü süslemelerin olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Yakın arkadaşlarımla Almanlardan çok Türk olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Evde ne çeşit yemek yediğime aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Çocuklarımın Türk tarzından çok Alman tarzına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Hem Türk hem Alman gibi yaşamaktan hoşlandığımı söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Ne tür gazete okuduğuma aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX H. Acculturation Attitudes Scale For Turkish-Russian

### Türkler için Kültürlenme Ölçeği

Sample Items

Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne de Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum	
1	2	3	4	5	
1. Türk bayramlarından çok Rus bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Türklerden çok Ruslarla bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Hem Türk hem Rus bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ruslar'dan çok Türkler'le biraraya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. "Bayram" bana birşey ifade etmiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hem Ruslar'la hem Türkler'le bir araya gelip vakit geçirmeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Rus bayramlarından çok Türk bayramlarını kutlamayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kimlerle bir araya gelip vakit geçirdiğime aldırmam.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Çocuklarımın hem Rus hem Türk tarzlarına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Evde Türk yemeklerinden çok Rus yemekleri yemeyi tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Evimde Türklere özgü süslemelerden çok Ruslara özgü süslemelerin olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Yakın arkadaşlarımla Ruslardan çok Türk olmasını tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Evde ne çeşit yemek yediğime aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Çocuklarımın Türk tarzından çok Rus tarzına uygun yetişmelerini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Hem Türk hem Rus gibi yaşamaktan hoşlandığımı söyleyebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Ne tür gazete okuduğuma aldırış etmem.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX I. Multidimensional Scale Of Percived Social Support

### Cok Yönlü Sosyal Destek Ölçeği

Aşağıdaki ifadeleri okuyarak sizin için uygun olan şekilde 1-7 arasında değerlendiriniz;

**1: Kesinlikle hayır- 7: Kesinlikle Evet.**

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
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

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 arkadaşlarımda 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, çocuklarımla, 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
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## APPENDIX J. Conflict Resolution Style Scale

### Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği

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 zayıflıklarımı 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 kırıncı 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) Sevgilimi 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 sevgilimin yanından uzaklaşırım.
- \_\_\_ 19) Sorunun çözümlenmesine 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, sırım geçene kadar konuşmayı reddederim.
- \_\_\_ 24) Bir problem yaşandığında, kendimi sevgilimin yerine koyarak onun ne düşündüğünü anlamaya çalışırım.
- \_\_\_ 25) Sürekli imalarda bulunurum.

## APPENDIX K. Cultural Distance Scale For German, Russian And Turkish

### Kültürel Uzaklık Ölçeği

Kendinizi, belirtilen kategorilerde Türk kültürüne ne kadar yakın bulduğunuzu belirtiniz.

Kendinizi, belirtilen kategorilerde Alman kültürüne ne kadar yakın bulduğunuzu belirtiniz.

Kendinizi, belirtilen kategorilerde Rus kültürüne ne kadar yakın bulduğunuzu belirtiniz.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5					1-----2-----3-----4-----5						
Tamamen Farklı Buluyorum					Tamamen Aynı Buluyorum						
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Giyim						Dil					
İletişim Tarzı						Yemek					
Dini İnançlar						Adetler					
Aile yaşantısı						Dünya Görüşü					
Değerler						Sosyal Faaliyetler					
Arkadaşlık						Yaşam standardı					

## APPENDIX L. Language Skills Index

### İletişim

Lütfen eşiniz ile iletişimde kullandığınız dil becerilerini göz önünde bulundurarak olarak kendinizi ve eşinizi 0-4 arasında değerlendiriniz, 0: hiç iyi değil; 1: pek iyi değil; 2: orta; 3: iyi; 4: çok iyi.

İlk bölümde yer alan “ben” olarak belirtilen alanda kendi için Türkçe/Rusça/Almanca becerilerinizi ve eşinizle Türkçe/Rusça/Almanca iletişim kurduğunuz durumları değerlendiriniz. “Eşim” olarak belirtilen alanda ise eşiniz için Rusça becerilerinizi ve eşinizle Rusça iletişim kurduğunuz durumları değerlendiriniz

	Ben					Eşim				
	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
Günlük konuları										
Anlama										
Okuma										
Yazma										
Konuşma										

## APPENDIX M. Social Network Questionnaire

### Sosyal Ağ Ölçeği

1. Sıradan bir hafta içerisinde yaklaşık kaç kişi ile görüşme imkanınız oluyor?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

2. Benzeri ilgi alanlarını (örneğin; spor, gezi, sanatsal faaliyetler) paylaştığınız kaç tanıdığınız var?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

3. Sizi ziyarete geldiğinde eviniz dağınık olsa utanmadan ve sıkılmadan rahatlıkla kabul ettiğiniz kaç arkadaşınız var?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

4. Toplam kaç aile üyeniz ile (örneğin; anne-baba, eş, çocuklar, kardeş) ve arkadaşınızla açık ve samimi olarak konuşabilirsiniz?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

5. Kaç kişiye ufak tefek yardımlar için başvurabilirsiniz?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

6. Zor durumda kaldığınızda başvurabileceğiniz aileniz (örneğin; anne-baba, eş, çocuklar, kardeş) dışında kaç kişi var?

Hiç  1-3  4-6  7-9  10-12  13-15  16 ve +

## APPENDIX N. Tangible And Information Support Index

### Aracsal Sosyal Destek Indeksi

Herhangi bir yerden maddi destek alıyor musunuz? Evet  Açıklayınız.....  
Hayır

Herhangi bir konuda bilgiye ihtiyaç duyarsanız size neler/kimler yardımcı olur?  
(Birden fazla işaretleyebilirsiniz)

Kendim  Eşim  Kök Ailem  Eşimin Kök Ailesi

Kurumlar  ..... Diğer  .....

Herhangi bir konuda maddi desteğe ihtiyaç duyarsanız size neler/kimler yardımcı olur?  
(Birden fazla işaretleyebilirsiniz)

Kendim  Eşim  Kök Ailem  Eşimin Kök Ailesi

Kurumlar  ..... Diğer  .....

## APPENDIX O. Societal Reactions Index, Relationship With Family Of Origin Questions

### Toplumsal Tepkiler

Aşağıdaki kişiler ilişkinizi ne kadar onaylamaktadır, 1-5 arasında değerlendiriniz.

	Neredeyse hiç	Biraz	Oldukça	Tamamen	Bilmiyorum
Babanız	1	2	3	4	5
Anneniz	1	2	3	4	5
Arkadaşlarınız	1	2	3	4	5
Eşinizin babası	1	2	3	4	5
Eşinizin annesi	1	2	3	4	5
Eşinizin arkadaşları	1	2	3	4	5

### Kök Aile İlişkileri İndeksi

Kök ailemle halen yüz yüze görüşürüm: Hiç Biraz Oldukça

Hep

Kök ailemle halen telefon, internet vb. iletişim kurarım: Hiç Biraz Oldukça

Hep

## APPENDIX P. Dyadic Adjustment Scale

### SAMPLE FORM OF DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

#### Çiftler Uyum Ölçeği

Birçok insanın, ilişkilerinde anlaşmazlıklar vardır. Lütfen aşağıda verilen maddelerin her biri için siz ve eşiniz arasındaki anlaşma veya anlaşamama ölçüsünü aşağıda verilen düzeylerden birini seçerek belirtiniz.

	Hemen hemen Her zaman anlaşırsınız	Hemen hemen Her zaman anlaşılmazsınız	Nadiren anlaşılmazsınız	Süçra anlaşılmazsınız	Hemen hemen Her zaman anlaşılmazsınız	Her zaman anlaşılmazsınız
1. Aileyle ilgili parasal işlerin idaresi.....						
2. Eğilimleriyle ilgili konular.....						
3. Dini konular.....						
4. Muhabbet-sevgi gösterme.....						

## APPENDIX R. Turkish Summary

### GİRİŞ

Evlilik ve aile terapileri uygulamalarında evliliğin devamlılığına ve sağlıklı yapısının ölçülmesine katkıda bulunacak bilgiyi sunabilmek amacıyla en yaygın şekilde kullanılan değişkenlerden bir tanesi evlilik doyumdur (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). Evlilik doyumunu farklı şekillerde tanımlayan çalışmalar, evlilik doyumunun ilişki içerisinde deneyimlenen mutluluk ve alınan memnuniyetin derecesini (Rho, 1989) veya eşlerin ilişkilerine yönelik beklentilerinin karşılanma derecesini (Bah, 1989'dan aktaran, Sharaievskaya, Kim & Stodolska, 2013) ifade ettiğinin altını çizmiştir. Karney ve Bradbury (1995) evlilik doyumunun, evliliğin istikrarı ve kalitesi ile birlikte değişimlerinin yüksek olmasından dolayı, evlilik ilişkisinin temel bileşenlerinden birisi olduğunu öne sürer.

Evlilik doyumu şimdiye kadar birçok araştırmaya konu olmuştur, bununla birlikte evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı özelliğe sahip çok sayıda değişken sunulmuştur (Bradbury vd., 2000). Larson & Holman (1994) evlilik doyumunu yordayan değişkenlerin bireysel özellikler ve davranışlar, çiftin etkileşim özellikleri ve geçmiş ve bağlamsal özellikler olarak incelenebileceği önerinde bulunmuştur ve yaptıkları literatür taraması sonucunda kök aile ilişkileri, sosyo-kültürel faktörler (yaş, gelir, eğitim seviyesi), kişilik özellikler, duygusal sağlık, zayıf kişiler arası ilişkiler ve kendilik algısı, kişiler arası benzerliklerin ve farklılıkların evlilik doyumunu etkileyen değişkenler olarak rapor etmişlerdir. Falke ve Larson (2007) yapılan çalışmalarda çoğunlukla tekli değişkenlere odaklandığını, evlilik doyumunun karmaşık ve çok sayıda değişkenden etkilenebileceğini, bu nedenle bir ilişkiyi tekli değişkenler üzerinden tanımlamanın birçok bilginin göz ardı edilmesi ve birlikte değişimlerinin incelenmesi açısından yeterli olmayabileceğini öne sürmüşlerdir. Diğer taraftan, literatürde kültürel farklılıkların çift uluslu evliliklerde homojen evliliklere kıyasla

daha çok zorluk yaşadıklarının ifade edilmesine rağmen (Cottrell, 1990; Daneshpour, 2008; Killian, 2008; Kisselev, 2010; Chi, 2011), çiftler arası kültürel farklılıkları ele alan çalışmalarda çoğunlukla çatışma çözüm yöntemlerinin (Bustamante, Nelson, Henriksen, & Monakes, 2011), kültürlenme tutumlarının (Negy, Hammonos, Reig-Ferre & Carper, 2010) ve sosyal desteğin (Copeland ve Norell, 2002) gibi tekli değişkenlerin evlilik doyumuna katkıları incelenmiştir.

Çiftlerin doğumları itibariyle ait oldukları uluslar farklılaştıkça kültürel olarak paylaştıkları değerler havuzu da farklılaşabilmekte, bunun sonucu olarak diğer çiftlere kıyasla kendilerine özgü daha fazla güçlük yaşamaktadırlar (Daneshpour, 2008, Crohn, 1995). Çift uluslu evlilikler aile psikolojisi literatüründe “özeleştirilmiş örneklem” olarak tanımlanmakta ve bu grupla evlilik doyumu çalışmak bir kaç varsayıma dayandığını belirtmek gerekir (Furrow, Johnson ve Brandley, 2011). Öncelikle bu grup kalıtsal olarak sorunlu olduğu şeklinde algılanmamalıdır (Donovan, 2004). Fakat boşanma oranlarının daha yüksek (Kalmijn, et. al. 2005; Gaines ve Ickes, 1997; akt. Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005) ve evlilik doyumlarının daha düşük olabildiği yönünde gözlemler bulunmaktadır (Smith, et. al., 2012). Literatürde bu gözlemlerin farklı kaynaklarının olabileceği üzerinde durulmuştur, ilk olarak kültürel farklılıklarından dolayı paylaşılan inançların, ritüellerin, gelenek ve göreneklerin aynı ulustan olan evlilere göre azalmasının evlilik hayatında daha çok zorladığı öne sürülmektedir (Daneshpour, 2008; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005). Diğer çiftlere kıyasla evlilik hayatında deneyimledikleri stres seviyelerinin yüksek olabileceği (Copeland & Norell, 2002; Fu ve ark., 2001, Jones & Chao, 1997), bu durumun bireylerin kültürleşme oranlarına dayalı olarak geliştirdikleri ruh sağlığı bozuklukları (Baltas & Steptoe, 2000; McFadden & Moore, 2001;) ve sosyal çevre baskıları (Jones & Chao, 1997) sonucunda oluşabileceğine yönelik gözlemler bulunmaktadır. Diğer taraftan, çiftlerin ulus farklılığı göz önünde bulundurulmadan yapılan çalışmalar çiftler arası kültürel, sosyal, ekonomik ve eğitim düzeyi benzerlik ve farklılıklarının hali hazırda ilişki doyumunu etkilediğini öne sürmektedir (Larson & Holman, 1994).

Literatürde farklı ülkelerden ve kültürlerden gelen kişilerin evliliklerini tanımlamak için birbirinden tutarsız veya birbiriyle iç içe gelen bir terminolojiye rastlanmaktadır. Farklı sosyal sınıf veya birimlerden kişilerin bir araya gelerek kurdukları evlilikler literatürde terminoloji ile ilgili bir tartışmalara yol açmış, Rohrllich (1988) bu konuya öncülük etmiştir. Bu projede “çift uluslu evlilik” olarak geçen evlilikler farklı bir etnik gruba, farklı dinlere sahip oldukları için endogamy ve exogamy olarak adlandırılabilirdi ancak sık kullanımı bulunmadığı, daha çok toplum da kullandığı şekilde karışık evlilik (mixed marriage) (Rohrllich, 1988) olarak adlandırıldığı görülmüştür. Benzer şekilde alt grupları dinler arası, etnik kökenler arası, ırklar arası tanımlamak amacıyla inter-evlilik (intermarriage) (Ho, 1990), iki-kültürlü (dual –culture) (Rohrllich, 1988), kültürler arası (intercultural) (McFadden & Moore III, 2001) gibi terimler de kullanılmıştır. Bunlara ek olarak, yine çift uluslu bir yapıyı vurgulamak için Lind ve arkadaşları (2010) tarafından çift kültürlü (bicultural) terimi kullanılmıştır. Haandrikman (2014) çalışmasında farklı ülkelerde doğup büyümüş olmanın altını çizmek amacıyla önerdiği “çift-uluslu evlilik (binational marriage)” kullanılmaktadır.

Globalizasyonun etkisiyle, gerek teknolojik gelişmeler gerekse eğitim ve iş dolayısıyla kazanılan fiziksel yakınlığın artmasıyla “çift uluslu evlilik-çift” olarak değerlendirilen kültürel olarak farklı paylaşımlara sahip bireylerin kurdukları evliliklerin sayısında artış görüldüğü öne sürülmektedir (Haandrikman, 2014; Killian, 2008; Donovan, 2004). Türkiye’de 2009 yılından bu yana Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (2014) verilen elde edilen bilgiler ışığında çift uluslu evliliklerin görülme oranının yıllar içerisinde %3-4 arasında değiştiği söylenebilir. Amerika’da bu artışın takip edilmesinin zor olduğu ancak anlamlı sayıda yüksek olduğu (Bystydzienski, 2011), Hollanda’da yaklaşık %30 oranında (Bijl vd., 2005) ve Almanya’da %10 oranında çift uluslu evlilik yapıldığı (Alman İstatistik Kurumu, 2011) belirtilmiştir. Bu artış ile birlikte literatürde farklı şekillerde tanımlamalarla “çift uluslu evlilikler” özel bir grup olarak adlandırılarak çeşitli çalışmalarda ele alınmıştır (Furrow, Johnson & Brandley, 2011).

Çalışmalar ilişkilerin farklı dönemlerinde evlilik doyumu ve kişilik özelliklerin korelasyon gösterdiğini önermektedir (Teichner ve Farnden-Lyster, 1997). Kişilik, zaman içerisinde kalıcı hale gelen ve kişilerin olaylar karşısındaki tepkilerini düzenleyen duygu, davranış ve düşünce örüntüsüdür (Morris, 2002). Larson (2000) strese dayanıksız olmanın, dürtüsellüğün, öfke ve düşmanlı tutumların ve fonksiyonel olmayan düşünce yapılarının anlamlı olarak evlilik doyumunu azaltan, yüksek sosyalliğin, esnekliğin ve girişkenliğin evlilik doyumunu arttıran kişilik özellikleri olduğunu öne sürmüştür. Charania (2006) ise kültürel özelliklerle başa çıkabilme, empati, saygı, yerel kültür, esneklik, hoşgörü, teknik beceri, açık fikirlilik, sosyallik, olumlu benlik algısı ve inisiyatif alabilmenin özelliklerinin evlilik doyumunun pozitif yordayıcılar olduğunu gözlemlemiştir. Kültürel farklılıkları ele alan çalışmalarda kişilik özelliklerinin oynadığı yordayıcı rol incelendiğinde ise, Tseng (2001) yanlış anlaşılma ve belirsizlik durumları ile başa çıkabilme becerilerinin daha iyi bir evlilik hayatına katkı sunduğunu belirtmiştir. Benzer şekilde, Bustamante ve diğerleri (2011) esneklik ile evlilik doyumu arasında pozitif ilişki bulunduğunu belirtmiştir. Sung (1990) ise açık görüşlü olmanın kültürel olarak farklılık gösteren bireylerin ilişkilerinde önemli bir rol oynadığının altını çizmiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulgularına göre kültür, dil veya din gibi farklılıkların daha çok kişilik özellikleri nedeniyle sorunlara yol açmaktadır. Diğer taraftan Muller (2004) çiftlerin kişilik özellikleri ve ilişki doyumları arasında tek kültürlü veya çift kültürlü olmaktan kaynaklı bir farklılık olmadığını önesürmüştür. Ashton (1998) çoklu kültür ortamlarında kişilik özelliklerini değerlendirirken kültüre hassas uygun bir araç seçilmesinin önemi üzerinde durmuştur. Kültüre hassas kişilik özellikleri ise Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2001) tarafından kültürel empati, açık fikirlilik, duygusal tutarlılık, esneklik ve sosyal girişkenlik olarak tanımlanmıştır.

Kişilik ve evlilik doyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi inceleyen diğer çalışmalar ise benzerlikler ve tamamlayıcılıkları değerlendirmektedir. Benzerlik hipotezi eşlerin benzerliklerinin evlilik doyumunu yükselteceğini öne sürerken, tamamlayıcılık hipotezi farklı kişilik özelliklerine sahip çiftlerin evlilik doyumlarının daha yüksek

olduğunu belirtir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre, dışa dönüklük, deneyime açıklık, hoşnut ve dürüst olma özellikleri yüksek olan eşler "sıradışı ve meraklı", "konuşkan ve enerjik", "dürtülerini düzenleyici" ve "dost, yardım sever" özellikler gösterirler ve yüksek evlilik doyumuna sahiptirler ve bu sonuç, benzerlik hipotezini destekler (Watson et al, 2000). Diğer taraftan, baskınlık / teslimiyetle ( Dryer & Horowitz, 1997) ve kendilik farkındalığı/ dürtüsellik (Nemeczek & Olson, 1999) özellikleri evlilik doyumunu desteklediğinden tamamlayıcılık hipotezi için tutarlılık gösterir.

Negy ve Synder (2000) kültürel olarak farklılık gösteren evliliklerde evlilik doyumu ve kültürlenme tutumlarının anlaşılmasının önemli olduğunu vurgular. Stephenson (2000) kültürlenmeyi 'bireylerin ve grupların farklı topluluklarla süregelen bir ilişki kurduğunda ortaya çıkan karmaşık ve çok yönlü bir öğrenme süreci' olarak tanımlar. Teorik olarak tanımlanan iki farklı kültürlenme tutumu vardır. Tek yönlü olarak adlandırılan kültürlenme tutumları, dominant kültür ile karşılaşıldığı birey veya grubun o kültüre ne kadar uyum sağladığını iki u arasında değerlendirir (Sanchez and Fernandez, 1993). Öte yandan, çift-yönlü olarak tanımlanan bakış açısı, farklı bir kültür ile karşılaşıldığında, tek bir taraf olmadan bireylerin kendi kültürel geçmişleri ve ana akım kültüre göre tutumlarını sergileyebileceğini belirtir (Thompson, 1999'dan aktaran Negy vd., 2010). Araştırma bulgularına göre göçmenlerin ana akım kültürel kodlara göre davranmalarının psikolojik sorunlara yol açabileceğini (Escobar, 1998'dan aktaran Falicov, 2003; Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993) bu nedenle çoklu kültür ortamlarında kültürlenme tutumlarının anlaşılması için çift-yönlü modellerin benimsenmesi gerektiğini öne sürmektedir (Falicov, 2003). Berry ve Kim (1988)'e göre kültürlenme tutumlarının, asimilasyon, ayrılma, uyum (entegrasyon) ve marjinalizasyon şeklinde çeşitli çıktıları olan ve çok sayıda farklı boyut arasından oluşan dinamik bir süreçtir.

Negy ve arkadaşları (2010) İspanyol kadınlarla yaptığı çalışmasında, algılanan ya da gerçek kültürlenme baskısının evlilik stresi ile ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Kültürlenmenin evlilik doyumu ile ilişkisini inceleyen az sayıda çalışmalardan biri olan Kisselev ve arkadaşları (2010) tarafından gerçekleştirilen çalışmada özellikle

dilin sağladığı kültürel uyumun evlilik doyumunu anlamlı olarak yordadığı gösterilmiştir. Bu ilişkide cinsiyetler arası farklılık gözlenmiş ve erkeklerin kültürlenme seviyesi düştüğünde, kadınların ise yüksek bulunduğu evlilik doyumlarının düşük olduğu bulunmuştur. Kültürlenmenin özellikle dilde sağlanan uyumun, pratik (ör. otobüse binmek), ekonomik (ör. iş bulmak) ve sosyal (ör. arkadaşlık) koşullara katkıda bulunduğundan stresin en önemli öncülü olarak önerilmiştir (Aycan ve Berry, 1996). Yalnızca, yapılan ikili görüşmelere dayanan çalışmalara göre, kültürel farklılıklar söz konusu olduğunda bilgi eşlerin kültürleri konusunda birbirlerine saygı göstermelerinin ilişkinin devamlılığı için önemli rol oynadığı yönünde bilgi bulunmaktadır (Crohn, 1995). Türker (2002) Türkiye’de gerçekleşen çift uluslu evliliklerde yaptığı gözlemler sonucu, yabancı eşin sadece Türk kültürünü benimsemesi beklendiğinde evlilik ilişkisinin, eşin yaşadığı psikolojik problemlerle birlikte, olumsuz etkilenebildiğini belirtmiştir.

Evlilik doyumu ile ilişkili olarak ele alınan bir değişken ise algılanan sosyal destektir (Cutrona, 1996; Burman and Margolin, 1992). Sosyal destek, duygusal, sosyal olarak bütünleyici, sosyal ağ gibi pek çok farklı formda olabilir (Russell, 1990). Algılanan sosyal destek kişi ihtiyaç duyduğunda desteğin mümkün olduğunu hissetmesi olarak kavramsallaştırılır (Cohen vd., 1986). Algılanan sosyal destek psikolojik sağlık ve stresten korunma ile pozitif bir ilişki içerisindedir ve bu durum, yüksek evlilik doyumu ile ilişkili bulunmuştur (Frese, 1999). Cutrona (1996) göre, birçok çalışma özellikle aileden alınan sosyal desteğin ilişkilerin desteklenmesi açısından önemli olduğunu belirtmiştir.

Algılanan sosyal destek, özellikle çift uluslu evliliklerde stress (Frese, 1999) ve azalmış sosyal ilişkilerin azalması (Cools, 2009) karşısında oynadığı tampon görevi evlilik doyumu ile ilişki hale gelir (Cools, 2009; Frese, 1999). Çift uluslu evliliklerde algılanan sosyal desteğin rolünün sosyal ortamlara bağlı olarak ve yeni bir kültürel ortamda bir partnerin diğerine bağımlı hale gelmesi sonucu önem kazandığı şeklinde açıklanmıştır (Cools, 2009). Akut bir stress olmadığında veya düşük seviyede stres yaşandığında algılanan sosyal desteğin, sadece desteğin sağlanabileceği yönünde

gelişmiş olmasının evlilik doyumu ile pozitif bir ilişki gösterdiği öne sürülmüştür (Norris & Kaniasty, 1996).

Kişinin kendi kültürü ve diğer kültür arasındaki farklılığın boyutu kültürel uzaklık olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır (Babiker, Cox, & Miller, 1980). Çoklu kültürel ortamlardaki etkileşimleri kavramsallaştırabilmek için farklı çalışmalarda çiftlerin kültürel farklılıklarının evlilik doyumunun üzerinde etkili olabileceği öne sürülmüştür (Danesphour, 2009; Gaines ve Agnew, 2003; Biever ve diğerleri, 1998; Romano, 1997; Bonacci ve diğerleri, 1996). Tseng ve diğerleri (1977), "farklı kültürel örüntüleri anlamak ve farkındalık, değer ve tutumların çatışmasından doğan potansiyel sorunları önceden tahmin yardımcı olabilir" diye belirtmiştir. Çalışmalar arasında evlilik doyumu açısından önemli olabilecek on dokuz farklı alanda kültür odaklı zorluk Romano (1988) ve Danesphour (2009) tarafından tespit edilmiştir; din, inanç sistemleri ve değerleri, güç sorunları, toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri, zaman yönelimleri, siyasi görüş, ekonomik ve mali konular, geniş aile tepkileri, çocuk yetiştirme, problem çözme ve iletişim, değerler, yiyecek ve içecek, cinsiyet, ikamet yeri, arkadaşlar, yasalar, sosyal sınıf, hastalık ve ethnocentrism olarak tanımlanmıştır. Crohn (1995), çok kültürlü bir ortamda çiftler ya da insanların durumunu yorumlamada kullanılabilecek ve kişisel bir rehber olarak hizmet verebilecek altı geniş boyut önermiştir; zaman, evrenin doğası, aile bütünlüğü, duygusal anlamlılık, kişilerarası ilişkiler ve toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri şeklindedir. Her ne kadar, benzer geçmişlere sahip çiftlerin evlilikleri kültürel olarak farklı kişilerin evliliklerinden daha basit değilse ve kültürden bağımsız olarak birçok ortak stres kaynağı içerse de, ortak ritüellerin ve geleneklerin olmaması evliliklerde stresi önemli oranda arttırır (Crohn, 1995; Donovan 2004). Larson (2000) kültürel uzaklık sonucu çiftlerin daha çok çatışmaya maruz kalabileceğini bunun sonucu olarak da daha az doyum veren ilişki yaşabileceklerini belirtmiştir.

Romantik ilişkideki ya da evli çiftlerin ilişkilerinde farklılıklarla ya da sorunla başa çıkmak yöntemleri ilişkilerinden aldıkları memnuniyete genel bir etkide bulunur (Brandbury vd., 2000). Bird and Melville (1994) çatışma çözümünün çiftin birbirini

anlamaya katkı sunması halinde çiftin evlilik doyumunun arttırılmasını sağladığını belirtmiştir. Problem çözme becerilerinin zarar görmüş olmasının evlilik doyumu düşmesi ve çiftin stresli olmasıyla ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür (Gottman, 2007). Ayrıca, olumsuz çatışma çözüm yöntemlerinin evlilik doyumundaki düşüşü anlamlı olarak yordadığı bulunmuştur (Özen, 2006; Johnson, 2003; Gottman & Silver, 1995).

Bu bilgiye ek olarak, kültürlerarası çiftlerin terapisinde de, çiftin baş etme yöntemlerinin araştırılması, terapistin kültürel yetkinliklerinin arttırması için de önerilmiştir (Bustamante ve ark., 2001). Cinsiyet rolü esnekliğinin en önemli baş etme mekanizmalarından olduğunu, kültürlerarası çiftin ilişkileri üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ancak, çalışmalarında evlilik doyumu ve baş etme mekanizmaları arasındaki ilişkinin daha çok değerlendirilmesinin gerekliliğini vurgulamışlardır. Abela ve arkadaşlarının (2005) yürüttüğü çalışma da farklı kültürlerde kadın ve erkeklerin iletişim tarzlarının evlilik doyumlarını farklı yönde etkileyebildiğini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmada, Anglo-Amerikalılar için kadın talepkar/erkek çekilen olduğu zaman evlilik doyumunu arttırdığı, Malta örneğinde ise tam tersi olduğu gözlenmiştir.

Çift uluslu evliliklerde konuşmalarda anlamın doğru aktarılmasını ifade eden dil becerisinin evlilik doyumu üzerinde etkili olduğu öne sürülmüştür (Wong, 2009; Abela ve diğerleri, 2005; Romano, 1997; Tseng, McDermontt, & Marezki, 1977). Karlson (1951'den aktaran Rohrich, 1988) çok kültürlü evliliklerde iletişim kalitesinin önemini vurgulayan ilk çalışmayı sunmuş ve önemli iletişim becerilerinden bir tanesinin ifade edilen bilginin anlaşılabilirliği olduğunu belirtmiştir. Çift uluslu evliliklerde dil becerisinin evlilik doyumuna etkisi ise çiftin birbirini net anlayabilmeleri (Tseng, 2001) ve kültürlenme stresine olan katkısı (Beiser and Hou, 2001'den aktaran Çakır, 2009). olarak iki yönden ele alınır. Duygusal ifadelerde yanlış anlama olarak kavramsallaştırılan iletişim sorunlarının evlilik doyumunda düşüşe katkı sağladığı bulunmuştur (Wong, 2009). Cools (2009) ise Finli ve Finli olmayan çiftlerle yaptığı gözlemlere dayalı olarak düşük dil becerisinin kültürlenme stresini arttırabildiği ve evlilik doyumunda da düşüşle sonuçlanabildiğini belirtmiştir.

Diğer taraftan, ilişkiye eşlerden biri tarafından getirilen bazı demografik özellikler ve kültürel yapılar bağlamsal özellikler olarak önerilmektedir (Larson ve Holman, 1994). Literatürde evlilik doyumu aktörün yaşı ve eşin yaşı arasındaki ilişki, çocuk sayısı, evlilik süresi, gelir ve eğitim uzunluğu göz önünde bulundurularak ortaya konulmaktadır (Jose ve Alfons, 2007). Yaş, meslek, eğitim ve gelir son zamanlarda evlilik becerileri üzerinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır (Larson ve Holman, 1994). Eğitim, evlilik doyumu (Larson ve Holman, 1994) ile tamamen doğrusal bir ilişkide değildir, ancak eğitim düzeyi artışıyla evlilik doyumu arasında pozitif bir ilişki (Dökmen ve Tokgöz, 2000) bulunmuştur. Irk, etnik köken ve evlilik doyumu arasındaki ilişki hakkında birbiri ile çelişen bulgulara rastlanmıştır. Son yirmi yılda kültürler arası çalışmalar ırk ve evlilik doyumu arasında zayıf bir ilişki göstermektedir (Whyte, 1990; Larson ve Holman, 1994'dan alınan). Ek olarak, evlilikte yaşanan yerdeki sürenin uzunluğu ise çift uluslu eşler arasındaki evlilik doyumu üzerinde olumlu bir etkiye sahip olabilir (Kisselev ve ark., 2010). Literatürde, evlilik doyumu ile çiftler arasındaki demografik farklılıklar arasındaki ilişkiyi değerlendiren bir çalışmaya rastlanmamıştır.

Çift uluslu evliliklerde evlilik doyumunu etkileyebilecek bir diğer değişken ise alınan sosyal destektir (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Alınan sosyal destek kişinin sosyal ağlardan aldığı resmi ve resmi olmayan her türlü desteği kapsamaktadır (Cohen vd., 1986). Alınan sosyal destek desteğin sağlandığı kişi sayısını gösteren sosyal ağ, maddi ihtiyaçlara yönelik yardımı ifade eden maddi destek veya sunulann bilgi olarak tanımlanan bilgi desteği şeklinde kavramsallaştırılabilir. Uluslararası yer değiştirme durumlarında gerek kurulan sosyal ağların zarar görmesi gerekse yeni sosyal ağların kurulmasının zorluğundan ötürü sosyal desteğin rolünü özellikle vurgulamak gerektirmektedir (Copeland & Norell, 2002). Copeland ve Norell (2002) çiftlerin uluslararası yer değiştirmeler yaptıklarında resmi ve resmi olmayan sosyal ağa ihtiyaç duyduğunu; arkadaş ve aile ağlarının varlığının başarısız evlilik riskini azalttığını belirtmiştir. Çakır (2009) özellikle göçmen eşlerin kocalarından aldıkları pratik ve finansal desteğin iyilik hallerine katkı sunduğunun altını çizmiştir.

Ailelerin ve arkadaşların evliliklerine yönelik tepkileri çift uluslu evliliklerin yaşadığı zorluklar arasında listelenmektedir (Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001). Larson and Holman (1994) aile ve arkadaşlardan alınan/alınamayan onay tepkileri olarak görülen sosyal tepkileri, çiftin ‘içinde bulunduğu bağlamı’ olarak kavramsallaştırmıştır. Bhugra and De Silva (2000) sosyal tutumların kültürel olarak farklı çiftlerin evliliklerinden daha sorun olmasına neden olan yönlerden bir tanesi olarak belirtmiştir. Birçok çift uluslu aile sağlıklı bir evlilik için önyargı ve ayrımcılık engeline takılmaktan muzdariptir (Jones & Chao, 1997). Bu konuda yapılan çalışmalar dış baskılar, olumsuz toplumsal ve aile tepkilerinin çift uluslu ailelerde evlilik doyumunu azalttığını göstermiştir (McFadden ve Moore, 2001).

Çift uluslu evliliklerde, özellikle göçmen eş için, karşılaşılan bir diğer zorluk kök aile üyeleri ile iletişimlerini koruma olarak belirtilmiştir (Fu vd., 2001). 16 kültür arasında yapılan araştırmada kök aile üyeleri ile iletişim kurma isteğinde toplumlar arası farklılıklar gözlenmediği belirtilmiştir (Georgas vd., 2001). Rosenblatt (2009) özellikle kök ailesinden uzakta yaşayan eşin, kök ailesi ile iletişim ve ilişkilerindeki azalmanın toplum içerisinde kaybolma ve utanç duygularına öncülük edebileceği öne sürülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, Negy ve arkadaşları (2010) Latin kökenli göçmen kadın örneğine kök aile ile bir araya gelme sıklığındaki düşüşün evlilik stresindeki yükselme ile anlamlı ilişki içerisinde olduğu bulunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Çift uluslu evliliklerde evlilik doyumunu ve kök aile ilişkilerini inceleyen çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır.

Multikültürel bakış açısına göre her birey kendi bağlamı içerisinde anlaşılmayı hak eder (Addison ve Thomas, 2009). Bu evrensel olarak kullanılabilir kültürü özgü bir çerçeve sunmak amacıyla öne sürülmüştür, her kültürün kendine özgü özelliklerinin uzmanı olunması gerektiği anlamına gelmez. Amerikan Psikologlar Birliği (2002) yayınladığı “Multikültürel Öğretim, Eğitim, Araştırma, Uygulama ve Psikologlar için Organizasyonel Değişim Kılavuzu” ve kültürel farklılıklar ile uygulamalar konusunda yapılan öneriler ışığında, terapistin kendi kültürel bakış açısının ve stereotiplerin farkında olmasının, kültürel farklılıklar konusunda bilgi ve

farkındalık kazanılmasının ve kültürel farklılıklara uygun uygulamaların geliştirilmesinin gerekliliği ortadadır (Arredondo, 2003). Ayrıca, aile psikolojisi literatüründe klasik yaklaşımlar çok kültürlü bir sistemi değerlendirmek açısından yeterli olmadığı konusunda eleştirilmektedir (Huston,2005; Waldman & Rubalcava, 2005). Bu eleştiri kaynağını, bu yaklaşımın kültüre özgü unsurları ve çevresel özellikleri beklenen oranda değerlendirememesinden, aşırı evrensel bir bakış açısından aileyi değerlendirmesinden almaktadır. Fakat, ekolojik sistem yaklaşımı aileyi ele alışında ailenin dahil olduğu sistemi ve çevresel faktörleri de ele alması açısından farklılaşmaktadır (Huston,2005).

Ekosistem çerçevesinde bir birlikteliğin gelişmesi ve sürdürülmesinin nasıl mümkün olabileceğine dair açıklamalar getirilmektedir (Huston, 2005). Ekolojik sistem modeli etnik azınlıklar gibi gruplarda bulunan karmaşık problemleri anlamak açısından iyi tasarlanmıştır (Phenice & Griffore,1996; Huston, 2000). Çünkü bu teori yalnızca bireyleri ele almaz, çevre ve diğerlerinin ilişkiye katkısını değerlendirmeye olanak sağlar (Phenice & Griffore,1996). Gerek çok çeşitli değişkenlerin evlilik doyumu üzerinde etkisi olması gerekse bu değişkenlerin evlilik doyumunu kavramsallaştırarak bir arada değişimlerinin değerlendirilebilmesi, konunun ekolojik sistem yaklaşımını kullanarak çok katmanlı bir perspektiften çalışılmasını gerekli kılmaktadır. Ekolojik sistem bakış açısı evlilik davranışlarını farklı analiz seviyelerinde tanımlayarak ve inceleyerek sorunların analitik olarak ele almayı sağlar (Huston, 2005). Wong (2009), ekolojik sistem modelinin ırklar arası evliliklerdeki evlilik doyumunun yordayıcılarının geliştirilmesine uygun kullanımına olanak sağladığını ifade etmiştir. Evlilik doyumunu çalışmayı sağlayan kuramların içinde, ekolojik sistem yaklaşımı, insan etkileşimlerinin tamamını ve ailelerin çevreleriyle olan ilişkilerini yakalayabilmesi bakımından tüm farklı aile biçimlerinde çalışılması önerilmiştir. (Phenice & Griffore,1996). Bu sayede, çoklu kültür ortamlarında çoğu kombinasyonlar arasında var olan dinamikleri anlamada faydalı olabilir. Buna ek olarak, ekolojik sistem yaklaşımı araştırma ve mesleki uygulama için kullanışlıdır (Wilson ve ark., 1997).

Huston (2005), Ekolojik Sistem Teorisi (Bronfenbrenner, 1977,1979) temelinde evlilik ilişkisinin incelenmesi için üç katmanlı yapısal bir model öne sürmüştür. Bu modelde üç katman, çiftlerin içinde işlev gördüğü *toplum*, bireylerin kişisel özellik, tutum ve inançlarını kapsayan *bireysel eşler* vey akın ilişki ağı içerisinde gösterdikleri davranışlardan oluşan *evlilik ilişkisi* olarak tanımlanmıştır. Larson & Holman (1994) evlilik üçgeni olarak da adlandırdığı çalışmalarında bu üç sistemi, çift sistemi içerisindeki bireysel üyelerin etkilerinin oluşturduğu bireysel özellikler, çift etkileşim süreçlerinin oluşturduğu çift özellikleri ve çiftin gömülü olduğu sistemin oluşturduğu ortamı belirten bağlamsal özellikler tanımlamıştır. Bu çerçevede ekosistem perspektifine bağlı evlilik analizi dört temel fikir ögesine dayanmaktadır; (a) evlilikler kişilerarası sistemlerdir, (b) eşlerin psikolojik ve fiziksel nitelikleri onların başarılı bir birliktelik sürdürme çabalarını biçimlendirir, (c) hem evlilik hem de çiftler dinamiktir, (d) evlilik birlikleri sosyal bağlama gömülüdür (Huston, 2005).

Sunulan literatür bilgilerine ek olarak son yıllarda ikili-kişilerarası ilişki araştırmaları, bir ilişki iki kişi arasında yaşanır görüşünden dolayı sadece bireylere odaklanmanın yetersiz kaldığı yaklaşımı üzerine temellenir, çiftin araştırmaya katılmasını gerekli kılar (Kenny, Kashy ve Cook, 2006). Bireylerin duyguları, düşünceleri ve davranışları arasında karşılıklı bir bağımlılık vardır. Bu anlayış, Aktör-Partner Bağımlılık Modeli (APIM) olarak kavramsallaştırılmış ve kişinin kendi özelliklerinin (aktör etkisi) ve partnerinin özelliklerinin (partner etkisi) hem kendi değişimi hem de partnerinin değişimi açısından ilişkileri değerlendirebilmek için kullanılmıştır. Evlilik doyumunu ekolojik olarak çalışabilmek için toplumsal, bireysel, evlilik seviyeleri arası bağlantıları inşa etmek ve her seviyenin diğerine bir bağlam sağladığının farkında olmayı gerekli kılmaktadır (Huston, 2000). Ekosistem bakış açısının temelleri ise bu karşılıklı değişime vurgu yaparak çiftlerin birbirine bağımlılığını destekleyen bir model öne sürmektedir (Huston, 2005).

### **Çalışmanın Amacı**

Sunulan literatür bilgileri ışığında bu çalışmanın amacını çift uluslu evliliklerde evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı değişkenleri incelemek oluşturmaktadır. Sunulan çalışmalar çift uluslu evliliklerde evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı bilgi eksikliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Brandbury ve diğerleri (2000) tarafından evliliğin çoklu değişkenlerin birlikte değişimlerinin incelenmesinin gerekliliği vurgulanmasına rağmen, yapılan çalışmaların çoğu ekli değişkenler üzerine temellenmektedir. Çoklu değişkenlerin yordayıcı özelliklerini ayırt etmek üzere ekosistem perspektifinden Huston (2005), Larson (2000) ve Larson ve Holman (1994) tarafından sunulan bulgular ışığında araştırmanın temellendiği üç seviye bireysel özellikler, çiftler arası etkileşim özellikleri ve bağlamsal etkiler olarak tanımlanmıştır. Literatür bulguları ve sunulan şematik organizasyon dahilinde çalışma kapsamına alınacak değişkenler bireysel özellikler olarak kişilik özellikleri, kültürlenme ve algılanan sosyal destek; çift özellikleri olarak çatışma çözüm yöntemleri, iletişim kültürel uzaklık; bağlamsal özellikler, demografik değişkenler, alınan sosyal destek, kök aile ilişkileri ve sosyal tepkiler olarak belirlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, çiftlerin tepkilerinin birbirine bağımlı oluşu görüşü temelinde (Kenny vd., 2006), kendilerinin ve birbirleri hakkındaki değerlendirmelerinin analiz edilmemesinin, yani aktör-partner etkisinin göz ardı edilmesinin önemli bir boşluğa yol açabileceği düşünüldüğünden, ekolojik sistem perspektifinden aktör-partner etkilerini değerlendirmek hedeflenmektedir. Böylece, bireysel özellikler, çift özellikleri ve bağlamsal özelliklerden oluşan üç seviyeden hangisinin kadının, erkeğin ve çiftin evlilik doyumları üzerindeki yüksek veya düşük etkiler olarak hesaba katıldığını açıklayarak evlilik doyumunun varyasını değerlendirmek amaçlanmaktadır. Ek olarak, eşlerin arasındaki etkileşimin, bireysel, çift ve bağlamsal özelliklerin benzerlik ve farklılıklarının eşlerin evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı özelliğe sahip olduğu test edilmek istenmektedir.

Bu amaca yönelik araştırma soruları şu şekilde şekillenmiştir:

*Aktör Etkileri:*

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) bireysel özellikleri (kişilik, kültürlenme, algılanan sosyal destek) kendi evlilik doyumunu ne kadar yordamaktadır?

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) çift özellikleri (iletişim, kültürel uzaklık, çatışma yönetim stili) kendi evlilik doyumunu ne kadar yordamaktadır?

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) bağlamsal özellikleri (alınan sosyal destek, sosyal tepkiler, kök aile ilişkileri ve demografik özellikler) kendi evlilik doyumunu ne kadar yordamaktadır?

*Partner Etkileri:*

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) evlilik doyumunu eşinin bireysel özellikleri (kişilik, kültürlenme, algılanan sosyal destek) ne kadar yordamaktadır?

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) evlilik doyumunu eşinin çift özellikleri (iletişim, kültürel uzaklık, çatışma yönetim stili) ne kadar yordamaktadır?

Eşlerden birinin (kadının ve erkeğin) evlilik doyumunu eşinin bağlamsal özellikleri (alınan sosyal destek, sosyal tepkiler, kök aile ilişkileri ve demografik özellikler) ne kadar yordamaktadır?

*Etkileşimsel Etkileri:*

Bireysel özellikleri (kişilik, kültürlenme, algılanan sosyal destek), çift özellikleri (iletişim, kültürel uzaklık, çatışma yönetim stili), bağlamsal özellikler (alınan sosyal destek, sosyal tepkiler, ve demografik özellikler) benzerlik ve farklılıklarının kadının ve erkeğin evlilik doyumunu nasıl yordar?

## **YÖNTEM**

### **Katılımcılar**

Çalışmanın katılımcıları 63 Alman-Türk ve 81 Rus-Türk, toplamda 144 çift, 144 kadın ve 144 erkek, toplamda 288 bireyden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmada Amaçlı Örneklem Prosedürü (Boehnke, Lietz, Schreier & Willhelm, 2011) kullanılmıştır. Çalışmaya (1) en az 6 aydır evli olan, (2) ekosistem etkilerini kontrol edebilmek amacıyla en az 6 aydır Türkiye’de ikamet eden, (3) diğer karıştırıcı etkileri kontrol

edebilmek amacıyla kadınların Rus veya Alman, erkeklerin Türk eşten oluştuğu, (4) psikometrik özellikleri uygun ölçekler kullanabilmek amacıyla Rus ve Alman kadınların en az temel düzeyde Türkçe beceriye sahip olduğu çiftler dahil edilmiştir.

Tüm örneklemin yaş aralığı 22-80, yaş ortalaması 40.49 yıldır ( $SS=12.35$ ). Kadınların yaş aralığı ise 20-74, yaş ortalaması 38.75 yıldır ( $SS=12.31$ ); Alman kadınların yaş aralığı 22-74 arasında değişmekte (Ort= 44.92,  $SS= 14.92$ ) ve Rus kadınların ise 20-48 arasındadır (Ort= 33.95,  $SS= 6.70$ ). Erkeklerin yaş aralığı 23-80, ortalama 42.43 yıldır ( $SS=12.17$ ), Alman eşe sahip erkeklerin yaş aralığı 24-80, ortalama 46.63 yıldır ( $SS= 15.16$ ) ve Rus eşe sahip erkeklerin yaş aralığı 23-60, ortalama 39.16 yıldır ( $SS= 7.85$ ).

### **Ölçüm Araçları**

Demografik bilgi formu, Çoklu Kültür Kişilik Ölçeği, Kültürleşme Ölçeği, Algılanan Çok Yönlü Sosyal Destek Ölçeği, Çatışma Yönetim Stilleri Ölçeği, Kültürel Uzaklık Ölçeği, Sosyal Ağ Ölçeği ve Evlilik Uyumu Ölçeği olmak üzere 7 ölçek, toplumsal tepkiler, dil becerileri ve kök aile ilişkileri indeksi olmak üzere 3 indeks kullanılacaktır. Veri toplama araçları 4 bölüm olarak planlanmıştır. Birinci bölümde bireysel özellikleri ölçmek için Çoklu Kültür Kişilik Ölçeği, Algılanan Çok Yönlü Sosyal Destek Ölçeği, Kültürleşme Ölçeği; ikinci bölümde çift özelliklerini ölçmek için Çatışma Yönetim Stilleri Ölçeği, Dil Becerileri indeksi, Kültürel Uzaklık; üçüncü bölümde bağlamsal özellikler ölçmek için Sosyal Ağ Ölçeği, Toplumsal Tepkiler ve Kök Aile İlişkileri indeksleri, demografik bilgi formu (yaş, cinsiyet, uyruk, eğitim, iş durumu, gelir, evlilik yaşı, evlilik süresi, çocuk sayısı, kullanılan dil ve oturma süresi bilgilerini içeren) ve dördüncü bölümde evlilikte doyumunu ölçmek için Evlilik Uyumu Ölçeği kullanılmıştır

### **İşlem**

Ölçüm araçları Rus-Türk ve Alman-Türk çiftlere uygun olarak hazırlanmış ve her çift için eşleştirilmiş soru bataryaları oluşturulmuştur. Ayrıca Rusça ve Almanca standart açıklama cümleleri belirlenmiş ancak sadece araştırmacıda kalması

sağlanmıştır. Oluşturulan bataryalar ayrı ayrı zarflara konulmuş ve eşleştirme yapılabilme için numaralandırılmıştır.

Çalışmaya gönüllü olabilecek katılımcılara ulaşabilmek için küçük kart visit boyutunda el ilanları duyuru ve bilgilendirme hazırlanmış, dernekler, derneklerin basılı yayınları, yabancı çalışanları olan işletmeler, yabancı dil kursları, site yönetimleri vb. ortamlarda sözel ve yazılı duyuru yapılması sağlanmıştır. Çalışmanın kriterlerine uygun yönlendirmeler yapıldığında çiftler ile randevularla buluşma sağlanmıştır

Çalışmaya katılacak ulaşıldıktan sonra kendilerinden randevu alınarak, uygulama yapılacak yer ve saatin belirlenmesi sağlanmıştır. Uygulama öncesi bilgilendirilmiş onam formu verilmiştir, bu formda uygulamanın amacı, gönüllülük esası ve istedikleri zaman uygulamadan çıkabilecekleri belirtilmiştir. Uygulamada sonuçların etkilenmemesi için en önemli nokta eşlerin formları doldururken ayrı olmalarıdır. Bu konudaki hassasiyet paylaşılmıştır. Uygulayıcı, özellikle ana dili Türkçe olmayan katılımcı için, uygulama esnasında yanında bulunmuştur, Türk katılımcının formu ayrı bir yerde doldurması kabul edilmiştir. Uygulama bittikten sonra kendilerinden verilen zarfa kâğıtları birlikte koyarak kapatmaları istenmiştir

### **Analizler**

Literatürde de değinildiği üzere, çiftlerin değerlendirilmesi için tek eşten alınan bilgi ve bu bilginin değerlendirilmesi yetersiz bulunmaktadır ve her iki eşin etkileşimlerinin değerlendirilmesinin gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır (Kenny, Kashy & Cook, 2006). Bu amaçla en sık kullanılan analiz APIM (actor-partner interdependence model) bu çalışmada kullanılmıştır. Bu model, kişinin nedensel değişkeninin kendi sonuç değişkeni (aktör etkisi) ve partnerinin sonuç değişkeni (partner etkisi) üzerindeki etkisinin araştırılmasına olanak sağlar.

Verinin modele uygun test edilebilmesi için öncesinde kişilik boyutları, kültürlenme seviyeleri, algılanan sosyal destek boyutları, çatışma çözüm stilleri, dil becerileri, kültürel uzaklık, alınan sosyal destek, sosyal tepkiler skorlarının

ortalamları ve standart sapmaları hesaplanmış, ve mutlak farkları alınarak analize hazır hale getirilmiştir.

Eşlerin benzerlik göstermesi durumunda sonuçlar etkilenebileceği için önerildiği üzere cinsiyet ve uyruğun; kişilik, kültürlenme tutumları, algılanan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm yöntemleri, dil becerileri, kültürel uzaklık, sosyal ağ, toplumsal tepkiler ve kök aile ilişkileri üzerindeki temel etkisini değerlendirmek amacıyla 2x2 ANOVA analizi uygulanmıştır.

Analizlerin istatistiksel olarak gücünü koruyabilmek amacıyla bireysel, çift ve bağlamsal olarak üzere üç seviyedeki değişkenlerden yordayıcı etkileri en yüksek olanlar ayrıştırılacaktır. Bu amaçla üç aşamalı aşamalı regresyon analizi (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2007) yapılması planlanmıştır. Bu analiz, bağımsız değişkenlerin birleşerek bağımlı değişken üzerindeki varyansı açıklama güçlerini gözlemlemeye olanak sağlar. Sırasıyla erkeklerin ve kadınların evlilik doyumlarını açıklayan varyansı açıklayan değişkenleri ayırtedebilmek amacıyla erkeklerin özellikleri ve kadınların özellikleri ayrı ayrı değerlendirilmiştir. Birinci analizde bireysel özelliklerin yer aldığı değişkenler üç aşamalı regresyonla değerlendirilmiş birinci blokta kişilik özellikleri, ikinci blokta kültürlenme seviyesi ve üçüncü blokta algılanan sosyal destek analize sokulmuştur. İkinci analizde çift özellikleri değerlendirilmiş, birinci blokta çatışma çözüm yöntemleri, ikinci blokta dil becerileri ve üçüncü blokta kültürel uzaklık analize sokulmuştur. Üçüncü analizde ise bağlamsal özellikler değerlendirilmiş birinci blokta demografik değişkenler (yaş, gelir, eğitim seviyesi, ikamet süreleri), ikinci blokta alınan sosyal destek ve üçüncü blokta sosyal tepkileri analize sokulmuştur. Her bir analizde sırayla aktör ve partnerin evlilik doyumu sonuç değişkeni olarak değerlendirilmiş ve açıklanan varyans gözlenmiştir. Elde edilecek sonuçlar doğrultusunda bireysel, çift ve bağlamsal özelliklerin aktörün ve partnerin evlilik doyumu ile nedensel ilişkisini incelemek üzere yapısal eşitleme modeli ile yol analizi yapılmıştır.

Benzerlik ve farklılıkların değerlendirilmesi için alınan kişilik özellikleri, kültürlenme seviyesi, algılanan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm yöntemleri, demografik

değişkenler (yaş, eğitim seviyesi), alınan sosyal destek değişkenlerinin mutlak farkları ile oluşturulan yeni değişkenler ile regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Böylelikle, bireysel özellikler, çift özellikleri ve bağlamsal özellikler olmak üzere üç seviyedeki değişkenlerin benzerlik ve farklılıkların her iki eşin evlilik doyumunu açıklayan varyansı değerlendirilmiştir.

## BULGULAR

### Korelasyonlar Analizleri

Erkeklerin evlilik doyumu kendi Kültürel Empati, Duygusal Tutarlılık, Açık görüşlülük, aileden, arkadaştan ve toplam Algılanan Sosyal Destek, uyum tutumları, ayrışma tutumları, Olumlu Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri, dil becerisi, kültürel uzaklık, maddi destek, tomponsal tepkiler, ziyaret ve uzaktan iletişim şeklindeki kök aile ilişkileri puanları ile pozitif yönde ilişki göstermiştir. Korelasyonlar düşük ve orta (.20-.51) arasında değişmiştir. En düşük korelasyon kök aile ile ziyaret yoluyla ilişki, en yüksek korelasyon ise aileden algılanan sosyal destek ile gözlenmiştir. Erkeklerin evlilik doyumu kendi evlilik doyumu ile kendi olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili arasında negatif yönde korelasyon gözlenmiştir ( $r = -.34, p < .001$ ).

Kadınların kendi evlilik doyumları ve kendi Kültürel Empati, aileden, arkadaştan ve toplam Algılanan Sosyal Destek, uyum tutumları, ayrışma tutumları, kültürel uzaklık, sosyal ağ ve toplumsal tepkiler puanları arasından pozitif yönde, .17 ile .40 arasından değişen, korelasyon gözlenmiştir. Marjinalizasyon tutumları ( $r = -.23, p < .01$ ) ve olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri ( $r = -.29, p < .001$ ) ile kadınların evlilik doyumu arasında negatif korelasyonlar gözlenmiştir.

### Regression Analizleri

Bağımsız değişkenlerin varyansı açıklamadaki katkılarını gözlemlemek için aşamalı regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Toplam puanlar üzerinden;

- Bireysel özellikler; kişilik (Kültürel Empati (KE), Duygusal Tutarlılık (DT), Açık Görüşlülük (AG), Sosyal Girişimcilik (SG), Esneklik (Esn));

kültürlenme tutumları (asimilasyon, ayrılma, uyum (entegrasyon) ve marjinalizasyon); algılanan sosyal destek (aileden, arkadaştan, anlamı kişiden, toplam)

- Çift etkileşim özellikleri; kültürel uzaklık; çatışma çözüm stilleri (Olumlu, Olumsuz, Geri çekilme, Boyun eğme); dil becerileri
- Bağlamsal Etkiler; demografik değişkenler (yaş, ikamet süresi, en uzun ikamet, eğitim, gelir, evlilik süresi); alınan sosyal destek (Sosyal ağ, maddi destek ve bilgi desteği kaynakları toplamı); kök aile ile ilişkiler (görüşmelerin toplam frekansı), Olumsuz Toplumsal Tepkiler

olarak belirlenen değişkenlerin sırasıyla aktör etkileri ve partner etkileri değerlendirilmiştir.

### **Aktörün Evlilik Doyumunun Tahmininde Aktör Etkisi**

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan bireysel değişkenler incelendiğinde ilk aşamada erkeğin aileden algılanan sosyal destek puanını anlamlı olduğu gözlenmiştir,  $F(1, 139) = 53.80, p < .001, R^2 = .28$ . İkinci aşamasında uyum tutumları puanının denkleme katılması modelin anlamlı olarak iyileşmesini sağlamıştır,  $F_{inc}(1, 138) = 14.33, p < .001, R^2 = .35$ . Üçüncü olarak, KE kişilik özelliği denkleme katılmış ve modelde iyileşme gözlenmiştir,  $F_{inc}(1, 137) = 6.46, p < .05, R^2 = .38$ . Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu bireysel özellikleri arasında en güçlü olarak aileden alınan sosyal destek yordamıştır. Yüksek seviyede aileden alınan sosyal destek, uyum tutumu ve KE özelliği evlilik doyumundaki artışı yordamaktadır.

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan kendi çift değişkenleri incelendiğinde ilk modelde olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili yer almıştır ve model anlamlı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 141) = 18.69, p < .001, R^2 = .12$ . İkinci modelde ise, modele kültürel uzaklık eklendiğinde modelde anlamlı olarak iyileşme gözlenmiştir,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 17.05, p < .001, R^2 = .21$ . Olumsuz çatışma çözüm yöntemleri ( $\beta = -.30, p < .001$ ) ile kültürel uzaklık ( $\beta = -.34, p < .001$ ) puanlarındaki artış anlamlı olarak evlilik doyumundaki düşüşü yordamaktadır.

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan kendi bağlamsal özellikleri incelendiğinde yalnızca olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerinin modele alındığı zaman anlamlı sonuç verdiği bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 141) = 8.82, p < .05, R^2 = .08$  Olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerdeki artış evlilik doyumudaki düşüşü yordamaktadır.

Kadının evlilik doyumunu yordayan kendi bireysel değişkenler incelendiğinde ilk modelde kadının aileden algılanan sosyal destek puanını anlamlı olduğu gözlenmiştir,  $F(1, 140) = 28.64, p < .001, R^2 = .17$ . İkinci modelde marjinalizasyon tutumu denkleme katılmış ve anlamlı iyileşme sağlamıştır,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 4.11, p < .05, R^2 = .19$ . Kadının evlilik doyumunu aileden kendi algıladığı yüksek sosyal destek, düşük marjinalizasyon tutumu yordamaktadır.

Kadının evlilik doyumunu yordayan kendi çift değişkenleri incelendiğinde ilk modelde olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili yer almıştır ve model anlamlı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 141) = 13.23, p < .001, R^2 = .09$ . İkinci modelde ise, modele kültürel uzaklık eklendiğinde modelde anlamlı olarak iyileşme gözlenmiştir,  $F_{inc}(1, 140) = 4.88, p < .05, R^2 = .12$ . Kadının olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili ( $\beta = -.30, p < .001$ ) ile kültürel uzaklık ( $\beta = -.34, p < .001$ ) puanlarının düşmesi kadının evlilik doyumunu anlamlı olarak yordamaktadır.

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan kendi bağlamsal özellikleri incelendiğinde yalnızca olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerinin modele alındığı zaman anlamlı sonuç verdiği bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 141) = 17.42, p < .001, R^2 = .15$ . Kadının evlilik doyumunu olumsuz toplumsal tepkiler arttıkça anlamlı olarak artış göstermektedir.

### **Aktörün Evlilik Doyumunun Tahmininde Partner Etkisi**

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan partner etkileri incelendiğinde, ilk modelde kadının aileden algılanan sosyal destek puanını anlamlı olarak model katkı sunduğu bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 140) = 38.83, p < .001, R^2 = .22$ . İkinci aşamasında KE özelliklerinin denkleme katılması modelin anlamlı olarak iyileşmesini sağlamıştır,  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 8.35, p < .05, R^2 = .26$ . Kadının algılanan sosyal desteğinin ve KE özelliklerinin yüksek olması erkeğin evlilik doyumundaki iyileşmeyi yordamaktadır.

Erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayan kadının çift değişkenleri incelendiğinde ilk modelde olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili yer almıştır ve model anlamlı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 140) = 5.98, p < .05, R^2 = .04$ . Kadının olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilini daha çok kullanması eşinin evlilik doyumundaki düşüşü yordamaktadır.

Bağlamsal etkiler incelendiğinde, erkeğin evlilik doyumunu sadece kadının olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerinin yordadığı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 102) = 11.40, p < .05, R^2 = .10$ . Olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerdeki artış evlilik doyumundaki düşüşü yordamaktadır.

Kadının evlilik doyumunu yordayan erkeğin bireysel değişkenler incelendiğinde ilk modelde erkeğin aileden algılanan sosyal destek puanını anlamlı olduğu gözlenmiştir,  $F(1, 140) = 22.97, p < .001, R^2 = .14$ . İkinci modelde uyum tutumu  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 9.94, p < .05, R^2 = .20$ ; üçüncü modelde SG özelliği  $F_{inc}(1, 138) = 7.19, p < .05, R^2 = .24$ ; asimilasyon tutumu  $F_{inc}(1, 137) = 4.73, p < .05, R^2 = .27$  denklemlere eklenmiş ve anlamlı iyileşme sağlamıştır. Erkeğin aileden algıladığı sosyal destek, SG, uyum tutumlarındaki ve asimilasyon tutumlarındaki artış anlamlı olarak kadının evlilik doyumundaki artışı yordamaktadır.

Kadının evlilik doyumunu yordayan erkeğin çift değişkenleri incelendiğinde ilk modelde olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili yer almıştır ve model anlamlı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 141) = 7.14, p < .05, R^2 = .05$ . İkinci modelde geri çekilme  $F_{inc}(1, 140) = 4.01, p < .05, R^2 = .05$ ; üçüncü modelde ise boyun eğmenin  $F_{inc}(1, 139) = 6.41, p < .05, R^2 = .11$  denkleme katılmasıyla anlamlı olarak modellerde iyileşme gözlenmiştir. Erkeğin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili ve geri çekilme stilineki azalma, boyun eğici stilineki artma kadının evlilik doyumundaki artışı yordamaktadır.

Kadının evlilik doyumunu yordayan erkeğin bağlamsal özellikleri incelendiğinde yalnızca olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerindeki artışın kadının evlilik doyumundaki düşüşü anlamlı olarak yordadığı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 101) = 6.77, p < .05$ .

### ***Evlilik Doyumunun Tahmininde Etkileşim Etkileri***

Benzerliklerin erkeğin evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı etkileri incelendiğinde Açık görüşlülük özelliğindeki benzerliğin artışının erkeğin doyumundaki artışı yordadığı bulunmuştur,  $F(1, 138) = 4.21, p < .05, R^2 = .03, \beta = -.17$ . Kültürel empati boyutundaki

benzerlik ise anlamlı olarak kadınların evlilik doyumundaki artışı yordamaktadır  $F(1,138) = 9.81, p < .05, R^2 = .07, R^2 = .03$ . Asimilasyon tutumlarındaki benzerlik ise erkeklerin evlilik doyumundaki artışı anlamlı olarak yordamıştır,  $F(1,142) = 4.85, p < .05, R^2 = .03, \beta = -.19$ .

### **Aktör-Partner Etkisi**

Erkeklerin evlilik doyumunu ve kadınların evlilik doyumunu hem aktör boyutunda hem de partner boyutunda yalnızca aileden alınan sosyal destek, olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilli ve olumsuz sosyal tepkiler yordamıştır. Bu üç değişkenin bir arada, toplu etki gücünü değerlendirebilmek amacıyla yol analizi uygulanmıştır. Bulgulara göre, aileden algılanan sosyal desteğin aktör ve partner etkileri erkeklerin ve kadınların evlilik doyumlarını yordarken anlamlıdır, ayrıca eşittir. Olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri aktör ve partner etkileri birlikte değerlendirildiğinde yalnızca aktör etkilerinin anlamlı olduğu görülmüştür, erkeklerin olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilindeki artış anlamlı olarak erkeklerin evlilik doyumlarındaki düşüşü ve kadınların olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilindeki artış anlamlı olarak kadınların evlilik doyumlarındaki düşüşü yordamaktadır. Olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerin ise aktör ve partner etkilerinin erkek ve kadınların evlilik doyumları üzerinde yordayıcı etkisinin birlikte değişimleri yol analizi ile incelendiğinde de anlamlı olduğu görülmüştür. Bu etkilerin erkekler ve kadınlar arasında eşit olduğu, hem erkek hem de kadınların olumsuz toplumsal tepkilerindeki artışın her iki eş için hem kendi evlilik doyumunu hem de eşlerinin evlilik doyumlarındaki düşüşü anlamlı olarak yordadığı sonucuna varılmıştır.

### **TARTIŞMA**

Bu çalışmada Alman-Türk ve Rus-Türk çiftlerde evlilik doyumlarını yordayıcı bireysel, çift özellikleri ve bağlamsal etkiler ekosistem bakış açısıyla değerlendirilmiş. Bu değerlendirmede bireysel özellikler kişilik özellikleri (KE, SG, AG, DT, Esn), kültürlenme tutumları (asimilasyon, ayrılma, uyum (entegrasyon) ve marjinalizasyon), algılanan sosyal destek (aile, arkadaş, anlamlı kişi ve toplam) olarak; çift etkileri özellikleri kültürel uzaklık, çatışma çözüm stilleri (olumlu, olumsuz, geri çekilen, boyun eğici), dil becerisi olarak ve bağlamsal etkiler demografik özellikler, olumsuz

sosyal tepkiler, alınan sosyal destek (sosyal ağ, maddi destek ve bilgi desteği kaynakları sayısı) ve kök aile ilişkileri olarak tanımlanmıştır.

Erkek ve kadınların kendi özelliklerinin (aktör etkisi) ve partnerinin özelliklerinin (partner etkisi) ayrı ayrı hem kendi evlilik doyumları hem de partnerinin evlilik doyumları ile ilişkileri ve yordayıcı etkileri incelenmiştir. Bu analizi yapabilmek için temel varsayımlar karşılanmıştır. Verinin uygunluğu hakkında bilgi alma ve yorumlama için korelasyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Korelasyon analizleri sonucunda erkeklerin evlilik doyumlarındaki artışın kendi KE, DT, AG, aileden, arkadaştan ve toplam Algılanan Sosyal Destek, uyum tutumları, ayrışma tutumları, Olumlu Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri, dil becerisi, kültürel uzaklık, maddi destek, toplumsal tepkiler, ziyaret ve uzaktan iletişim şeklindeki kök aile ilişkileri puanları artışla; olumsuz çatışma çözüm stili puanlarındaki azalış ile birlikte değişim gösterdiği gözlenmiştir. Kadınların kendi evlilik doyumlarındaki artış ise kendi KE, aileden, arkadaştan ve toplam Algılanan Sosyal Destek, uyum tutumları, ayrışma tutumları, kültürel uzaklık, sosyal ağ ve toplumsal tepkiler puanlarındaki artış, marjinalizasyon tutumları ve olumsuz çatışma çözüm stilleri puanlarındaki azalış ile birlikte değişim göstermektedir. Bu bulgular genel olarak literatür ile tutarlı bulunmuştur. Özellikle kültürel farklılıkların arttığında evlilik doyumunda azalma ve evlilik ilişkisinde güçlüklerde artış olabileceğini vurgulayan çalışmaları (Danesphour, 2008; Donovan, 2004; Crohn, 1995) destekler niteliktedir.

Her ne kadar kişilik özellikleri korelasyonlar ile hem erkeğin hem de kadının evlilik doyumu ile ilişkili bulunduysa da, karşılıklı olarak yordayıcı etkisinin olmadığı bireysel etkilerin gözlenmektedir. Özellikle esneklik ve yanlış anlaşılmalarda başa çıkabilme (Tseng, 2001) ve açık olmanın (Sung, 1990) evlilik ilişkisini olumlu yönde etkileyebileceği belirtilmiştir. Birlikte değişim söz konusu kişilik özellikleri için gözlenmiş olsa da yordayıcı etki Kültürel Empati ve Sosyal Girişimcilik özellikleri için gözlenmiştir. Bu farklı bulgular önceki çalışmaların çoğunlukla klinik gözlemlere veya röportajlar dayanmasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Ek olarak, bu çalışmada kültüre hassas bir ölçüm aracı ile değerlendirme yapılmıştır, tutarlı bulunmayan

bulgular kültüre hassas özelliklerin ölçülmesinin gerekliliğini vurgulayan Ashton (1998) destekler niteliktedir.

Çalışma göçmenlik söz konusu olduğunda, göçmen eşin uyum tutumunun evlilik doyumunu etkileyeceğini öne sürmektedir (Falicov, 2003; Negy & Snyder, 2000). Bu çalışmanın bulguları göçmen olmayan eşin, göçmen eşin kültürüne uyum sağlamasının altını çizmektedir. Bu açıdan literature yeni bir bulgu olarak sunulmuştur.

Aileden alınan sosyal destek karşılıklı olarak her iki eş için hem kendi evlilik doyumunu yordamak hem de eşinin evlilik doyumunu yordamak açısından anlamlı olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu bilgi ışından literatürde vurgulanan aileden algılanan desteğin önemin (Cutrona, 1996), evrensel olarak tutarlılığına katkı sunmuştur.

Aynı şekilde literatür negative çatışma çözüm yöntemlerinin evlilik doyumunu yordama açısından çok daha belirleyici bir özellik taşıdığına altını çizmiştir (Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Çalışmanın bulguları bu sonucu destekler niteliktedir. Ancak, bu etkinin özellikle eşlerin kendi doyumlarını yordamada, eşlerin doyumlarını yordamaktan daha önemli olabileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Çatışma çözüm stillerini aktör ve partner etkileri açısından inceleyen az sayıdaki çalışmalardan birisi olan Özen (2006) ile tutarlılık göstermektedir.

Dil becerisinin her hangi bir yordayıcı etkisi gözlenmemiştir, halbuki dil becerisinin özellikle göçmen eşin kültürlenme stresine katkı sunmasından dolayı evlilik doyumunu üzerinde etkili olabileceği öne sürülmüştür (Tseng, 2001; Chen, 1990). Örnekte belirli bir seviyede Türkçe konuşulabildiği için hiç beceriye sahip olmama koşulunda ortaya çıkabilecek yordayıcı etki gözlenmemiştir. Yine de dil becerisinin belirli bir seviyenin üstüne çıktığında evlilik doyumunu üzerindeki etkisinin kaybolabileceği öne sürülebilir.

Kültürel farklılıklar paylaşılan kültür havuzunun azalmasından dolayı çift uluslu evlilikler özelinde evlilik doyumunu etkileyebilecek stres kaynağı olarak öne sürülmüştür (Romano, 2008; Waldman and Rubalcava, 2005) ancak bu çalışmada sadece bireysel olarak tanımlanan farklılığın yine bireyin kendisinin evlilik doyumunu etkileyebilecek bir değişken olarak ele alınabileceği gözlenmiştir. Bu açıdan literatüre

yeni bir bilgidir, daha önceki çalışmalar çoğunlukla niteliksel gözlemlere dayandığı için bu etkinin üzerinde durulmamıştır.

Demografik değişkenler anlamlı ilişki göstermemiştir. Literatürde her ne kadar tutarlı çalışmalar bulunmasa da buradaki ilişkilerin yordayıcı etkisinin gözlenmemesi değişkenlerin doğrusal bir düzende dağılmamasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir, özellikle evlilik süreleri ve yaş için bu durum söz konusudur. Bununla birlikte, kültürlenme seviyesi ve stresi ile ilişkisi olabileceğinden oturma süresinin evlilik doyumunu yordayabileceği beklenmiştir (Kisselev vd., 2010) fakat bu etki gözlenmemiştir. Bunun bir nedeni başka aracı etkilerin kontrol edilmesinin gerekliliği olabilir.

Alınan sosyal desteğin, özellikle göçmen eşin karşılaştığı sosyal ilişkilerde azalma ile evlilik doyumunu etkileyebileceği öne sürülmüştür (Kisselev vd., 2010; Copeland & Norell, 2002). Çalışmadaki bulgular bu bilgileri destekler nitelikte değildir. Bunun bir nedeni örneklemeden kaynaklanabilir, çalışmaya katılan çiftlere çoğunlukla sosyal ortamlarda ve sosyal ağlar aracılığıyla ulaşılmıştır.

Olumsuz sosyal tepkilerin çiftlerin her ikisinin birden karşılıklı evlilik doyumlarını yordadığı bulunmuştur. Literatürde kültürel farklılıklar olmasa da evrensel olarak aile (Larson, 2000) ve arkadaşlardan (Cihan-Güngör, 2007; Larson & Holman, 1994) alınan onayın evlilik doyumunu pozitif yönde yordayabileceği üzerinde durulmuştur. Çift uluslu ve kültürel olarak farklılık gösteren bireylerin evlilik doyumunu açısından aileden ve arkadaşlardan alınan onayın daha önem kazandığı vurgulanmıştır. Sonuçlar bu bulguları destekler niteliktedir.

Kök aile ile ilişkiler korelasyonlarda evlilik doyumunu ile birlikte değişim göstermiş fakat herhangi bir yordayıcı etki gözlenmemiştir, diğer taraftan özellikle göçmen eş için önemi üzerinde durulmuştur (Fu vd., 2001). Larson (2000) bu değişkenin evrensel olarak uzun süreli evliliklere katkı sunabileceğini belirtmiştir. Çelişen bulgu bu çalışmada yalnızca görüşme sıklığının alınmış olmasından ve görüşme kalitesinin içeriğine ilişkin bilginin eksik olmasından kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Ayrıca, evlilik doyumunu ve evliliğin uzun süremesi arasında da nedensel bir ilişkiden çok birlikte değişim gösteren bir ilişki söz konusudur (Karney & Brandbury, 1995).

## **Sonuçlardan Yapılan Çıkarımlar**

Bu çalışmanın, bireysel çift özellikleri ve bağlamsal etkiler olmak üzere üç seviyede, ayrıca her iki eşin hem kendi özelliklerinin hem de eşinin özelliklerinin evlilik doyumları üzerindeki etkisini araştırarak şekilde aktör-partner etkileriyle incelemesi sonuçları geniş bir yelpazede çıkarımlar yapılmasını sağlamaktadır.

Çift uluslu evliliklere yönelik yapılacak müdahaleler konusunda yol gösterici bir niteliğe sahiptir. Eşler arasında karşılıklı etkiler aileden alınan sosyal destek, çatışma çözüm stilleri ve sosyal etkiler için gözlenmiştir. Kişilik boyutunda tek bir özellik olarak sadece Kültürel Empati boyutunun bireysel etkisi ön plana çıkararak evlilik doyumunu yordayıcı değerlendirilmesi, çalışmayı temel alarak öğretilbilir ve öğrenilebilir konuların yapılan müdahalelerde öncelik kazanması konusunu gündeme getirmektedir.

Bireysel farkındalık kazandırıcı müdahalelerin hangi alanlarda yapılabileceğine yönelik öneriler getirilebilmektedir. Kültürel farklılıkların ve kültürlenme tutumlarının katkısını psikoeğitim modelleri ile bireylere sunmak mümkündür.

Çok değişkenin incelenerek, bireysel, çift özellikleri bağlamsal etkileri değerlendirmesi evlilik öncesi danışmanlık ve müdahaleler için kapsamlı bir bilgi sunmaktadır. Bunlara ek olarak, çalışmanın sonuçları bağlamsal etkileri de göz önünde bulundurduğu için koruyucu ve önleyici bakış açısıyla sosyal politikalar üretilirken referans alınabilecek bilgi sunmaktadır.

## **Sınırlılıklar**

Bu çalışma örnekleme gereği Türkiye’de yaşayan erkeklerin Türk, kadınların Alman veya Rus olduğu evlilikli kapsamaktadır. Bu nedenle yapılan gözlemler sadece kadınların göçmen, erkeklerin dominant kültürden geldiği evlilikler üzerinde yapılmıştır. Bu durum genelleme açısından bir sınırlılık getirmektedir.

Ayrıca, çalışmaya dahil olan yabancı uyruklu kadın eşler ölçeklerin psikometrik özelliklerini karşılayabilmek amacıyla belirli dil seviyesine kadar Türkçe konuşabilmektedir. Bu nedenle Türkçe dil becerisinin daha düşük veya hiç olmadığı

eşlerin evlilik doyumları konusunda bilgi almak mümkün olmadığından edinilen gözlem ve genelleme ile ilgili bir sınırlılık söz konusudur.

Ek olarak, çiftlere çoğunlukla sosyal ortamlara dahil olan çiftlere ulaşılmıştır. Birbirine benzer sosyal ağları olan çiftlerle uygulama yapılmıştır. Bu durum da sosyal destek etkisinin gözlenmesi açısından bir sınırlılık oluşturabilir.

## APPENDIX S. Curriculum Vitae

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Tezer Yörük, Nihan  
Nationality: Turkish (TC)  
Date and Place of Birth: 26 February 1985, Ankara  
Marital Status: Married  
email: nihantezer@gmail.com

### EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
BS	Ege University Psychology	2007
High School	Türk Telekom Anadolu Teknik High School, Ankara	2003

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2015-Present	Karma Kültür & Psikoloji Merkezi	Owner/ Clinical Psychologist
2014-2015	Olimpos Hastanesi	Clinical Psychologist
2010-2014	Antalya İl Emniyet Müdürlüğü Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışma Birimi	Psychologist

### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Fluent German, Intermediate Japanese

### PUBLICATIONS

1. Tezer, N., & Arkar, H. (2013). Does personality affect social relationships? Assessing mediator role of social network, loneliness, and perceived social support. *Anadolu Psikiyatri Dergisi*, 14 (1), 46-52.

## APPENDIX T. Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

### YAZARIN

Soyadı :

Adı :

Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

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: