

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO INFIDELITY: EXAMINING THE ROLES OF
SELF-COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS, RUMINATION AND COGNITIVE
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ABSTRACT

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO INFIDELITY: EXAMINING THE ROLES OF SELF-COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS, RUMINATION AND COGNITIVE APPRAISAL

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This study tested a model that includes the interrelationship (direct and indirect relationships) among offended partners' self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal and emotional reactions to infidelity. Moreover, the nature of the gender differences in reactions to infidelity was searched by testing the proposed model with invariance across gender. The participants of the study were 431 offended partners in their dating relationship that were reached by a purposive sampling method. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, The Stress Appraisal Measure, Ruminative Response Scale, Forgiveness Scale, Self-Compassion Scale and demographic information form were utilized in the present study. SEM results showed that offended partners who had a higher level of forgiveness, feel a lower level of negative emotions. On the other hand, when they ruminate more and perceive the situation as a threat, their negative emotions are stronger. Moreover, when they perceive the situation as controllable by themselves and perceive the situation as a situation that cannot be controlled by anyone, they show a higher level of negative reactions. Self-compassion was not directly related to negative reactions, but it was found to be related to them through

other variables. The model was found different across the gender. The findings of the study were discussed, and implications and recommendations for further studies were presented.

Keywords: Reactions to infidelity, rumination, self-compassion, forgiveness, cognitive appraisal.

ÖZ

ALDATILMAYA VERİLEN DUYGUSAL TEPKİLER: ÖZ-ŞEFKAT, AFFETME, RUMİNASYON VE BİLİŞSEL DEĞERLENDİRME ROLLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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Bu çalışmada aldatılma deneyimi yaşamış bireylerin öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon, ve bilişsel değerlendirmeleri ve aldatılmaya verdikleri olumsuz duygusal tepkiler arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkileri (doğrudan ve dolaylı) bir model ile test edilmiştir. Ayrıca, önerilen modelin cinsiyet genelinde değişmezliği test edilerek cinsiyet farklılıklarının aldatılmaya verilen tepkilerindeki doğası incelenmiştir. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle ulaşılmış olan, flört ilişkilerinde aldatılma deneyimi yaşamış 431 kişi çalışmanın katılımcılarını oluşturmaktadır. Pozitif ve Negatif Duygu Ölçeği, Stres Değerlendirme Ölçeği, Ruminasyon Ölçeği, Affetme Ölçeği, Öz-anlayış Ölçeği ve demografik bilgi formu bu çalışmada kullanılmıştır. YEM sonuçlarına göre aldatılan bireyin yüksek affetme becerisi ile daha düşük seviyede olumsuz duygu gösterdiği görülmüştür. Öte yandan, ruminasyon seviyeleri arttığında ve bireyler durumu bir tehdit olarak algıladıklarında, olumsuz duyguların daha güçlü olduğu sonucu elde edilmiştir. Ayrıca, bireyler durumu kendileri tarafından kontrol edilebilir olarak algıladıklarında ve durumu kimsenin kontrol edemediğini algıladıklarında, daha

yüksek düzeyde olumsuz tepkiler göstermişlerdir. Öz-şefkat, olumsuz tepkilerle doğrudan ilgili olmamasına rağmen, diğer değişkenler yoluyla dolaylı olarak bu tepkilerle ilişkili bulunmuştur. Model cinsiyetlere göre farklı bulunmuştur. Çalışmanın bulguları tartışılmış, sonuçların katkıları ve gelecek çalışmalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aldatılmaya verilen tepkiler, ruminasyon, öz-şefkat, affetme, bilişsel değerlendirme.

To the Nature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Through the life course, having close relationships is one of the most fundamental human needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and a romantic relationship is one of these close relationships that has the power to increase happiness (Hendrick, 2004) and life satisfaction (Argyle, 1987). Many adults seek a romantic relationship and try to maintain it. According to Knox and Schacht (2008), development of a romantic relationship is affected by social, psychological, physical and cognitive factors. After developing a relationship, continuing that relationship is also essential. Different factors, such as intimacy level, involvement, similarities between partners and physical attractiveness, can affect the maintenance of a satisfactory relationship (Hendrick, 2004). When the individuals have high satisfaction from their relationship, when they made a high investment in their relationships and when they do not have enough alternatives, they develop commitment on the relationship (Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996). According to Rusbult (1983), when there is low satisfaction, low investment, and more alternatives, there can be the reason for dissolution.

People have relationships to fulfill their belongingness need, but according to Blow and Harnett (2005a), 25% of relationships end with some form of romantic infidelity. Actual extensity of infidelity is higher than what is observed (Johnson, 2003). In the media, famous people come to screens many times with infidelity events. A famous American actress Sandra Bullock's ex-husband Jesse James said after his infidelity, "In general, both women and men cheat...It's part of life." Is it really so common? The frequency of having at least one extramarital intercourse in America was reported as between 30 and 60% for males and between 20 and 50% for females

(Sponaugle, 1989; Vangelisti & Gerstenberger, 2004). Hansen (1987) states that 70.9% of men and 54.4% of women showed extradyadic behaviors in dating relationships. The results of the studies of infidelity in dating relationships are as follows: 30% of men; 34% of women (Feldman & Cauffman, 1999), 75% of men and 68% of women (Wiederman & Hurd, 1999), 33% of men and 31% of women (Allen & Baucom, 2004) and 35% of college students (Hall & Fincham, 2009) were engaged with infidelity.

Statistical information about the prevalence of infidelity is insufficient in Turkey, where the results of the 2005 Durex Global Sex Survey (Durex, 2005) conducted in 41 countries provided statistical information. The results of this survey indicated that Turkey had the highest proportion, with 58% of the participants having had a sexual relationship which was extramarital. In this study, the participants were asked if they were having any extramarital infidelity, or if they had had extramarital infidelity before. Yeniçeri and Kökdemir (2006) found the rate of infidelity as 19.6% in a Turkish university students' sample. The age range of these students was between 18 and 38. In that study, the participants were asked if they had ever cheated on their partner emotionally or sexually. In the same study, 17.3% of the participants said that their partners had cheated on them. In another Turkish study conducted by Onayli, Erdur-Baker and Kordoutis (2016) reported that out of 210 volunteering participants (some of whom were university students and the rest of whom were university graduates) with an age range between 18 and 49, 34.3% of them were cheated by their partners. Moreover, in a recent study by Toplu-Demirtas and Finchman (2017), which was conducted among college students with an age range between 18 and 28 in Turkey, participants were asked if they had ever cheated on their partner. It was reported that 13.2% of women were cheating on a partner and 15.7% of men were cheating on a partner in a dating relationship.

The proportions of infidelity in Turkey was found differently in the studies. The difference of the samples can be one reason for this difference. Moreover, the definition of "infidelity" changes from person to person. For example, Yeniçeri and

Kökdemir (2006) asked participants what betrayal means for them; 14.7 % said that it is enough to experience only emotional infidelity to call it “betrayal”, 4.5% of them said only sexual infidelity can be regarded as betrayal, moreover, 70.1% of them believed that any type of infidelity is a betrayal; on the other hand 10.7 % of them said that emotional and sexual infidelity must be together to regard such an act as betrayal. Furthermore, infidelity was not understood clearly (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001) and the review of Blow and Hartnett (2005a) in the studies related to infidelity between the years 1980 and 2005 shows that the operational definition of infidelity changes from study to study.

Infidelity might lead to deep emotional hurts and damage in the couples' interpersonal relations (Wang, King, & Debernardi, 2012), the relationship (Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999), the one who has been cheated on (Shackelford, LeBlanc, & Drass, 2000) and the cheater (Hall & Fincham, 2009). Moreover, it may cause a break-up after infidelity (Hall & Fincham, 2006). Deceived partners experience several different kinds of negative emotions like resentment, anger, depression. Also, they lose trust, and their self-esteem and personal and sexual confidence decreases following infidelity. (Charny & Parnass, 1995). Outcomes of infidelity can be loss of faith, loss of intimacy, and infidelity affects the relationships with children, friends or parents (Wang et al., 2012). According to Shackelford et al. (2000), after experiencing the infidelity, the deceived partner frequently experiences negative emotions. Occurrences of positive outcomes of cheating are very rarely reported (Blow & Hartnett, 2005a; Charny & Parnass, 1995), such as raising self-confidence, increase in the value of the family, increase in self-care and understanding the importance of marital communication (Olson, Russell, Higgins–Kessler, & Miller, 2002).

Infidelity seems to have taken different forms, and its definition changes accordingly. The definition made by Blow and Hartnett (2005b) is a comprehensive one which reads as,

A sexual and/or emotional act engaged in by one person within a committed relationship, where such an act occurs outside of the primary relationship and

constitutes a breach of trust and/or violation of agreed upon norms (overt and covert) by one or both individuals in that relationship in relation to romantic, emotional or sexual exclusivity (p. 191).

Three types of infidelity are sexual-only, emotional-only, and combined sexual and emotional (Thompson, 1984). Emotional infidelity refers to emotional contact with someone except current partner (Wilson, Mattingly, Clark, Weidler & Bequette, 2011). Females engage in more emotional infidelity than males, and males engage in more sexual infidelity than females (Barta & Kiene, 2005). Sexual dissatisfaction seems the reason for men's infidelity, and relationship dissatisfaction seems to be the reason for women's infidelity (Allen et al., 2008; Whisman & Snyder, 2007; Atkins, Yi, Baucom & Christensen, 2005).

Women and men show different reactions to infidelity (Shackelford et al., 2000; DeSteno & Salovey, 1996; Hupka & Bank, 1996). Sexual infidelity of the partner makes men more upset than women whereas emotional infidelity of the partner makes women more upset than men (Groothof, Dijkstra, & Barelds, 2009). The study of Shackelford et al (2000) showed that after discovering infidelity, men reported higher levels of reactions in terms of homicidal/suicidal, happy, and sexually aroused emotions, whereas women reported higher levels of the following feelings: nauseated/repulsed, depressed, undesirable/insecure, helpless/abandoned, and they showed anxious reactions. Regarding coping with infidelity, women have more difficulty in handling emotional infidelity; however, for men the situation is opposite, handling sexual infidelity is more difficult for them (Goldenberg et al., 2003; Shackelford, Buss, & Bennett, 2002).

Gender difference in reacting to infidelity was explained by evolutionary theory and sociocultural theory of jealousy (Wilson et al., 2011). Evolutionary theory claims that sexual infidelity is more difficult to handle for men because men want generations with his genes. For women, it is more difficult to handle with emotional infidelity because they do not want to lose long-term commitment and the resources of men to raise a child. On the other hand, according to sociocultural theory, men believe that women do not have sex without love and women believe that men can have sex

without love (Harris & Christenfeld, 1996). Therefore, an offended male partner thinks when his partner cheats him sexually, it also means emotional infidelity. On the other hand, when a man cheats on his partner emotionally, the woman partner thinks that sexual infidelity has been committed as well (Wilson et al., 2011).

Several variables may be related to how people react to infidelity and how they cope with it. So far, the related literature has provided several variables impacting positive and negative reactions to infidelity, yet the study hereby focuses on personality traits; specifically, self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal. These particular variables were chosen for at least two reasons. First of all, these selected variables are rather personal trait variables and exploring relationships among them should help us to understand the underlying reasons behind individual differences in reactions to infidelity regardless of gender. Also, these variables may be responsible for the difference across gender in reactions to infidelity. These variables were selected based on the reports of previous studies. These variables and their relationships to infidelity reactions have been studied by separate and independent studies. This study aims to bring these variables together to examine their relative contribution to negative reactions to infidelity. Unlike previous studies, this study aims to construct and to test invariance of the model for the difference between men and women. These variables have been introduced very briefly below and a more detailed explanation has been provided in the literature review section.

Self-compassion is one of the chosen variables for the study. It is unfortunate that there is a lack of research examining the relationships between self-compassion and reactions to infidelity. However, self-compassion helps to cope with infidelity. The book of Steven Stosny (2013), titled *Living and Loving after Betrayal: How to Heal from Emotional Abuse, Deceit, Infidelity, and Chronic Resentment*, pointed out the importance of the role of self-compassion after infidelity. Self-compassion helps us to recognize our humanity, resilience, and strengths and focus on growing, healing and improving. Self-compassion has three key factors which are self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness (Neff, 2003a). Therefore, the individual with

self-compassion can approach the problem, whether it is painful or distressful, with common humanity and kindness. Self-compassion is positively related to healthy psychological functioning because if an individual has self-compassion with those three factors (self-kindness, common humanity, mindfulness), he/she accepts his/her weaknesses and does not try to suppress them. Moreover, self-compassion is an important variable for this study due to its reported relationships with rumination (Neff, 2003a), and forgiveness (Neff & Pommier, 2013). In this study, it is expected that higher level of self-compassion should be related to a better ability to appraise the situation and to show lower level negative reactions to infidelity.

According to Neff and Pommier (2013), higher self-compassion is related to higher forgiveness. Related studies reported that forgiveness had been an essential factor for improving relationships. Forgiveness helps release the anger on an offender (Hargrave, 1994) and improve the relationship and heal emotionally (DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993), or without revenge, and allow the person, who hurt one, to go (Fitzgibbons, 1986; Smedes, 1984). Forgiveness can be helpful with the problems related with anger and depression (Fitzgibbons, 1986), sexual abuse (Madanes, 1991; Schneider, 1989), personality disorders (Fisher, 1985; Wolberg, 1973), guilt (Joy, 1985), drug abuse (Flanigan, 1987), and broken marital relationships (Worthington & DiBlasio, 1990). Forgiveness has a positive relationship with psychological healing (Hargrave, 1994), well-being (Worthington, 2003) and a negative relationship with depression and anxiety (Hargrave, 1994), and trauma symptoms of the offended partner (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2005). According to Battleson (1997), if the couples stay together after infidelity, one of the most critical factors that helps them to do so is forgiveness. Based on these research findings, forgiveness was chosen as one of the research variables for the study hereby. It is expected that individuals who score low in forgiveness are more likely to report negative appraisal of the situation (e.g. loss/threat) and thereby they will manifest somewhat negative reactions to infidelity.

The ruminative tendency is one of the variables that is included in the study. Rumination is a cycling thinking pattern which focuses on symptoms of distress in a passive and repetitive way and not taking action to solve or correct the problems (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998). Ruminative people are more likely to have a negative mood which triggers negative memories and decreases motivation to solve problems (Ward, Lyubomirsky, Sousa, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2003). Furthermore, rumination leads people to employ maladaptive strategies while trying to cope with distress (Lyubomirsky & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1995) and ruminators are pessimistic in realizing plans (Ward et al., 2003). Rumination is one of the focuses of this study because, if people with rumination tendencies are more likely to have a pessimistic outlook and to blame themselves when they face difficulties in life, such as infidelity, they should regard the infidelity as a threat, and thereby their reactions to infidelity should be rather negative.

Finally, cognitive appraisal is one of the useful theories that explains the reactions to infidelity (Wang et al., 2012). Albeit only recently, researchers have begun to utilize it in the context of infidelity, and the theory has been widely and successfully used to explain stress coping strategies. Stress can rise when a person experiences infidelity, therefore the relationship between cognitive appraisal and reactions to infidelity cannot be denied. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), the occurred event could be evaluated as relevant to the well-being of the person. The studies of Lazarus (1966; 1993; 1999; 2000, 2001) examined the concept of appraisal. In the study of Lazarus and Folkman (1984), primary and secondary appraisals were described and differentiated. An individual decides if an event is threatening or not threatening in the primary appraisal, and the primary appraisal can be irrelevant (no implications for individuals), benign-positive (instead of negative effects, there are pleasurable emotions), or stressful (which consists of three parts: harm/loss, threat, and challenge).

The stress appraisals can be explained as such: an individual has experienced loss in the first part of the stress (called harm/loss), or has estimated threat but not happened

in the second part (called threat). The third part is called “challenge”, which indicates growth or gain. The secondary appraisal is the evaluation of coping resources and alternatives. Meldrim (2005) stated that none of the appraisals is less important than the other, just secondary appraisals occur after the primary appraisal is done (it is a next step). However, two appraisal processes affect each other to generate an overall percept (Ferguson, Matthews & Cox, 1999). When an individual cannot cope with a threat because of insufficient personal resources, s/he will undergo stress. In the study of Wang et al. (2012), which is related to reactions to infidelity, only centrality, and threat parts were studied as two dimensions of cognitive appraisal. The centrality dimension means recognizing the importance of an event to the well-being of the individual. On the other hand, threat dimension means recognizing the harm or loss of an event.

Reactions to the romantic infidelity relate with cognitive process of evaluating the importance or level of the threat. If an individual experiences infidelity and the infidelity is interpreted as a threat, the level of distress is high. However, if romantic infidelity is important for the individual, he /she will take more active steps even if he/she has negative emotions (Wang et al., 2012). According to the authors, the reactions to romantic infidelity may differ from person to person. Some people react in a more passive manner and try to deny or avoid the situation while some people react in a more revengeful way or behave aggressively. In fact, after discovering the infidelity, people are likely to report severe negative emotional reactions, such as grief, depression, anxiety, hyper vigilance, obsessive rumination and attachment trauma (Glass, 2000; Glass & Wright, 1997; Gordon et al., 2004; Lusterman, 1995).

Self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal are related to gender. The relationship between gender and self-compassion implies that women have lower self-compassion than men (Neff, 2003a). According to Neff (2003a), women have more self-judgment, feel more isolated, and are less mindful about their negative emotions. However, there is no difference in the self-kindness and common humanity.

Considering gender differences in forgiveness, the majority of the related studies reported no gender difference in the case of forgiveness (Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O'Connor, & Wade, 2001; Macaskil, Maltby, & Day, 2002; Toussaint, & Webb, 2005). Only a few studies reported the gender difference. Among those, Eaton, Struthers, and Santelli (2006) suggested that females have a lower tendency to forgive than males, and according to Denton and Martin (1998), men report higher score on benefits of forgiveness than women. On the other hand, females are more forgiving than males with a little difference (Miller, Worthington, McDaniel, 2008).

Rumination was also chosen as a variable for this study. Ruminative tendencies might be due to gender differences as women were found to have higher rumination tendencies than men (Allgood-Merten, Lewinsohn, & Hops, 1990; Blanchard-Fields, Sulsky, & Robinson-Whelen, 1991; Nolen-Hoeksema, Larson, & Grayson, 1999; Nolen-Hoeksema, Parker, & Larson, 1994). Ruminative people are also less likely to forgive (Berry, Worthington, O'Connor, Parrott, & Wade, 2005; Berry et al., 2001). Moreover, women have higher negative cognitive appraisal than men (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004). Women have higher threat (Anshel, Jamieson, & Raviv, 2001), and challenge appraisal than men (Durak, 2007). In the present study, it is expected that participants, especially women who experienced partner's infidelity will react negatively if they appraise the situation as harmful and threatening.

In short, this study aims to understand reactions to infidelity by examining its relative relationships to several trait variables, namely self-compassion, rumination, forgiveness, and cognitive appraisal, and to test underlying reasons behind gender differences in reactions to infidelity. This study has brought together the aforementioned variables for the first time for modeling the interrelationships between self-compassion, rumination, forgiveness, and cognitive appraisal and reactions to infidelity.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The present study could be viewed as an attempt to examine relationships among offended partners' self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal [primary appraisal (threat and challenge), secondary appraisal (self-control, other-control and uncontrollability)], and emotional reactions to infidelity. According to discovered direct and indirect relationships, the current study presents a conceptual model explaining the predictor roles of self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal on negative emotional reactions to infidelity and invariance for male and female gender.

More specifically, based on the related literature, this proposed study aims to

1. test an overall model that includes the interrelationship (direct and indirect relationships) among self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal and emotional reactions to infidelity.
2. examine the nature of the gender differences in reactions to infidelity by testing the proposed model with invariance across gender.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Infidelity has an unclear role in society. Although it is accepted as an immoral act (Treas & Gieson, 2000; Jankowiak, Nell & Buckmaster, 2002), it is presented as an entertaining issue by the media. Meldrim (2005) implies that the media in America is interested in infidelity and she gives as an example President Clinton's affair, stating that the effects of infidelity on the offended partner did not draw much interest. Moreover, infidelity is a subject in literature. Emile Zola's book called *Therese Racquin* is an example. Infidelity is a subject in Turkish literature as well, as can be seen in Mehmet Rauf's book *Eylül* and Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's book *Aşk-Memnu*. The common point of all of these books is their primary interest in the cheating partner, rather than the offended partner.

Infidelity damages both the individuals (the one who cheated and was cheated) and their relationships (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). The offended partner from the infidelity may be both cognitively and emotionally overwhelmed (Meldrim, 2005). When a couple experience infidelity in their relationship, both partners (offended and unfaithful partners) suffer from cognitive and emotional problems; moreover, most of the couples cannot recover (Charny & Parnass, 1995). It leads to the offended partner to interrogate the beliefs about trust and safety in the relationship (Spring, 1996; Brown, 1991; Glass & Wright, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 1999). Moreover, s/he can display some symptoms of the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and it can threaten his/her life (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

Although infidelity may result in traumatic responses (Gordon & Baucom, 1999; Lusterman, 1998) and higher depressive and posttraumatic symptomatology for the people who cheated on their partners than who were cheated on (Hall & Fincham, 2009), scientific knowledge on infidelity and especially the number of studies about dating infidelity is limited the results of infidelity, and models that use the present study's variables is still somewhat limited. Moreover, although majority of previous studies pointed out the gender differences in reactions to infidelity, the reasons for such gender differences remain unclear.

This present study aims to a) examine the direct and indirect relationships among self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal and emotional reactions to infidelity, and b) examine the gender differences in reactions to infidelity by testing the proposed model with invariance across gender. Based on the direct and indirect relationships that were discovered, a model explaining possible relationships between variables of the study and negative reactions to infidelity was tested, and the gender difference of the model was discussed. Therefore, the current study with a tested model shows how strong the relationship between the variables and individuals' reactions to infidelity is.

The results of this study can be beneficial to couples, families, and the mental health professionals. The finding of the study should have particular implications for psychological counselors as the relationship issues are common presenting problems

among help-seeking adult populations (Erdur-Baker & Bıçak, 2006; Erdur-Baker, Aberson, Drapper, & Barrow, 2006). Given that family and marriage counseling is a rapidly emerging area of counseling in Turkey due to some lawful regulations (couple counseling is now about to be mandatory before marriage and divorce), mental health professionals working in this area are now in need of more scientific knowledge and accordingly developed skills more than ever.

The selected variables of the study are considered as risk or personal protective factors which may be used to explain individual differences in how they react to these distressful experiences, such as infidelity. The importance of these variables (as buffering against distress or being a leading risk factor) would be more salient for psychological counselors to profile their clients under risk. For instance, it is known that women have higher negative cognitive appraisal (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004), higher rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 1999), and lower self-compassion (Neff, 2003a) than men. Therefore, the relationship between gender and reactions to infidelity may be related to such personal factors (Simon & Nath, 2004). Cognitive appraisal, rumination, forgiveness and self-compassion which seem to have links with the negative emotions of women can explain the gender differences in reactions to infidelity.

In brief, this study can be useful for professionals in the field of psychological counseling to better understand what is related to a person's reactions to romantic infidelity and find ways to improve treatments related to romantic infidelity and help couples before and after experiencing infidelity. Moreover, the demographic information can give insight into reactions to infidelity; therefore, it will be helpful for counselors to have information about which characteristics can lead which reactions after the discovery of an affair.

The proposed and tested model should have important contributions to the national and international literature. It should help future researchers by providing them with new research questions to examine and/or confirming the results with new methodologies and different samples. In fact, this is going to be the first research study to bring these variables together to examine their relative contribution to the

explanation of reactions to infidelity. The study of Wang et al. (2012) is about effects of attachment and cognitive appraisal on university students' reactions to infidelity. The results of their study show that individuals who evaluate romantic infidelity with a higher importance although they have a tendency to show negative emotions, they have willingness to do more constructive movements to improve the situation. On the other hand, when they perceive infidelity as a threat, it causes more negative emotions and responses, such as distress, guilt, fear and irritability. In that study, the researchers measured only primary appraisal and its relations to infidelity scenarios, but the secondary appraisal was ignored. The study hereby aims to integrate both primary and secondary appraisal and test their relative contributions to explain male and females' reactions to infidelity. Additionally, there is no research about the relationship between gender and reactions to infidelity considering the predictor roles of cognitive appraisal, forgiveness, rumination and self-compassion. Accordingly, the central significance of this study will be supplying a quantitative data.

Furthermore, there are very few studies about infidelity for the Turkish population. Especially, the number of studies about dating infidelity is limited. According to researcher's knowledge among them only one of them (Onayli et al., 2016) studied the offended partners' emotions. Yet, Durex Global Sex Survey (2005), which is the only study that shows statistics about infidelity in Turkey, presents that 58% of the participants had sexual infidelity. Some of previous studies in Turkey focus the extramarital infidelity and some of them focus on dating infidelity; and the studies which are related to dating infidelity mostly focus on the cheater. That shows there is a need to study in Turkey about offended partners' emotions after dating infidelity. According to literature, the offended partners, after discovering infidelity, can experience a variety of negative emotions; and to help people handle these emotions, it is critical to have studies to see the relationship between these emotions with other variables.

The present study should be helping to fill the enormous gap which is about self-compassion, rumination, forgiveness, cognitive appraisals and reactions to infidelity

in romantic relationships in Turkish infidelity literature. Furthermore, the adaptation of the Forgiveness Scale (Rye, 1998) into Turkish culture will be another significance of the study.

1.4. Research Questions

The main research question of the study was as follows:

What are the direct and indirect relationships among self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, and cognitive appraisal [primary appraisal (threat and challenge), secondary appraisal (self-control, other-control and uncontrollability)] and emotional reactions to infidelity of deceived individuals in a model?

Also, answers to the following research questions were sought;

1. How does deceived individuals' self-compassion relate to forgiveness, self-control, other-control, challenge, rumination, threat, uncontrollability and negative emotional reactions after infidelity in a model?
2. How does deceived individuals' forgiveness relate to self-control, other-control, challenge, rumination, threat, uncontrollability and negative emotional reactions after infidelity in a model?
3. How does deceived individuals' ruminative responses relate to threat, uncontrollability, self-control, other-control, challenge and negative emotional reactions after infidelity in a model?
4. How does deceived individuals' cognitive appraisals (threat, uncontrollability, self-control, other-control, challenge) relate to negative emotional reactions after infidelity in a model?
5. Is the constrained model invariant or equivalent across females and males?

1.5. Definition of Terms

Self-compassion is “being open to and moved by one’s own suffering, experiencing feelings of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding,

nonjudgmental attitude toward one's inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that one's experience is part of the common human experience" (Neff, 2003a, p. 224). Moreover, "self-compassion entails three basic components: 1) extending kindness and understanding to oneself rather than harsh self-criticism and judgment; 2) seeing one's experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than as separating and isolating; and 3) holding one's painful thoughts and feelings in balanced awareness rather than over-identifying with them" (Neff, 2003, p.224).

Forgiveness is "one's merciful response to someone who has unjustly hurt. In forgiving, the person overcomes negative affect (such as resentment), cognition (such as harsh judgements) and behaviour (such as revenge-seeking) toward the injurer, and substitutes more positive affect, cognition and behaviour toward him or her" (Al-Mabuk, Enright, & Cardis, 1995, p. 427). Rye et al., (2001), in a study which is called evaluation of the psychometric properties of two forgiveness scales, specified that the "forgiveness would be conceptualized as a response toward an offender that involves letting go of negative affect (e.g. hostility), cognitions (e.g. thoughts of revenge), and behavior (e.g. verbal aggression), and may also involve positive responses toward the offender (e.g. compassion)" (p. 261).

Ruminative response style is "a pattern of behaviors and thoughts that focus the individual's attention on his or her emotional state and inhibit any actions that might distract the individual from his or her mood" (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991, pp. 569).

Cognitive appraisal is "a process through which the person evaluates whether a particular encounter with the environment is relevant to his or her well-being, and if so, in what ways" (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongois, & Gruen, 1986, p. 992). It has two stages, "*primary appraisal*" and the "*secondary appraisal*" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to Ferguson et al. (1999), "two appraisal processes are not mutually exclusive, but rather interact to produce an overall percept" (p. 98).

“In *primary appraisal*, the person evaluates whether he or she has anything at stake in this encounter” (Folkman et al., 1986, p. 993). It includes threat, challenge and centrality. “*Threat* refers to the potential for harm, and it is experienced when the person anticipates future harm or loss” (Karademas & Kalantzi-Azizi, 2004, p. 1034). “*Challenge* refers to the potential for gain even under difficult situations” (Karademas & Kalantzi-Azizi, 2004, p. 1034), “*Centrality* refers to the perceived importance of an event for one's well-being” (Peacock & Wong, 1990).

In *secondary appraisal*, the person evaluates if anything can be done to overcome or prevent harm or to improve the prospects for benefit” (Folkman et al., 1986, p. 993). It includes self-control, other-control and uncontrollability. These terms were explained by the following examples: *controllable-by-self or self-control* “I have the ability to overcome stress”, *controllable-by-others or other-control* “There is help available to me”, *uncontrollable-by-anyone or uncontrollability* “I feel totally helpless” (Roesch & Rowley, 2005, p. 189).

Negative Affect (NA) is “a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states, including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness, with low NA being a state of calm” (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988, p. 1063).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study aims to understand peoples' reactions to infidelity. In order to reach the aim, a) the links of reactions to infidelity with the trait variables of self-compassion, rumination, forgiveness and cognitive appraisal were tested, and b) whether or not these variables are underlying reasons behind gender differences in reactions to infidelity were investigated. This chapter introduces related literature in order to provide a theoretical framework for the study. The chapter consists of three main sections. The first section summarizes the existing research on infidelity in romantic relationships in order to establish a foundation for the study. Later, the chosen variables (self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal) for the study are introduced in relation to reactions to infidelity along with the rationale behind why these variables have been selected. Lastly, the summary of the literature review is provided.

2.1. Infidelity in Romantic Relationships

People live in relationships with their families, friends, partners and co-workers (Guerrero, Andersan, & Afifi, 2014). According to research, the most common subjects that humans speak are relationships problems, family, sex, and romantic partners or possible romantic partners (Haas & Sherman, 1982).

Guerrero et al. (2014) classified different kinds of relationships; these are role relationships, interpersonal relationships and close relationships. The authors explained these relationships as such; in role relationships, there are no unique people, and individuals are interchangeable (e.g. the relationship between a salesclerk and a client); and in interpersonal relationships, the ordinary activities go

beyond a “task level” and reach a social and emotional level (e.g. the relationship between two university students who come together to do homework and speak about themselves, drink coffee, etc.). The third type, close relationships, include more than interpersonal relationships with emotional attachment, need fulfillment and irreplaceability (e.g. the relationship with one’s best friend, first love, mother, etc.) (Guerrero et al., 2014). A close relationship can be responsible for happiness or sadness; moreover, it may fulfill some needs such as feeling loved, belonging to a social group (Guerrero et al., 2014).

People who are giving and receiving affection have a better psychological and physical health (Floyd, 2006) and affection can be satisfied by loving others and receiving love from others (Schutz, 1958). Relationship with a partner could be the most satisfying relationship which can give more pleasure than any another type of human relationships; for this reason, most people want and seek romantic relationships (Kimeldorf, 2008). Romantic relationships require being a couple, and they may require a marriage and intimacy of sexual relationship (Guerrero et al., 2014).

According to Guerrero and Mongeau (2008), romantic relationships can grow in three ways. First, sexual and emotional aspects grow together. Second, in the beginning, couples are like friends, and later sexual exclusivity grows. In the last way, couples are friends-with-benefits in the beginning and then start having a romantic relationship. Although a romantic relationship gives pleasure, sometimes this kind of relationships can bring pain with a discovery of infidelity (Kimeldorf, 2008). Infidelity is wounding (Guerrero et al., 2014), and it is one of the common problems and one of the most difficult subjects to study (Özgün, 2010).

2.1.1. Definitions of Infidelity

Several disciplines, including some forms of art, such as cinema, music or literature are interested in infidelity (Özgün, 2010). Infidelity is popular in the media; daytime

talk shows (Greenberg, Sherry, Busselle, Hnilo, & Smith, 1997) soap operas (Greenberg & Busselle, 1996; Greenberg & Woods, 1999) and magazines are interested in the subject of infidelity. Many researchers are interested in infidelity mostly because it damages individuals and relationships (Gordon et al., 2004).

In the literature, various terms and definitions are used to describe infidelity. Some of these terms are cheating, affair, unfaithfulness and betrayal (Wilson et al., 2011). Moreover, the terms nonmonogamy, extradyadic involvement, extramarital involvement, extramarital coitus, polyamory, extramarital sex, extramarital intercourse, extra-sex and adultery have also been used (Campbell, 2009). In the past, infidelity was accepted only to have sexual contact with another person than the partner, but today, sexual intercourse, cybersex, watching pornography, kissing, holding hands, having emotional intimacy with another person than the partner are accepted as infidelity (Hertlein, Wetchler, & Piercy, 2005). According to Lusterman (1998), infidelity is any behavior that harms the agreement between two people. According to Blow and Hartnett (2005b), the operational definition of the term infidelity changes from one study to other, and Meldrim (2005) stated that it is limited to heterosexual, extramarital intercourse although infidelity can also happen in a dating relationship. Therefore, Blow and Hartnett (2005a) defined infidelity as “A sexual and/or emotional act engaged in by one person within a committed relationship, where such an act occurs outside of the primary relationship and constitutes a breach of trust and/or violation of agreed upon norms (overt and covert) by one or both individuals in that relationship in relation to romantic, emotional or sexual exclusivity” (p. 191). However, in a relationship, the ideas of the people about the description of infidelity might be different (Hertlein et al., 2005).

Infidelity is an important theoretical subject of romantic relationships. According to the evolutionary perspective, it is important for evaluating reproductive resources (Buss, Larsen, Westen, & Semmelroth, 1992; Buss & Shackelford, 1997). According to the equity perspective, it shows inequities in a relationship (Walster, Walster, &

Perscheid, 1978). According to the investment model perspective, infidelity shows a deprivation of commitment to a relationship (Rusbult, 1980).

2.1.2. The Prevalence of Infidelity

Although the prevalence of infidelity was examined in previous studies, it is difficult to understand the exact prevalence rate of infidelity because of its definition and data collection procedure (DuPree, White, Olsen, & Lafleur, 2007). Firstly, there is not any consensus on the definition of infidelity, and different studies use different operational definitions of infidelity (Blow & Hartnett, 2005b). For example, Brand, Markey, Mills and Hodges (2007) reported infidelity rates as 31.4% for women and 20.4% for men when they used a broader definition, and they reported the rates as 19% for women and 21% for men when they used a narrow definition, including just sexual intercourse with another partner. According to Mattingly, Wilson, Clark, Bequette, and Weidler (2010), self-reported infidelity rates are high because people have different perceptions for infidelity. For an individual, an extradyadic behavior may be accepted as infidelity, but for another individual it may not.

Secondly, the prevalence of infidelity may differ according to the method of reaching the participants in a study. For instance, face-to-face interviews revealed lower infidelity rates when compared to computer-based interviews (Wishman & Snyder, 2007). Hall and Fincham (2009) claimed that actual infidelity rate is higher than what was reported. Higher rates of infidelity in dating relationships than cohabiting relationships and marriages were reported between the years 1996–2001, and the dating infidelity percentages raised between these years (Adamopoulou, 2013).

According to the studies that the researcher has reached, the prevalence of infidelity can be seen with different percentages. Although these studies are not very recent, they may give an idea about the prevalence of infidelity. In Allen and Baucom's (2006) study, which was conducted among 504 students, 69% of the students reported that they had had some kind of infidelity in the last 2 years during their

dating relationship. In another study with 287 college students, 35% of them engaged in infidelity, and 29% of them called it as sexual, 28% of them called it as emotional, and 43% called it as both sexual and emotional (Hall & Fincham, 2009). Martins, Pereira, Andrade, Dattilio, Narciso, and Canavarro (2015) conducted a study with 783 participants, all of whom had a dating relationship during the participation, and according to the results, 23.4% of men and 15.5% of women have engaged in face-to-face sexual infidelity during their current dating relationship; and for online sexual infidelity, the figures are 15.3% for men and 4.6% for women. Moreover, 62.6 % of men and 57.2% of women have engaged in face-to-face emotional infidelity; for online emotional infidelity, the percentages are 46.8% for men and 40.6% for women.

Statistical information related to infidelity is very scarce in Turkey. According to the results of 2005 Durex Global Sex Survey (Durex, 2005), which was conducted in 41 countries, Turkey had the highest proportion with 58% of participants having had a sexual relationship which was extramarital. In a research study by Turkish Statistical Institute (2017) which was about the lifestyles and values of the families, reasons for divorce were searched with the participants who had had at least one-time divorce. The results showed that 32.2 % of women and 8.7 % of men had divorced because of infidelity. Yeniçeri and Kökdemir (2006) found that 19.6% of the college students, from 404 participants, cheated on their partners. In a more recent study conducted by Toplu-Demirtas and Finchman (2017) with 420 participants, 13.2% of female college students and 15.7% of male college students reported cheating in their dating relationships. No other source related to the prevalence of infidelity in Turkey has been found.

2.1.3. Reasons for Infidelity

Infidelity can be a sign of problems in a relationship, and it can occur when the emotional potential of the relationship is limited (Brown, 2001). However, Mortan Hunt (1969) said: “I have not yet seen any evidence that the loving, satisfying, and

close marriage can be improved- or even that it can remain unthreatened by affairs” (p. 157). According to Brown (2001), the affair alone is not the most critical part; the problem is dishonesty that occurs in the relationship. Then, he explained it with six stages: generate an environment to develop an affair, betrayal, disclosure of the affair, crisis (in this period, partners may decide to solve the issues together or separately) and the last step is rebuilding; and at the end of all of this, forgiveness process can start. According to Humphrey (1987), many factors should be considered to understand why infidelity has happened; how many different partners a person has had, how long the affair lasted, and whether or not there is a strong emotional bond or sexual intercourse.

Mostly, men and women have different needs to engage in infidelity (Lusterman, 1998). Glass and Wright (1992) discovered that women are mostly involved in an affair by having sex with love; on the other hand, men had primarily sexual motives. It is not like this for all people. For some men, it can be romance and seeking excitement or an escape from daily responsibilities, and for some women, having a sex affair adds color to their days (Lusterman, 1998). However, women are still more likely to cheat when they do not have a satisfying relationship, and men are more likely to cheat to have more intercourse with another person (Whisman, Gordon, & Chatav 2007). Even if the differences of ratio between women and men for the infidelity are getting lower, still the ratios of emotional and sexual infidelity changes according to gender, and men have more sexual infidelity (Martins et al., 2015).

Mostly the straying partner chooses someone who is known to be safe for the affairs, and the betrayed partner mostly has heard about the third party from a friend from work or a close friend (Brown, 2001). Lusterman (1998) made a list of the reasons for infidelity in marriages. This list includes the following not being able to communicate about feelings and needs or solve problems with the partner, not understanding the needs of the other, not actually knowing the partner, not being able to deal with cultural differences, having unrealistic anticipations, not having the same enjoyment and thrill as before, and losing sight of the other because of the daily life

responsibilities. Moreover, he added that understanding the reasons of infidelity can help to establish the chances of the recovery of the relationship, to resolve cheater's feelings about continuing the relationship or not, and to decide the kind of treatment.

According to Brown (2001), an affair can try to give a hidden message to the betrayed partner, and these messages change according to the type of affair. Mostly the straying partners say that the reason for their infidelity is the fact that they were hurt or their relationship was meaningless for them moreover, lack of sexual or emotional receptiveness of the partner can be reasons (Brown, 2001). On the other hand, positive and negative life events can be a source of stress and anxiety, and when the couple are able to speak about their stress and anxiety, they keep the relationship more satisfying; otherwise, it is possible to seek affairs with others (Lusterman, 1998). Furthermore, depression and anxiety can lead people to try to find solutions in order to reduce these feelings at least for a period of time, and a new love can be an option at this point (Lusterman, 1998). The affair does not have the pressures of the everyday worries of a relationship, and because it is secret, it produces a shelter against the outside pressures (Brown, 2001). Poor communication with less positive and more negative interactions and lashes and not having enough emotional support can be other reasons for infidelity (Allen et al., 2005). Moreover, regardless of the gender, the positive attitudes of the straying partner toward infidelity, less relationship satisfaction, less commitment, and more alternatives are related with infidelity (Martins et al., 2015).

Many men have a tendency to see women as an object rather than a human being. Feminist movement has tried to raise awareness of men's approach to women; however, in the media, women are still shown as objects instead of human beings and some people still have this belief. When a man has this belief, it is possible to have a sexual affair without any emotional meaning (Lusterman, 1998).

In a study by Glass and Wright (1992), 56 % of the men and 33% of women who had solely sexual extramarital involvement said that they have happy marriages.

Lusterman (1998) emphasizes the fact that some people have the idea that a marriage must cover all of their needs, including attention and great sex. They believe that the role of women in a marriage is to keep their husbands satisfied fulfilled. However, this is not realistic. It is best for the couples to have a more realistic idea about their partners and accept that they are human beings with their imperfections and good qualities. In this way, they can be prepared for the ups and downs of the relationship.

According to Aaron Beck's (1988) book, which is called *Love is Never Enough*, commitment, sensitivity, generosity, consideration, loyalty, responsibility and trustworthiness are important for relationships. Cooperation, compromising and going together on the same decisions are necessary, and being resilient, accepting, forgiving and tolerating mistakes are important (Beck, 1988). When a person has an infatuation, he/she idealized the new partner; therefore, everything seems perfect. During the course of the affair, it is very difficult to accept how they get the wrong impression about the partner (Lusterman, 1998).

There are variables related to infidelity; they are culture, connection with religion services, educational levels, income levels and employment status. In terms of cultural differences, Treas and Giesen (2000) reported that African-American participants showed higher tendency for infidelity than White American participants. Furthermore, some other studies have found that African Americans have higher connection with infidelity (e.g. Amato & Rogers, 1997; Smith, 1991). However, in the study of Choi, Catania, and Dolcini (1994), no significant difference was found between African-Americans and Hispanics and they found that low-to-moderate educational level is a mediator between race and infidelity.

In terms of life time proportion of infidelity, there is no difference between African-Americans and Whites; on the other hand, there is a difference between them regarding infidelity that has happened in the last year (Wiederman, 1997). Most of the studies related with correlation between race and infidelity are limited to Caucasian samples (Blow & Hartnett, 2005a). Furthermore, a comparison of the

studies across Turkish sample and Western sample which are related with intentions to infidelity shows that Western sample has higher intentions to engage infidelity than Turkish sample (e.g., Toplu-Demirtas & Finchman, 2017; Jackman, 2015).

Less religious people are more connected with philandering (Whisman et al., 2007). Some groups of people who participate in religious services have low rates of infidelity (Amato & Rogers, 1997; Atkins et al., 2001; Forste & Tanfer, 1996; Treas & Giesen, 2000). On the other hand, Blumstein and Schwartz (1983), did not find a relation between participation in religious services and infidelity. Dating and cohabiting couples that have different religious values have more connection with infidelity (Forste & Tanfer, 1996).

Young and well-educated males are more likely to cheat on his partner (Shen, 1997). People with higher education reported more extramarital sexual infidelity (Atkins et al., 2001). In a marriage, if a woman has a higher level of education than her partner, she is more likely to cheat on her partner. In dating and cohabiting relationship, women's infidelity has a positive relationship with education level (Forste & Tanfer, 1996). Furthermore, women with higher education are three times more likely to have online sexual infidelity (Martins et al., 2015). Fisher said (as cited in Tsapelas, Fisher, & Aron, 2010) social changes, such as the rising in female economic and reproductive independence may be the reason for having less gender difference in infidelity than before. Using more sensitive scales for measuring infidelity with broader definitions is another reason for less gender difference (Tsapelas, Fisher, & Aron, 2010).

Income level and infidelity have a positive relationship (Atkins et al., 2001). Having high income gives more chance to meet a partner and engage in infidelity (Blow & Hartnett, 2005b). Moreover, the work environment gives an opportunity for infidelity for males and females (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Higher interest in sex is related to sexual infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000). The past of the individual related to infidelity is also important. According to Martins et al. (2015), a woman who cheated

on her partner is more likely to cheat in her future relationships. Moreover, the number of earlier sexual partners is also found to be related to infidelity (Treas & Giesen, 2000). A woman who had four or more sexual partners before their current relations is more likely to engage in infidelity (Forste & Tanfer, 1996). Finally, nontraditional gender-role orientation of women is positively related to sexual infidelity (Hansen, 1987).

Reasons for the infidelity and which variables are more related to being unfaithful have been mentioned above. However, offended partners' experiences after discovering the infidelity should be focused on, as well. Moreover, they are asking to themselves why their partner has cheated on them and searching the answers of many more questions. Although in the present study, emotional reactions of the offended partner have been studied, under this heading, the possible reasons for infidelity have been given. These reasons may answer the questions of an offended partner.

2.1.4. Types of Infidelity

In some studies, the types of infidelity come out as one-night stands, philandering, serial, flings, romantic love, long-term relationships, etc. (Özgün, 2010). Different types of infidelity (one-night stands, philandering and affairs) are related to different problems and need a different kind of help (Lusterman, 1998). Previously, infidelity was defined as sexual behavior with someone except one's current partner; however, in the current literature, emotional and sexual infidelity have been differentiated. The widely reported types of infidelity are sexual-only, emotional-only, and combined sexual and emotional (Thompson, 1984). An affair can be only emotional or only sexual or sexual with an emotional attachment or emotional with sexual intercourse (Lusterman, 1998). Özgün (2010) described these types; sexual-only type is any sexual contact, such as intimate touching, kissing or sexual intercourse. Emotional-only type is any emotional attachment to someone except one's current partner, such as dating, flirting or falling in love, and combined sexual and emotional type

combines both. When a partner spends time, gives attention or has a romantic relationship with someone else, this can be emotional infidelity (Buss & Shackelford, 1997).

According to Hertlein et al. (2005), there is also internet infidelity. When infidelity is online, it may include sexual infidelity, but it is mostly emotional infidelity (Cooper & Sportolari, 1997). Moreover, the reasons and effects of internet infidelity are similar with offline infidelity (Harrold, 2001). Glass and Wright (1985) find out the types of infidelity on six points (completely sexually, mostly sexually, more sexual than emotional, more emotional than sexual, mostly emotional, and completely emotional) that were obtained from a questionnaire on marital fidelity prepared by Bowers and Furstenberg (1967).

There is one more type of infidelity which is called communicative infidelity. This type of infidelity occurs to give a message to the partner. For instance, the straying partner engages in infidelity in order to make his/her partner jealous or take revenge (Tafuya & Spitzberg, 2007). Dissatisfaction with the current relationship is one of the important factors of infidelity (Sheppard, Nelson, & Andreoli-Mathie, 1995). Monotony, need for enthusiasm, need for feeling attractive, getting revenge from the partner and sexual discrepancy are other reasons for infidelity (Buunk, 1980; Fleischmann, Spitzberg, Andersen, & Roesch, 2005; Roscoe, Cavanaugh, & Kennedy, 1988; Wiggins & Lederer, 1984). After any type of infidelity, appearing of trauma is very usual for the participants (Lusterman, 1998).

2.2. Reactions to Infidelity and Relationship with Other Variables

2.2.1. Reactions to Infidelity

In general, an affair occurs suddenly, not according to a plan, and later the relationship does not seem as good as it was before (Lusterman, 1998). According to Brown (2001), when the betrayed partner discovers the affair; it is not a new notion,

it is a confirmation because the partner recognizes something is going wrong but doesn't want to acknowledge it. Lusterman (1998) indicated that when an individual discovers that his/her partner is unfaithful, that leads to feelings devastated and having many question marks in the mind, such as

“How long has this been going on? Does this mean my relationship is over? How many other people know about the affair? How could I have ever trusted him? How could she have ever done such a thing to me? How could I ever trust this person again-even if I wanted to? Is this the first time it has happened? Should I confront him about this right now or should I just ignore it? Maybe it is just an infatuation, should I set a trap? Should I talk with other people about it? My friend recently went through something like this; maybe it would be a good idea to talk to her about it.” (p. 4).

These thoughts could lead to having feelings of rage, shame, hurt, jealousy, betrayal, fear and uncertainty. Moreover, some individuals may have deep physical reactions as vomiting or diarrhea; some of them scream, break objects, attack their partner, commit suicide or homicide (Lusterman, 1998). Moreover, after finding out about the infidelity, the betrayed partner first experiences shock, then anger, and then rumination about the infidelity; and many times, the betrayed partner asks for information about the affair but does not want to believe them because this is a way to avoid hurt and fear (Brown, 2001). In addition, offended partners can feel anger toward the partner or themselves because of not catching the signs earlier or not being with their partner (Hertlein et al., 2005). As the authors mentioned above, after infidelity, the offended partner shows emotional and physical reactions.

According to the knowledge of the researcher, the cultural comparisons on reactions to infidelity is a limited study area. Geary, Rumsey, Bow-Thomas, and Hoard (1995) conducted two studies with American and Chinese samples and compared them. In the first study, participants were provided with imaginary scenarios, including sexual or emotional infidelity. Then, participants were asked to rate offended partners' feelings. It was found that USA sample is more distressed regarding sexual infidelity than Chinese sample. The second study was the replication of the first study. In the second study, the authors found that Chinese males are more intense regarding sexual infidelity than American males; and American females are more intense regarding

emotional infidelity than Chinese females. In Turkey, a study carried out by Özgün (2010), in which participants had only offended married women, found post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as reaction to infidelity. Detailed information about some studies and reactions of the offended partner after discovering infidelity were given below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1.

Sample Studies Reporting Reactions to Infidelity

| Author | Outcome | Country | Relationship type | Method of the study |
|---------------------------|---|---------|-------------------|---|
| Charny and Parnass (1995) | -a weaker self-image (personal and sexual) -abandonment (a weaker sense of belonging) -rage -positive ambiance toward spouse | Israel | marriage | -Think of an imaginary case and answer questions -Participants were therapists |
| Cano and O'Leary, (2000) | -depression -anxiety | USA | marriage | Two groups -humiliating marital events group -maritally discordant control group -survey |

Table 2.1 (cont.)

| | | | | |
|--|---|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
| Shackelford, LeBlanc, and Drass (2000) | undesirable/insecure hostile/vengeful depressed helpless/abandoned happy shocked nauseated/repulsed blameworthy content/relieved humiliated sexually aroused tired homicidal/suicidal anxious forgiving | USA | committed sexual relationship | -Think of past, future or current relationship -answer questions about 1.sexual infidelity 2.emotional infidelity |
| Gordon, Baucom, and Snyder (2004) | -depression -PTSD -concern with emotion regulation -high relationship distress - low trust -low commitment | USA | -cohabiting -marriage | -initial screening with therapist -treatment: midterm assessment -treatment completed: termination assessment -6 months later: follow-up |

Table 2.1. (cont)

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------|----------|---|
| Mapfumo (2016) | Negative emotional reactions (bad, morally wrong etc.) | Zimbab we | marriage | Mixed method -Qualitative and quantitative |
|-------------------|--|--------------|----------|---|

There are various sources displaying reactions to infidelity, but they are not empirical studies. According to Lusterman (1998), in the literature, the most common negative feelings are blame, shame and guilt after discovering betrayal. Guilt and shame are mostly related to outside awareness and mostly they are not conscious. Then they are conscious, they have the form of anxiety or regret that are related to evolutionary and cultural pressures because guilt and shame after a partner's infidelity is irrational in nature (Stosny, 2013). Furthermore, according to Stosny (2013), after infidelity, the handicaps for healing are guilt and shame after betrayal. They constitute obstacles to recovery from betrayal. Stosny (2013) added that the best way to survive guilt and shame is to change them to self-compassion by acknowledging that although they are strong, they are irrational. The offended partner can feel betrayed and lose trust (Spring, 1996; Vaughan, 2003); moreover, s/he can lose the sense of aim, specialness and identity (Spring, 1996).

According to Lusterman (1998), the most painful result of discovering infidelity is loss of trust because it makes it difficult to speak about what happened and what to do about it; furthermore, whatever the decision is (to continue the relationship or not), the most important thing is to maintain communication. After the infidelity, not only the offended partners have negative emotions, but also the effects of infidelity are mostly negative for the involved partner and the third party (Blow, 2005). The betrayer partner suffers from depression, intrusions, avoidance and traumatic symptomatology, guilt, shame, and less general well-being and self-forgiveness than faithful partners (Hall & Fincham, 2009). Infidelity can also cause health problems because of the stress and tiredness (Hertlein et al., 2005). Moreover, infidelity has negative effects on the relationship (Drigotas et al., 1999; Hall & Fincham, 2006).

Infidelity can negatively affect trust, and intimacy between couples, and it is generally hard to recuperate pain (Hertlein et al., 2005). After dating infidelity, the couple may break-up the relationship (Hall&Fincham, 2006). University students answered a questionnaire to measure their attitude and behavior toward a partner's infidelity. In this study 69.1% said that they would breakup, and 45% of them reported that they had a break-up (Knox, Zusman, Kaluzny, & Sturdivant, 2000). Couples are participating in therapy mostly because of infidelity (Bischoff, 2003). Most couples can show similar behaviors after an infidelity experience (Thompson, 1984), but some couples can decide not to break-up after the discovery of the infidelity (Subotnik & Harris, 1999; Vaughan, 2003). According to studies, healing process after infidelity with clinical applications are a growing literature area (e.g. DuPree et al., 2007; Scheinkman, 2005).

Afifi, Falato, and Weiner (2001) reported the effect of discovery method on the relationship quality, relationship dissolution and forgiveness. They listed the four discovery ways as such: unsolicited third-party discovery (told by others), red-handed discovery (accidental discovery), solicited discovery (asking questions to the partner and discovering the infidelity), and unsolicited partner discovery (the partner has disclosure). They added the most damaging discovery was the unsolicited one from third party sources, and nearly the same damage occurred from the red-handed discovery. Learning from third-party gives the highest damage because this means knowing that other people have learnt about the infidelity. The reason for this difference could be the fact that infidelity is public, and it needs a sudden account-making (Afifi et al., 2001). On the other hand, unsolicited partner discovery led the least damage and solicited discovery kept a middle place. The possible reasons why unsolicited partner discovery gives the least damage can be the fact that infidelity could be kept hidden from others (Afifi et al., 2001) and the unfaithful partner has time to find ways of fixing things and apologize (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994).

After discovering the infidelity, only very few couples improve their relationships (Charny & Parnass, 1995). The number of studies related to positive outcomes of infidelity is very limited (Blow & Hartnett, 2005b). The emotions that the offended partner experience during the process of discovery and recovery can be both hurtful, but these emotions could be used to grow by finding a useful meaning of them (Lusterman, 1998). Beck (1988) indicated that the emotions take shape from the thoughts; not from the facts. Lusterman (1998) remarked that when a person thinks his/her life is a disaster, the brain tells the body to be in a disaster mode. He added that it is not good to hang out or hold in strong emotions like anger. The best thing to do is to turn these kinds of feelings into productive feelings. This distinction is critical to turn an emotion or thought into a useful form and use reporting instead of emoting (Emoting means showing crude emotion, and reporting means describing one's feelings in a calm and clear way) (Lusterman, 1998).

Lusterman (1998) added that reporting has the following benefits: helping the individual think more clearly and be calm, and feeling that the other person is hearing you and taking you seriously, which opens the doors to be empathic to each other. When an individual blames himself/herself or the partner, this feeling can cause shame; and after feeling blame, instead of becoming defensive, it should be better to accept responsibility as this is a more productive way (Lusterman, 1998). After infidelity, some of the couples meet with some positive outcomes, such as having a higher level of consciousness, learning to act more responsibly, and being more sensitive about the thoughts and feelings with the partner (Brown, 1999).

2.2.2. The Role of Gender in Infidelity and Reactions to Infidelity

Gender plays a significant role in infidelity (Atkins et al., 2001). Barta and Kiene (2005) compared the rates of infidelity without considering its type (emotional or sexual) and found that males (33%) and females (31%) had close rates of infidelity. According to the results of their study, females engaged in more emotional infidelity than males and males engaged in more sexual infidelity than females. Mostly the

reason for men's infidelity is sexual dissatisfaction, and the reason for women's infidelity is relationship dissatisfaction (Allen et al., 2008; Whisman & Snyder, 2007; Atkins et al., 2005). Barta and Kiene (2005) stated that motivations for infidelity differed between sexual and emotional infidelity. Dissatisfaction, neglect and anger are emotional motivations; however, wanting diversity of sex partners, more frequent sex, and wanting a partner who has different sexual interests are the sexual motivations of infidelity.

Some of the other studies on dating infidelity with college students did not find a gender difference (i.e., Feldman & Cauffman, 1999; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999; Maddox Shaw, Rhoades, Allen, Stanley, & Markman, 2013; Negash, Veldorale-Brogan, Kimber, & Fincham, 2016). On the other hand, a study by Fernandez (2012) showed that men engage in infidelity more than women, and Shimberg, Josephs and Grace (2015) found that women engage in infidelity more than men. Some studies have found a gender difference while some others have not. Studies with samples that include offended partners mostly did not find gender difference. On the other hand, studies with mixed samples (offended and undeceived) mostly find gender difference. Therefore, varied samples may be the reason for different results in studies. Furthermore, the difference of the rates between men and women may be lower during emerging adulthood (Atkins et al., 2001). According to a study, male Turkish college students engage in dating infidelity behaviors more than females, but this difference was not significant (Toplu-Demirtaş & Tezer, 2013).

Besides, women and men show different reactions to infidelity (Shackelford et al., 2000; DeSteno & Salovey, 1996; Hupka & Bank, 1996). Males and females react differently to emotional and sexual infidelity (Wilson, et al., 2011); men get more upset than women as a reaction to sexual infidelity; however, women get more upset as a reaction to emotional infidelity (Shackelford et al., 2000; Groothof et al., 2009). Emotional infidelity is more difficult to handle for women, and they are more likely to end the relationship; however, men find sexual infidelity more difficult to handle and more likely to end the relationship (Goldenberg et al., 2003; Shackelford et al.,

2002; Fernandez, Sierra, Zubeidat, & Vera-Villaruel, 2006). Furthermore, some studies examined gender differences in negative feelings after betrayal, and some of these studies focused on only one gender's negative feelings. Feelings of a man after discovering the infidelity of his partner were studied by Gouzos (2017), and the results show that the most common feelings are anger, hurt and lastly hate. Less than these feelings but again important ones were jealousy, shame and embarrassment, disbelief or shock and inadequacy.

In the study of Foster (2013) with women from Jamaica, the emotional reactions of women to their partner's sexual infidelity was found heartbreak, sadness, and hurt more than feelings of anger and rage. Shackelford et al. (2000) conducted a study related to gender difference regarding the emotional reactions to infidelity. In their study, they tested 103 emotions after infidelity of the partner which are collected in 15 components. According to the results, content/relieved (such as content, satisfied...), homicidal/suicidal (homicidal, suicidal and violent), happy (such as pleased, delighted, glad etc.), and sexually aroused (specifically, aroused and sexually aroused) feelings were higher in men than women after a partner's infidelity; nauseated/repulsed (such as sickened, numb etc.), depressed (sad, hurt etc.), undesirable/insecure (physically unattractive, insecure, unwanted etc.), helpless/abandoned (distressed, powerless etc.), and anxious (worried and tense) feelings are higher in women than men after a partner's infidelity.

Moreover, in the same study, they compared the emotions according to the type of the infidelity. Hostile/vengeful (enraged, angry etc.), shocked (surprised, astounded etc.), nauseated/repulsed (sickened, numb etc.), humiliated (embarrassed, ashamed etc.), sexually aroused (specifically, aroused and sexually aroused), and homicidal/suicidal (homicidal, suicidal and violent), feelings are higher in sexual infidelity than emotional infidelity and undesirable/insecure (physically unattractive, insecure, unwanted etc.), depressed (such as sad, hurt etc.), helpless/abandoned (distressed, powerless etc.), blameworthy (guilty, responsible etc.), tired (sleepy,

bored etc.), and forgiving (forgiving, understanding and unforgiving) feelings are higher in emotional infidelity than sexual infidelity.

According to the same study, in both types of infidelity men have higher scores than women in homicidal/suicidal feelings, and women have higher scores than men in helpless/abandoned and shocked feelings. Homicidal/suicidal, helpless/abandoned and shocked are greater in emotional infidelity than sexual infidelity. Moreover, in the same study, feelings of jealousy, anger and hurt were compared, and the results showed that in sexual infidelity women feel more anger and pain but there was and no difference in jealousy. In emotional infidelity, women showed higher anger, hurt, and jealousy than men.

Gender difference in reactions to infidelity was explained by evolutionary theory and sociocultural theory of jealousy (Wilson, et al., 2011). According to evolutionary theory, coping with sexual infidelity is more difficult for a male because it is perceived as not being able to transfer his genes to the next generations. Moreover, emotional infidelity is more difficult to handle for a female because she may lose long-term commitment and lose the resources of male to grow up a child. On the other hand, based on the sociocultural theory, men believe that women do not have sex without love and women believe that men can have sex without love (Harris & Christenfeld, 1996). By considering these, an offended male partner thinks that when his partner cheats on him sexually, it also means emotional infidelity. When a man cheats on his partner emotionally, a female partner can think that also sexual infidelity has happened (Wilson, et al., 2011).

In short, the literature clearly showed that men and women's reactions to the infidelity change; however, the nature of this gender difference is unclear. Although the previous studies mostly searched the reactions to infidelity across gender, it is suspected that some variables may have relationships with reactions to infidelity and maybe these relationships can explain the role of gender.

The following subjects have been studied before: relationship with jealousy (Miller, & Maner, 2009), level of relationship power (Berman & Frazier, 2005), gender of the interloper (Wiederman, & LaMar, 1998), self-esteem and mortality salience (Goldenberg et al., 2003), sexual orientation, infidelity expectations, and love (Leeker, & Carlozzi, 2014), mating effort (Jones, Figueredo, Dickey, & Jacobs, 2007), five factor model of personality (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to experience) (Wade, & Walsh, 2008), forgiveness (Paleari, Regalia, & Fincham, 2005), cognitive appraisal (Wang et al., 2012) and reactions after discovering infidelity. Some of these variables were found related to reactions after infidelity, but some others were not. Moreover, some of them studied to explain gender difference between some variables, such as self-esteem (e.g. Goldenberg et al., 2003), forgiveness (e.g. Shackelford et al., 2010) and reactions to infidelity.

In the current research study, self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisals were studied together on a model and it was expected that they would explain why some people show more negative emotions than the others after an infidelity. Furthermore, these variables show a difference across gender and this could help explain gender difference in emotional reactions to infidelity.

One of these variables can be self-compassion. As Stoney (2013) suggested, self-compassion is important to deal with guilt and shame after the discovery of infidelity and it is useful for healing. The other variable is forgiveness because as it is shown in the studies, forgiveness is important for recovery from infidelity (e.g., Paleari et al., 2005). Moreover, after a betrayal, ruminating about it increases the negative emotions related to the event, which can hinder forgiveness (Edmondson, 2004). Self-compassion is important in dealing with the outcomes of rumination (e.g. Krieger, Altenstein, Baettig, Doerig, & Holtfort, 2013). Therefore, rumination could play an important role in the present model. Moreover, cognitive appraisal theory is one of the useful theories to explain the reactions to infidelity (Wang et al., 2012). Furthermore, it is known that women have lower self-compassion (Neff, 2003a),

higher forgiveness (Miller et al., 2008), higher negative cognitive appraisal (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004) than men when they encounter various life events. Therefore, in the present study, self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal were examined across gender in reactions to infidelity as well.

2.2.3. Self-compassion and Reactions to Infidelity

Neff (2003a) stated that self-compassion is a new notion in Western culture but, it has existed in Eastern philosophy for a long time. Neff (2003a) defines self-compassion as acceptance, love and kindness to oneself. Self-compassion is submitted as a way of approaching to the self with three key factors: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (Neff, 2003a). Self-kindness involves being gentle to oneself after experiencing a painful event and understanding oneself when feeling inadequate or feeling pain or when one fails instead of avoiding or self-criticism. Common humanity refers to the notion that an event is not only experienced by an individual; rather, it is a part of the larger human experience. Mindfulness refers having a balanced approach to one's thoughts and feelings, neither suppression nor exaggeration (Neff, 2003a). People who have these three features are self-compassionate, and those people accept their weaknesses and try to change them instead of suppressing them. Therefore, self-compassion is a good predictor of healthy psychological functioning as it has positive relations with wanted outcomes (Petersen, 2014).

Self-compassion and compassion to significant others must be in a balance. They complete each other, and when an individual has compassion to loved ones but not have enough self-compassion, it may lead to psychological exhaustion (Stosny, 2013). Self-compassion is negatively related to anxiety, depressive symptoms, experiential avoidance, and rumination (Bayramoğlu, 2011; Krieger et al., 2013; Raes, 2010). Moreover, the outcomes of self-compassion are emotional resilience, psychological resilience, vitality, well-being, positive psychological functioning and interpersonal conflict resolutions (Busch, 2014; Neely, Schallert, Mohammed, Roberts, & Chen, 2009; Neff, Hsieh, & Dejjitterat, 2005; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick.

2007; Neff & Vonk, 2009; Neff, 2011; Wei, Liao, Ku, & Shaffer, 2011; Yarnell & Neff, 2013), which are signs of good psychological health. The painful and distressful feelings are approached with kindness and common humanity with self-compassion (Neff, 2003a). When an individual has a fear of self-knowledge, this can cause psychological problems (Maslow, 1968).

According to a study by Pauley and McPherson (2010), self-compassion was found useful to deal with depression and anxiety. It is obvious that self-compassion with three factors has a positive relationship with better physical and psychological well-being (Alink, Cicchetti, Kim, & Rogosh, 2011; Allen, Goldwasser & Leary, 2012; Bluth & Blanton, 2014; Danese, Pariante, Caspi, Taylor, & Poulton, 2007; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Hsieh, 2008; Neff, 2003a, 2009; Neff & McGeehee, 2010; Neff, Pisitsungkagarn, & Woo Kyeong, 2013), psychological health (Neff, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), emotional intelligence (Heffernan, Quinn Griffin, McNulty, & Fitzpatrick, 2010), life satisfaction (Neff, 2003b) and positive affect, agreeableness, happiness, optimism and conscientiousness (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). Moreover, self-compassion is related to less anxiety and high well-being (Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007) and less depression (Neff, 2003b; MacBeth & Gumley, 2012). Additionally, self-compassion is negatively related to stress (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012), negative affect (Neff et al., 2007), rumination (Neff, 2003b), neuroticism (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff et al., 2007), and aggression (Barry, Loflin, & Doucette, 2015). Baker and McNulty (2011) claimed that there are contrasting effects of self-compassion; it may help people to be far from negative feelings; on the other hand, negative emotions can motivate people.

Self-compassion is related to compassion for humanity, empathetic concern, perspective taking, personal distress, altruism, and forgiveness of others (Neff & Pommier, 2013). When people make mistakes and have inadequacies, they can respond to them with self-criticism or with self-compassion (Neff & Lamb, 2009). Self-compassion helps people to change negative self-related emotions to positive emotions; therefore, they do not need to hide their weaknesses (Neff, 2003b). When

an individual experiences a failure and approach it with compassion, he/ she does not suppress negative feelings; instead, he/she accepts these feelings, and accepting the imperfect human nature lets him/her replace negative feelings like shame to compassion (Neff et al., 2005). People with high self-compassion can observe their reactions to events more successfully than others, and because they accept their responsibility for negative events and evaluate their actual performances, they have lower level negative emotions. Therefore, they ruminate less (Leary, Tate, Adams, Allen, & Hancock, 2007). In addition, Neff (2011) pointed out that self-compassion lowers distress and rumination. That is, a higher level of self-compassion means less rumination (Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007).

In a study by Leary et al., (2007), the participants were asked to imagine a stressful social event. The results revealed that participants with less self-compassion reported more negative self-feelings than the participants with more self-compassion. Self-compassionate people accept that everyone can make mistakes, and they can be more understanding toward themselves when they make a mistake. They do not ruminate about these mistakes. In contrast, people who are not self-compassionate believe that they are the only one who makes mistakes. They criticize themselves and ruminate about these mistakes (Neff, 2003). In brief, self-compassion shows how individuals treat themselves following a mistake (Neff, 2003). Moreover, self-compassion can help people to be more satisfied with their relationships; however, it may lower the motivation to correct the problems in relationships (Baker & McNulty, 2011). Therefore, this contrast can affect close relationships (Baker & McNulty, 2011).

Steven Stosny's (2013) book called *Living and Loving after Betrayal: How to Heal from Emotional Abuse, Deceit, Infidelity and Chronic Resentment* describes how to handle the situation after discovering infidelity. Stosny implies that the best way to deal with infidelity is self-compassion. Self-compassion is important for healing the identity and keeping away from vulnerability. He adds that self-compassion is a need to feel safe because it helps to recognize our humanity, resilience and strengths and focusing on growing, healing and improving. Self-compassionate people do not

ruminate about their negative emotions and are able to stay because calm when they encounter a difficult life event (Leary et al., 2007).

Literature review reveals very limited studies on the relationship between self-compassion and infidelity or reactions to infidelity. One of these studies examined the effectiveness of self-compassion therapy on emotion regulation of damaged women from marital infidelity with a quasi-experimental method. This study reported that self-compassion therapy helps increase healthier emotion regulation (Dhastbozorgi, 2018). Another study by Johns, Allen, and Gordon (2015) investigated the relationship between mindfulness and forgiveness of infidelity with 94 participants who have a history of partner affair. They have found that mindfulness and forgiveness are positively related. It should be noted that although they did not study self-compassion in their research, mindfulness is one of the aspects of self-compassion. In short, these research studies showed that self-compassionate people ruminate less and show higher emotional resilience, which may help them to forgive infidelity more easily than others.

Some other variables were reported to be related to both self-compassion and emotional reactions to infidelity, as well. For example, shame and guilty are two common negative feelings that people experience after discovering betrayal (Lusterman, 1998). Shame and guilt can cause anxiety, depression and anger problems; therefore, in order to solve this problem, the best step to take is to replace guilt and shame with self-compassion (Stosny, 2013). Moreover, self-compassion is related with one's reactions after bad events. After a negative event, self-compassionate people treat themselves more kindly because they accept their imperfect humanity (Leary et al., 2007). That is mostly related to common humanity, which is an aspect of self-compassion; and with the common humanity, people think the events they have experienced are not worse than what other people have experienced (Leary et al., 2007). Self-compassion helps a person to be kind to himself/herself and to understand his/her own emotions after some events which happen as a result of his/her fault (Leary et al., 2007). Sometimes people accuse

themselves for their partners' infidelity (Lusterman, 1998). Therefore, in the present study, self-compassion was chosen to measure if it has a relationship with emotional reactions to infidelity.

Self-compassion is related to positive behaviors in relationships (Neff & Beretvas, 2013). Low self-compassionate people blame others in the relationship because it is difficult for them to accept the truths about themselves (Neff & Tirsch, 2013). In romantic relationships, couples with high self-compassion have higher relational well-being than other couples (Neff & Beretvas, 2013). After a romantic relationship breakup, self-compassionate people, show less emotional distress (Sbarra, Smith, & Mehl, 2012) and better romantic outlook than others (Zhang & Chen, 2017). Self-compassionate people ruminate (Neff, 2003a) and brood less often (Raes, 2010), which is the key for better emotion regulation (Zhang & Chen, 2017). Moreover, brooding has a mediation role between self-compassion and depression, and self-compassion and anxiety (Raes, 2010). Poor emotional adjustment is one of the obstacles that does not let people recover from difficult events in life (Updegraff & Taylor, 2000). Therefore, self-compassion may have a relationship with negative emotional reactions of an offended partner after experiencing the partner's infidelity.

An offended partner possibly feels negative emotions, and these negative emotions may lead to depression or symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (Gordon et al., 2005; Lusterman, 1998; Meldrim, 2005). Also, these negative feelings and situations are difficult for individuals to cope with, and it is important to protect these people so that they are not affected negatively. In addition, self-compassion is a strong personal trait to help people to improve psychological health (Neff, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007) and to protect them from depression and anxiety (Pauley & McPherson, 2010).

If people do not have high self-compassion, it can be raised. Neff and Germer (2013) conducted a study which included an 8-week work shop. At the end of the period, the self-compassion level of the intervention group raised. That shows self-

compassion can be built later. Although self-compassionate people can feel negative emotions, they can accept and cope with them more effectively than others (Neff, 2003). People with self-compassion deal with life challenges, such as divorce, breakup or losing loved ones more easily (Super, 2015). According to Leary et al., (2007), while imagining a stressful event, self-compassionate people have less negative feelings for themselves than others. Therefore, it was expected that self-compassion has a relationship with negative emotions after experiencing infidelity. Self-compassion is related to forgiving others (Neff & Pommier, 2013), which is important after the process of discovering infidelity.

2.2.4. Forgiveness and Reactions to Infidelity

Forgiveness has been reported to be significant in healing relationships among people in religious communities (Hargrave, 1994). DiBlasio and Proctor (1993) stated that the healing effect of forgiveness was discovered by clinicians and that they have been using forgiveness to help families solve relationship problems. According to Hargrave (1994), forgiveness is important in restoring family relationships. Forgiveness means releasing the anger of an offender (Hargrave, 1994), repairing relationships, curing oneself emotionally (DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993), and releasing the person who has hurt you, without taking revenge (Fitzgibbons, 1986; Smedes, 1984). Moreover, Brown (1999) described forgiveness as accepting faults, sorrow, worry, damages, repentance and pleasures. On the other hand, forgiveness is not forgetting what has happened but rather letting go of negative emotions, such as anger and/or resentment (Brown, 1999; Lusteran, 1998).

As self-compassion is positively related to positive outcomes (Neff & McGeehee, 2010), forgiveness is a helpful intervention for solving the problems caused by anger and depression (Fitzgibbons, 1986), family origin (Hope, 1987), sexual abuse (Madanes, 1991; Schneider, 1989), personality disorders (Fisher, 1985; Wolberg, 1973), guilt (Joy, 1985), drug abuse (Flanigan, 1987), and broken marital relationships (Worthington & DiBlasio, 1990). Forgiveness has a positive

relationship with psychological healing (Hargrave, 1994), and well-being (Worthington, 2003). It has a negative relationship with depression and anxiety (Hargrave, 1994), and the trauma symptoms of the offended partner (Gordon et al., 2005). Furthermore, Gordon et al. (2005) designed a three-stage treatment program which includes cognitive-behavioral, insight-oriented strategies and literature of traumatic response and forgiveness to recover from cognitive, behavioral, and emotional consequences of infidelity. They added that couples survive from the traumatic effects with forgiveness.

According to Battleson (1997), if couples stay together after infidelity, one of the most important factors that plays a role in this decision is forgiveness. He conducted a qualitative study with 8 couples among whom at least one of the partners had cheated, in order to discover why married couples stay together after discovery of infidelity and what role forgiveness plays in couples' decision to stay together. He found that firstly there are reasons which lead them to stay together. These reasons may be financial, legal or religious, or they may not want to divorce for family reasons; however, it was difficult for them to stay together without considering forgiveness. Although forgiveness is not enough to keep them together, it was one of these factors that keep them together, and then it makes the process easier. Battleson (1997) reported some strategies that make forgiveness easier; action strategies (whatever done individually), interaction strategies (behavioral action which is done together or for the partner), acceptance strategies (accepting the partner situation with insight and understanding), repentance strategies (by verbalization or actions that show regret or penitence) or strategies that are private for individuals.

According to Brown (1999), when the couple work on the problem and choose to continue to be together, it is easier to forgive, and individuals do not need to hurry to feel the forgiveness. They need time for it because it is a process. When the offended partner is ready to change the underlying emotions, the couple can start the rebuilding, and if everything goes well, the forgiveness stage starts; on the other hand, forgiveness can start later even if things do not go well for the couple (Brown,

2001). When the couple recognizes a slow progress in healing, they can start the forgiveness process (Lusterman, 1998). Brown (1999) explained the process as below:

Because of the ties of the couple, the pain that occurred from the problems is intense. To recognize the pain of each other is a big step for forgiveness. One of the situations that shows individuals that they are ready to forgive is the ability to speak about infidelity without reacting strongly or feeling bored and understand the affair is a thing of the past and does not control the present. A big step to prepare for forgiveness is reexamining the experiences and sharing thoughts about what the individual can and cannot commit. After breaking up, most individuals need at least two years to be ready to forgive because that period is for grieving and trying to form a new life. When the couple do not have communication after the discovery of infidelity, there is no mutual forgiveness; therefore, in that condition, letting go of hurt and angry feelings is the best option (Lusterman, 1998). Forgiveness is very important for recovery from infidelity (e.g., Gordon & Baucom, 2003; Paleari et al., 2005). Also, as, Lusterman (1998) indicated, forgiving oneself is as important as forgiving the partner.

In a dating relationship, sexual infidelity is the least forgivable hurtful event (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006). There are different ways of discovering infidelity: detection from a third party, the partner's confession of the infidelity after being asked, and the partner's admitting the infidelity without being asked (Afifi et al., 2001). Afifi et al. (2001) studied the effect of the discovery method on forgiveness with 115 participants who had had experienced infidelity (who had been cheated on by their partners or who had cheated on their partners) in their relationships. When they are witness the infidelity or learn about it from the third party, it is most difficult to forgive. They suggested two possible reasons for this: infidelity is public and opportunity of sudden account-making of unfaithful partner. The easiest way of forgiving is when the partner admits without being asked (Guerrero et al., 2014) because in that way the unfaithful partner can be ready to use face repair strategies

or apologize to minimize the face threat (Baumeister et al., 1994). In this way, after the disclosure, the unfaithful partner has the opportunity to do these immediately, and the infidelity can be hidden from the public (Afifi et al., 2001). Forgiveness is the last step of dealing with the affair, and it can occur after confronting and solving the subjects that they avoid (Brown, 2001). Forgiveness is not forgetting the issue that had happened; it is putting the affair in the appropriate place instead of the center at an appropriate time (Brown, 2001).

According to Smedes's book *The Art of Forgiving* (1996), forgiving has three stages; rediscovery of personality of the person who hurt the victim, giving up the right to be equal, and reviewing the feelings toward that person. All of stages are in the rebuilding period, and after completing the rebuilding phase, couples are ready to forgive (Brown, 2001). In other words, after rebuilding period, they can be more honest, open to communication and more likely to gain the trust of each other, and trust between them is generally stronger than before (Brown, 2001).

All of these explanations above show that forgiveness is important for the recovery stage after discovering infidelity. Forgiving the other helps the offended partner to have fewer negative emotions (Brown, 1999; Lusterman, 1998) and helps him/her in dealing with depression and anxiety (Hargrave, 1994). Additionally, it is related to psychological healing (Hargrave, 1994) which will be helpful after the discovery of betrayal, just like self-compassion. The offended partner can experience trauma symptoms, and forgiveness may help in dealing with them (Gordon et al., 2005).

In the present study, it is expected that forgiveness will be negatively related to negative emotional reactions to infidelity. Forgiveness is negatively related to rumination (McCullough, Bono, & Root, 2007), which makes the recovery process more difficult after the discovery of the betrayal.

2.2.5. Rumination and Reactions to Infidelity

Rumination is a cycle of thinking pattern focusing on symptoms of distress passively and repetitively and not taking action to solve or correct the problems (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998). Rumination elevates the negative mood by activating negative memories and causing one to lose the motivation to solve problems (Ward et al., 2003). Additionally, ruminative people use more maladaptive coping strategies to deal with psychological symptoms (Lyubomirsky & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1995), and they are pessimistic in realizing their plans (Ward et al., 2003), which makes them more upset and anxious (Wood, Saltzberg, Neale, Stone, & Rachmiel, 1990). Rumination does not let people use problem solving skills and solution-focused behaviors (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1987). Research shows that rumination is related to posttraumatic stress disorder (Moğulkoç, 2014; Roley et al., 2015), symptoms of depression (Betman, 2012; Erdur-Baker, Özgülük, Turan, & Danişık, 2009; Iqbal, & Dar, 2015; Oliver, Smith, & Leigh, 2015; Roley et al., 2015), anxiety (Iqbal & Dar, 2015), and impaired emotion regulation (Jostmann, Karremans, & Finkenauer, 2011). Furthermore, rumination is negatively related to forgiveness (Berry et al., 2005; Berry et al., 2001).

Edmondson (2004) suggested that rumination is connected with depression; on the other hand, forgiveness is good for psychological and physical health. After a betrayal or an event that hurt the person, ruminating about it raises the negative emotions related to the event, which can foil forgiveness; therefore, rumination could be a moderator between forgiveness and health (Edmondson, 2004). According to him, forgiveness may repair a broken relationship in addition to diminishing negative feelings. Rumination is related to anger, and more rumination raises more anger (Rusting & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998); therefore, if a ruminative individual meets with infidelity, it is more difficult to forgive. Vengefulness is positively correlated with rumination, and individuals with higher vengefulness have higher negative feelings, higher rumination, lower forgiveness and lower satisfaction with life than individuals with lower vengefulness (McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick, & Johnson, 2001).

According to the results of Edmondson's (2004) study, there was not a relationship between a forgiving personality and ruminative tendencies because a relationship between only "state forgiveness" and "trait rumination" was found; on the other hand, there was no relationship between "trait forgiveness" and "trait rumination". In other words, when an individual is not likely to ruminate, that may allow him/her to forgive for a specific condition.

The relationship between self-compassion and rumination has been studied in many studies (e.g. Krieger et al., 2013; Raes, 2010; Skoda, 2011). These studies have found that self-compassion is important in dealing with the outcomes of rumination. Some researchers have also studied the impact of rumination in romantic relationships. For example, Senkans, McEwan, Skues and Ogloff (2016) studied with 525 participants, and the results show that rumination raises the dating violence, relational problems and stalking previous partners. In addition, ruminative people have less satisfaction in their romantic relationships (Elphinston, Feeney, Noller, Connor, & Fitzgerald, 2013), and ruminative people have a higher level of negative emotions towards their partners (Jostman et al., 2011). Rumination is related to depressive and psychological symptoms and causes difficulty in problem solving (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991, 1995, 2001; Oliver, Smith, & Leigh, 2015; Raedt, Hertel, & Watkins, 2015).

As previous research showed, self-compassion is positively related to healthy outcomes (Germer, 2009; Neff, 2003a; Neff, 2003b; Super, 2015; Van Dam, Shapperd, Forsyt, & Earleywine, 2010). Forgiveness is also positively related to healthy outcomes (Hargrave, 1994; Worthington, 2003). However, rumination is connected with negative outcomes (Erdur- Baker et al., 2009; Roley et al., 2015; Iqbal & Dar, 2015). Therefore, in the present study, rumination is expected to be positively correlated with negative emotional reactions.

2.2.6. Cognitive Appraisal and Reactions to Infidelity

According to Wang et al. (2012), the reactions to romantic infidelity differ from person to person. Some people are constructive, and they try to solve the problems in their relationship. Some people are passive, and they try to deny or avoid the situation, while others try to take revenge or behave aggressively. Cognitive appraisal theory is one of the useful theories to explain the reactions to infidelity. This theory is derived from the studies on stress coping strategies (Wang et al., 2012). People's reactions may change depending on how an individual evaluates a stressful situation (Gomes, Faria, & Gonçalves, 2013). Lazarus (1991) classified the cognitive appraisals as primary (the significance of the situation for the individual) and secondary appraisals (the ability to handle the stressor), which are significant to recognize the actions and emotions of an individual during a stressful situation. The stressful situation can be perceived as a threat or challenge; threat appraisal is a reason for negative emotions as anxiety or fear whereas challenge appraisal is the reason for positive emotions as excitement, eagerness, and confidence (Folkman, 2008).

Cognitive appraisal models are important for stress coping literature to explore the stressor of human well-being and the selection of different coping strategies. The number of studies related to cognitive appraisal theory and reactions to infidelity is limited. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), the occurred event could be evaluated as stressful or relevant to the well-being of the person. The primary and secondary appraisals were differentiated, and they were described in the study of Lazarus and Folkman (1984). In the primary appraisal, the individual decides if an event is threatening or not. In the primary appraisal, it can be decided whether the event is irrelevant, benign-positive or stressful. When an interaction occurs with the environment, and there are no implications for the individual, it refers to being irrelevant. When an interaction has pleasurable emotions instead of negative ones, it shows benign positive. The third one is classified as stressful. It is also called stress appraisal, and it has three parts: harm/loss, threat, and challenge. In the first part of

the stress, which is called harm/loss, the individual has experienced loss. In the second part, which is called threat, individuals have estimated threat, but the threat has not happened, yet. The third part is called challenge, which is related to growth or gain. These are related to primary appraisal.

Secondary appraisal is estimating the coping resources and alternatives or estimating how to get over the stressor. Secondary appraisal is the next step of primary appraisal, and there is no hierarchy between the importance of the two appraisals (Meldrim, 2005). Stress can occur when an individual cannot handle a threat due to insufficient personal resources Wang et al. (2012) examined adult attachment, cognitive appraisal, and reactions to romantic infidelity, and they used two dimensions of cognitive appraisal, which are centrality and threat. These two dimensions of cognitive appraisal theory are connected with the stressful event and they are empirically described (Peacock & Wong, 1990).

The centrality dimension of stress appraisals mentions the detected significance of an event to one's well-being, while threat dimension means the detected harm or loss after an event (Wang et al., 2012). Reactions to romantic infidelity are related to the cognitive process of evaluating the importance or level of the threat. When the occurred infidelity is evaluated as a severe threat, people experience high emotional distress. On the other hand, when it is evaluated as a significant event for their life and well-being, they will become more active for solving the situation even if they feel negative emotions (Wang et al., 2012). After discovering the infidelity, people are likely to report serious negative emotional reactions, such as grief, depression, anxiety, hypervigilance, obsessive rumination and attachment trauma (Glass, 2000; Glass & Wright, 1997; Gordon et al., 2004; Lusterman, 1995).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, secondary appraisals (self-control, other-control, uncontrollability) and emotional reactions to infidelity have not been studied so far. However, there are studies which show the relationship between secondary appraisals and positive and negative emotions after stressful life events like work

stress (e.g. Durak, 2007). The perception of other control is not related to negative emotions or positive emotions, and the self-control perception is positively related to positive emotions and not related to negative emotions (Durak, 2007). Besides, Negative Affect is related to uncontrollability (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Dopke & Milner, 2000).

As summarized above, the cognitive appraisal is expected to be related to emotional reactions to infidelity. When people recognize infidelity as a threat, this raises negative emotions. To the best of the author's knowledge, there are no studies related to secondary appraisal (self-control, other-control, uncontrollability) and reactions to infidelity; however, they are expected to be related in the present study.

2.2.7. Relationship between Gender and the Variables of the Study

The variables of the present study, namely self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal have a relationship with gender. Gender is related to self-compassion: females are less self-compassionate than men (Neff 2003b, Neff et al., 2005, Neff & Vonk, 2009; Yarnell et al., 2015). This difference could be because women are accepted in the society as self-sacrificing beings (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Ruble & Martin, 1998). Women use more negative self-talk, and they are more critical to themselves than men (Leadbeater, Kuperminc, Blatt, & Hertzog, 1999). Women with high self-compassion are more satisfied with their relationships and try harder to correct their mistakes. The majority of related studies haven't reported a gender difference in forgiveness (Berry, et al., 2001; Macaskil et al., 2002; Toussaint, & Webb, 2005). There are only a few studies that have reported gender difference in this variable. Among them, Eaton, Struthers, and Santelli (2006) suggested that women have a lower tendency to forgive than males, and according to Denton and Martin (1998), males benefit more from forgiving than females. On the other hand, females tend to be more forgiving than males, albeit with a little difference (Miller et al., 2008).

Females have higher levels of anxiety, worry, rumination and depressive symptoms than males (Broeren, Muris, Bouwmeester, Van Der Heijden, & Abee, 2010; Butler, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1994; Erdur-Baker et al., 2009; Hankin, & Abramson, 2001; Ziegert, & Kistner, 2002). This could be related to public pressure on women to hide negative feelings, which causes women to have internal talking and rumination (Fernando, 2006). Some other research studies also show women have a higher level of rumination than men (Erdur-Baker et al., 2009; Fernando, 2006; Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991, 1994, 2001). Females have a higher tendency to make a negative cognitive appraisal than males (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004). They are reported to have a higher threat (Anshel et al., 2001), and challenge appraisal than males (Durak, 2007). In the present study, it is hypothesized that participants, especially females who have experienced partners' infidelity will react negatively if they appraise the situation as harmful and threatening.

2.3. Summary of the Literature

As the studies summarized above indicate, infidelity can affect many kinds of relationships, such as dating relationships, cohabiting relationships and marriages. The percentages in the studies in this subject show that cheating is not a rare event, and it can be more than what is observed (Hall & Fincham, 2009). The effects of infidelity are mostly negative for the offended partner, involved partner and the third party (Blow, 2005). The betrayed partner experiences shock, anger and rumination about the infidelity (Brown, 2001), has a variety of negative emotional reactions (Mapfumo, 2016), shows depression and anxiety (Cano & O'Leay, 2000), feels rage, shame, guilt, hurt, jealousy, betrayal, fear and uncertainty; in addition, he/she has physical reactions, such as vomiting and diarrhea; some of them scream, break objects, attack the partner, or commit suicide or homicide (Lusterman, 1998). In order to help the victims, researchers need to examine which personal traits are important for victims to cope with the negative emotions after discovering infidelity of the partner.

Some researchers find gender difference in reactions to infidelity. For women, emotional infidelity is more difficult to handle, and they are more likely to end the relationship; however, for men, sexual infidelity is more difficult to handle and more likely to end a relationship (Fernandez et al., 2006). Gender difference in reactions to infidelity was explained by evolutionary theory and sociocultural theory of jealousy (Wilson, et al., 2011). These theories try to explain gender difference by considering if the infidelity is sexual or emotional. The nature of gender difference and which variables have a relationship with this difference are unclear. Although these theories try to explain the gender difference in reactions to emotional and sexual infidelity, it is still unknown which variables lead to different reactions after discovering of infidelity. It is suspected that some variables may have relationships with reactions to infidelity, and these relationships may explain the role of gender. People show different reactions after discovering infidelity. Some of them show more negative emotions, while some others do not. The reasons why people show different reactions could be explained by a study that includes self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal all together. Moreover, a model with these variables may explain the gender difference in reactions to infidelity.

In the present study, for the first time, self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisals were studied together to understand the different emotional reactions to infidelity. The model proposes that when offended partners are more self-compassionate, forgive the unfaithful partner and perceive the situation as controllable by themselves, they experience lower level of negative emotions. On the other hand, when they ruminate more, perceive the situation as a threat and perceive the situation as something that cannot be controlled by anyone, they experience a higher level negative emotions. Moreover, the mediator roles of these variables are expected to be related with negative reactions after infidelity. Although females are better forgivers than males, by considering all the model across gender, they are less self-compassionate, more ruminative, and they are more likely to evaluate a situation as a threat when compared to males. This could cause females to have more severe

negative emotions after discovering infidelity of the partner, and this can help explain gender difference in reactions to infidelity.

These variables were selected based on the related literature. As Stonsy (2013) suggested, one of the variables that can explain this difference in a relationship can be self-compassion because it is important for healing identity and motivating to be far from vulnerability. In addition, forgiveness is important in dealing with emotions after discovering of the infidelity, and rumination is positively related to negative emotions. As some previous research studies showed, self-compassion and forgiveness are positively related to healthy outcomes; however, rumination relates to negative outcomes. Cognitive appraisal theory is one of the useful theories to explain why the reactions to romantic infidelity differ from person to person (Wang et al., 2012) because the reactions can change according to how people evaluate the stressful situation (Gomes et al., 2013).

By considering the literature summarized above, the present study aimed to explain which variables play a role in reactions to infidelity and which ones are responsible for the gender differences in reactions to infidelity. In order to reach this goal, in the light of the related literature, a model was constructed to be tested. This model includes the variables of self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisal and their direct and indirect effect on negative emotional reactions to infidelity. Although discovering infidelity may result in traumatic responses (Gordon & Baucom, 1999; Lusterman, 1998), the scientific knowledge on infidelity and how to handle the results of infidelity is still somewhat limited. Also, previous research did not test a model with the present study's variables to explain the relationship between emotional reactions and discovering of the infidelity. The variables which were used in the present study were tested separately in the previous studies to explain the reactions to infidelity after discovering the affair of the partner. However, in the present study, these variables were tested in one model to search their role in a relationship in the time period between discovering infidelity of the partner and negative emotional reactions, and in order to see how they are related to negative

emotional reactions after discovering infidelity of the partner. Moreover, although the majority of the previous studies pointed out the gender differences in reactions to infidelity, the reasons for such gender differences remain unclear. Gender has a relation with these variables: women are more ruminative, find it easier to forgive, have less self-compassion and are more likely to evaluate a situation as a threat when compared to men. These differences can be the reason for the gender difference in emotional reactions. Therefore, the model will show the direct and indirect relations of these variables to reactions to infidelity. Moreover, with this model, the nature of the gender difference in the emotional reactions to infidelity could be explained. In this way, the current study with a tested model can show which variables should be strengthened in order to help people overcome the emotions resulting from infidelity.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter introduces detailed information about methodology of the study with seven sections which include the overall design of this study, sampling procedure and characteristics of the participants, the measurement tools utilized with their internal consistency results, description of variables, data collection procedure, data analysis, and potential limitations of the study.

3.1. Overall Research Design

This study presents a conceptual model explaining the relationships among rumination, self-compassion, forgiveness, cognitive appraisal, and emotional reactions to infidelity. Correlational research design was used to examine the relationships among the study variables. The measurement degree of two or more related quantitative variables are described by a correlational study with a correlational coefficient (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the correlational relationships among the variables. The gender differences and type of infidelity in emotional reactions to infidelity were analyzed as a first step with two-way ANOVA. Then, the proposed model with rumination, self-compassion, forgiveness, cognitive appraisal [primary appraisal (threat and challenge), secondary appraisal (self-control, other-control and uncontrollability)] and emotional reactions to infidelity were examined. Finally, structural invariance of the final model across genders were tested. Figure 1 shows the tested model. The model proposes that when offended partners are more self-compassionate, forgive the unfaithful partner, perceive the situation as challenge and perceive the situation as control by themselves, they feel less negative emotions; on the other hand, when they ruminate more, perceive the situation as threat, perceive

the situation as can control by others and perceive the situation as can not control by anyone, they feel more negative emotions. Moreover, the mediator roles of these variables are expected to be related with negative reactions after infidelity.

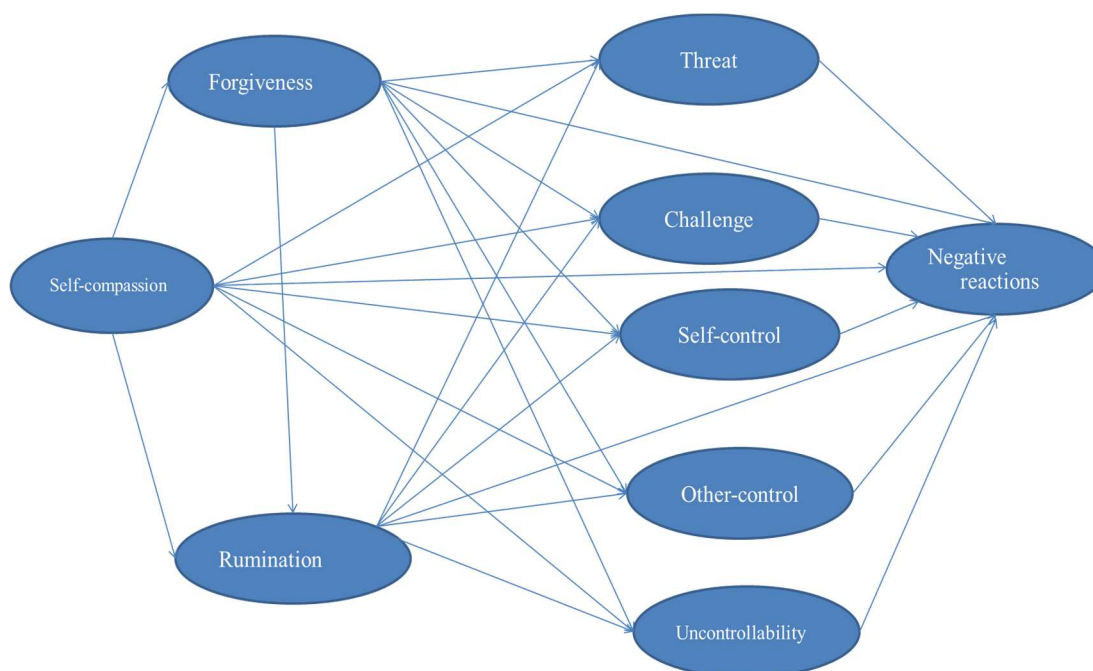


Figure 3.1. Hypothesized structural model of the relationships among rumination, self-compassion, forgiveness and cognitive appraisal in reactions to infidelity before testing validity and reliability of the scales

3.2. Sampling Procedure and Participants

Before collecting data in order to confirm ethical principles in conducting research, necessary forms were prepared for Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University. Purposive sampling method was used and only the participants who were cheated or who were suspicious that they had been cheated by their partners in their dating relationship were included in the study. The results of the analysis revealed no significant difference between the participants who were cheated on or who had suspicious that they had been cheated on by their partners. Both groups of

participants were collapsed. Three sets of data were gathered for the study. The first set of data was used for the pilot study of the forgiveness scale to adapt it to Turkish. The data of the pilot study was collected in 2013-2014 spring semester by the researcher in person. There were 202 participants. The participants used nicknames when they were answering the questionnaires.

The second set of data consisted of 69 participants and was gathered by the researcher in person to examine the test-retest reliability of the forgiveness scale. The same questionnaire was given to the same participants three weeks later than the collection of the first set of data and the participants used the same nicknames as the names used in the first instance of data collection. The third set of data was collected for the main study in the 2014-2015 fall semester. The data of the main study were collected via the Internet and by a graduate student in person.

The target population of the study was all university students in Turkey. University students constituted the accessible population. The university students who had been cheated in their relationship were selected as a sample for the study to explore the reactions to infidelity in dating romantic relationships. First, participants were given questionnaires with a question in the beginning on cheating in a relationship. They were asked if they had ever cheated on their dating relationship. If they gave a positive answer to this one, they were asked to answer the following questions considering their experiences of infidelity; if they gave a negative answer to this one, they continued the questionnaires without answering more demographic questions. All volunteering participants filled out the questionnaires, but only participants who reported to being cheated were included in the study. The questionnaires were not given only to the participants who were cheated on in order not to offend them. Participants who were not cheated on were eliminated in the present study; therefore, purposive sampling method was used and the prerequisite for the inclusion in the study was to have been cheated on in their relationship or to have had suspicions of infidelity.

3.2.1 Participants of the Main Study

The printed and electronic questionnaires were collected for the main study from 1324 university students in total in universities at Ankara. After eliminating the missing data (67 of them had missing data), 1257 of them could be used. According to the aim of the study, the participants who were not cheated on by their partners (824 participants) were eliminated. Then the number of participants was 433; however, two cases were multivariate outliers. After eliminating these cases, data set had 431 cases. Descriptive statistics indicated that 273 (63.3%) of the participants were cheated on, and 158 (36.7%) of the participants were suspicious that they had been cheated on by their partner in their dating relationship. Therefore, in total 431 participants were used in data analysis of the main study because participants who were cheated on and were suspicious that they had been cheated on by their partners did not have significant score differences in the study variables.

Demographic characteristics of the sample have been given in Table 3.1. The average age of the participants is 24.41 (SD=5.78) ranging from 18 to 38. Of the participants, 291 (67.5%) were female and 140 (32.5 %) were male. Most of the participants were undergraduate students (284) (65.9 %), and the rest of the participants were post graduate students, including master students (84) (19.5 %) and doctoral students (48) (11.1 %), and 15 (3.5 %) of the participants did not answer this question. 213 (49.4 %) of the participants informed that they do not have a current relationship, 160 (37.1%) of them have a relationship, and 26 (6 %) of them are sharing the same home with their partner, 32 (7.5%) of them are engaged; 35 (8.1%) of the participants are still with their partners who cheated on them (21, 4.9%) and who suspected that they had been cheated (14, 3.2%).

Table 3.1.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N = 431)

| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 140 | 32.5% |
| Female | 291 | 67.5% |
| Age | | |
| 18-24 | 280 | 65 % |
| 25-31 | 102 | 23.6% |
| 32-38 | 49 | 11.4% |
| Current Education level | | |
| Undergraduate | 284 | 65.9 % |
| Master | 84 | 19.5 % |
| Doctorate | 48 | 11.1 % |
| Missing | 15 | 3.5 % |
| Relationship status | | |
| Not have a relationship | 213 | 49.4 % |
| Have a relationship | 160 | 37.1 % |
| Sharing the same home with a partner | 26 | 6 % |
| Engaged | 32 | 7.5 % |

The number of the participants who could call this situation as “cyber infidelity” were 89 (20.6%). 262 (60.8%) of them did not call it cyber, and 80 (18.6 %) of them were not sure if it could be called cyber or not. Some of the participants described the relationship that their partner built with another person as “a sexual relationship rather than an emotional relationship” 116 (26.9%). 76 (17.6 %) of them called it “mostly a sexual relationship”, 66 (15.3%) of them called it “mostly an emotional relationship”, 59 (13.7%) of them called it “exactly a sexual relationship”, 54 (12.5%) of them called it “an emotional relationship rather than a sexual relationship”

and 40 (9.3%) of them called it “exactly an emotional relationship”. 20 (4.6 %) of the participants did not answer this question.

101 (23.4%) of the participants learnt that they had been cheated on when they found certain action on the social media (on Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, and so on) such as following certain people or liking certain posts or when they saw certain photos on computer or when they read certain cell phone messages or social media posts;; 82 (19 %) of the participants understood or suspected that they were cheated on because they observed a change in the behaviors and habits of their partner (recognizing lies, ignorance or ending the relationship without any apparent reason), 55 (12.8%) of them learnt from a friend of theirs or their partner’s friend. The rest of the participants learnt in other ways: 52 (12.1%) of them found out the affair by chance or followed his or her partner, 50 (11.6%) of the participants’ partners confessed that they had cheated, 21 (4.9%) of the participants understood or had suspicions that they had been cheated on because partners started a new relationship immediately after their relationship; 14 (3.2%) of them learnt from the person that the partner had a relationship with, and 6 (1.4%) of them learnt about the affair in a variety of other ways; 50 (11.6%) of the participants did not write an explanation to this question. In Table 3.2., infidelity related characteristics of participants are given.

Table 3.2.

Infidelity Related Characteristics of the Participants (N = 431)

| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|----------|----------|
| Still with their partners | | |
| who had cheated on them | 21 | 4.9% |
| who suspected that they had been cheated on | 14 | 3.2% |
| break-up | 396 | 91.9% |
| Cyber infidelity | | |
| Yes | 89 | 20.6% |

Table 3.2. (cont.)

| | | |
|--|-----|--------|
| No | 262 | 60.8% |
| Not sure | 80 | 18.6 % |
| Form of infidelity | | |
| Exactly an emotional relationship | 40 | 9.3 % |
| Mostly an emotional relationship | 66 | 15.3% |
| An emotional relationship rather than a sexual relationship | 54 | 12.5% |
| A sexual relationship rather than an emotional relationship | 116 | 26.9% |
| Mostly a sexual relationship | 76 | 17.6 % |
| Exactly a sexual relationship | 59 | 13.7% |
| Did not answer | 20 | 4.6 % |
| How they learnt that they had been cheated on | | |
| Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Messenger and so on) or cell phone messages | 101 | 23.4% |
| Change in the behaviors or habits of the partner, recognizing lies, ignorance, ending the relationship without any apparent reason | 82 | 19 % |
| From a friend of theirs or their partner's friend | 55 | 12.8% |
| Found out by chance or followed his/her partner | 52 | 12.1% |
| Learnt from his/her partner | 50 | 11.6% |
| Partner started a new relationship immediately after their relationship ended | 21 | 4.9% |
| From the person that the partner had a relationship with | 14 | 3.2% |
| In a variety of other ways | 6 | 1.4% |
| Did not answer | 50 | 11.6% |

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

In this study, six scales and a demographic information form were used for data collection. These were Forgiveness Scale, the Forgiveness Inventory (only used in pilot study), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, Self-Compassion Scale, Ruminative Response Scale and the Stress Appraisal Measure. In this title, assumption checks, adaptation of the Forgiveness Scale and the validity and reliability of the Forgiveness Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, the Self-Compassion Scale, the Ruminative Response Scale, and the Stress Appraisal Measure were tested and explained. Except the Forgiveness Scale, the validity tests of the other scales were done with the main data.

Before presenting data collecting instruments, assumption checks of CFA were given. The assumptions of CFA (missing value analysis, sample size, outliers, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity) (Kline, 2011) were checked for the instruments. The missing value analysis (MVA) was conducted according to Little's MCAR Test; the missing data were random, and the number of missing cases did not exceed 5%. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the missing data problem can be when it is more than 5%. In order to decide the next step with the missing data (delete or continue with that data), characteristics of the missing cases were compared with the completed cases by chi-square analyses. No significant difference was found between the cases with and without missing data. In order not to reduce the sample size, expectation maximization (EM) was conducted to handle the missing data. The sample size was adequate to conduct CFA since Kline (2011) suggested 200 participants.

Then, in order to check univariate outliers, standardized z-scores were used. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), cases between -3.29 and +3.29 are not outliers. There was only one case which is an outlier. Before deleting the univariate outlier, Mahalanobis distances were examined to check multivariate outliers (Kline, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Results show that a few cases were out of the Chi-

square distance. According to CFA results, whether the outliers were deleted or not made no difference; therefore, it was decided to include the outlier in the data set in order not to reduce the sample size.

Skewness and Kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov & Shapiro-Wilk values, histograms, Q-Q plots and boxplots were used to check univariate normality assumption. A value between -3 and 3 shows a normal distribution (Kline, 2011). All the skewness and kurtosis values were between -3 and +3. Moreover, the variables showed a normal distribution in accordance with Kolmogorov-Smirnov & Shapiro-Wilk values (not significant), histograms, Q-Q plots and boxplots, too.

Then, multivariate normality was checked by running Mardia's tests (Kline, 2011). The results revealed that the variable's Mardia's coefficient were non-normal. Finney and DiStefano (2006) suggested that when samples are moderately non-normal, Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation is reliable. They suggested using Satorra-Bentler correction for the analyses of severely non-normal data. In the present study, the CFA was conducted twice for the scale with Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation and with Satorra-Bentler correction. The results of ML were reported because the results were almost the same, and a resampling technique which is called "bootstrapping procedure" was used to eliminate the effects of non-normality.

Then, linearity assumptions were checked by using bivariate scatter plots (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and plots showed that linearity assumption was not violated. Lastly, multicollinearity assumption was checked. Multicollinearity exists when bivariate correlations exceed .90 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The correlations were less than .90. Therefore, in the present study, there were no multicollinearity problems among the subscales.

Subsequently, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaires. According to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2009), Cronbach Alpha value could be between 0 and 1, and the lowest

acceptable value for the social sciences is 60. Then, in order to test the construct validity of the questionnaires, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted by using AMOS 18. Item parceling was used in the questionnaires. Since item parceling is a method whereby the researcher creates parcels by using the sums of Skewness and Kurtosis or means of two or more items in the data set, this method is suitable for the study. Item parceling gives better reliability values for the items and can be used for the scales with more than 5 items (Kline, 2011). Moreover, Bandalos (2002) reported that item parceling decreases the irregularity on the RMSEA and CFI which is disrupted by non-normality. In the present study, item parcels were used for the Forgiveness Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, The Stress Appraisal Measure, Ruminative Response Scale and Self-Compassion Scale.

Model fit in CFA can be evaluated by different fit indexes. Byrne (2010) claimed that each set of criteria has limitations so varied criteria should be used. There are three fit indexes; absolute fit index [model chi-square (χ^2), χ^2/df value and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)], incremental fit index [Bentler Comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)], and parsimony-adjusted index [Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA)] (Kline, 2011). The descriptions of these fit indices are written below.

Model Chi-Square (χ^2): It is a goodness-of-fit statistics, and a value of 0 with a non-significant p-value shows a perfect fit. It is highly sensitive to large sample sizes and correlation sizes. In order not to have such limitations, normed chi-square, which is ratio of χ^2 to the degree of freedom-df (χ^2/df), was reported. According to Kline (2011), when χ^2/df is less than 3, this shows an acceptable fit, and according to Wheaton, Muthen, Alwin, and Summers (1977), when χ^2/df is less than 5, this shows an acceptable fit.

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR): SRMR is comparing the monitored and estimated correlations (Kline, 2011). The value which is smaller than

.08 displays a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Moreover, according to Kline (2005), when the value is smaller than .10, it is acceptable for rational model fits.

The Bentler Comparative Fit Index (CFI): This fit index compares the hypothesized and independence models to appraise the hypothesized model (Kline, 2011). The values of CFI have a range of 0 and 1, and the higher scores show a good fit. An acceptable model fit has values higher than .90 (Bentler, 1992); however, according to Hu and Bentler (1999), values higher than .95 indicate a good fit.

Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI): The fit index called TLI is also known as Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI). The values of TLI have a range between 0 and 1, and higher scores show a good fit. The values higher than .95 indicate a good fit. (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Root Mean Square of Error of Approximation (RMSEA): The RMSEA is a badness-of-fit index, and this fit index compares the hypothesized and independence models, and a value close to zero indicates a good fit (Kline, 2011). According to MacCallum, Browne and Sugawara (1996), a value higher than .10 is a poor fit; and a value between .08 and .10 shows a medium fit. Values lower than .08 show an acceptable fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993), and values lower than .06 show a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Moreover, PCLOSE value is used to evaluate the closeness of fit, and a non-significant PCLOSE value indicates better model fits (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996).

3.3.1. Forgiveness Scale

The Forgiveness Scale was developed by Rye (1998) in order to measure forgiveness toward a particular offender. The items in the scale measure affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses to wrongdoing. It was designed for a study conducted with participants who were college women wronged in a romantic relationship (Rye, 1998). The questionnaire included 16 items.

In the study of Rye et al., (2001), 1 item was eliminated because of low factor loading. The Forgiveness Scale is a 5 point Likert-type scale (1 “Strongly disagree” to 5 “Strongly agree”) with 15 items and two subscales: Absence of Negative with 10 items and Presence of Positive with 5 items. Sample items are "I spend time thinking about ways to get back at the person who wronged me", "If I encountered the person who wronged me, I would feel at peace." (Appendix B). The study of Rye et al., (2001) shows that Cronbach’s alpha of the scale is .87 and Cronbach's alphas of the subscales are .86 and .85 for Absence of Negative and Presence of Positive subscales, respectively. Moreover, according to test re-test reliability, the scale is reliable (.80), and reveals the same results for both the Absence of Negative and the Presence of Positive subscales (.76). In addition, convergent validity of the scale was tested with Enright Forgiveness Inventory, and each dimension showed significant correlations (Rye et al., 2001). The Turkish adaptation of the scale was done in the current study. Hence, one factor structure of the Forgiveness Scale was used to measure forgiveness of the participants who had been cheated on (Rye et al., 2005).

3.3.1.1. Pilot study: Translation and Adaptation Process of the Forgiveness Scale

The permission request for translating the instrument into Turkish was made by the researcher herself to Associate Professor Mark S. Rye. Upon completing the translation process explained below, validity (construct validity and convergent validity), and reliability (inter item and test-retest reliability) of the scale were examined. For convergent validity, Forgiveness Inventory (Gordon & Baucom, 2003) was utilized which was adapted to Turkish by Özgün (2010). The description of the inventory was provided below.

3.3.1.1.1. Translation of the Forgiveness Scale

First, the items were translated into Turkish by three independent experts in counseling and proficient in English. Secondly, the three translations were compared

and for each item, the ones who reflect best the original meaning were chosen by two experts in counseling and proficient in English. Then, two experts back-translated the items into English. Following this, researcher and her supervisor evaluated the back translated and original items. Afterwards, Turkish language lecturer and two experts in the field were checked the language of the scale. According to their feedback, some slight changes in the structure of the sentences or word choice were made on the scale.

3.3.1.1.2. Participants of the Pilot Study

In the pilot study adapting the Forgiveness Scale, data were collected with 3-week time interval. In the first data collection, 202 students participated in the study. In the second data collection 69 of the previous participants were responded to invitation and filled out the scales. Therefore, test re-test reliability of the scale were tested with 69 participants that were participated first and second data collection. Demographic information of the participants in the first and second data collection were given on the Table 3.3. In the first data collection, 130 (64.4%) were women, 72 (35.6 %) were men from the 202 participants. On the second data collection, 45 (65.2%) were women and 24 (34.8%) were men from 69 of the participants.

Before collecting the data, approval from the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee was received. The purposive sampling method was used. The data were collected from the participants who were cheated on by their partners. At the beginning of the questionnaire, the aim and the procedure of the study were explained. For collecting the data to check the test re-test reliability, the same sampling method was used to the same people however 69 of them participated second time to the study. In the first data collection, the number of female participants were larger than male participants' number; 130 (64.4%) of them were female and 72 (35.6%) of them male, with the age range of 18 and 39 ($M= 23.84$, $SD= 5.25$). From 202 participants, 116 (57.4%) were cheated on by their partners, 86 (42.6%) were suspicious that they had been cheated on by their partners.

Table 3.3.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample of the Pilot Study and Re-test of Pilot Study

| | <i>Pilot Study</i> | | <i>Re-test of Pilot Study</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| | <i>(N=202)</i> | | <i>(N=69)</i> | |
| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Gender | | | | |
| Male | 72 | 35.6% | 24 | 34.8% |
| Female | 130 | 64.4% | 45 | 65.2% |
| Age | | | | |
| 18-24 | 140 | 69.3 % | 44 | 63.8 % |
| 25-31 | 44 | 21.8% | 19 | 27.5% |
| 32-39 | 13 | 6.4% | 5 | 7.2% |
| Missing | 5 | 2.5% | 1 | 1.5% |
| Current education level | | | | |
| Undergraduate | 143 | 70.8 % | 45 | 65.2 % |
| Master | 37 | 18.3 % | 15 | 21.7 % |
| Doctorate | 21 | 10.4 % | 8 | 11.6 % |
| Missing | 1 | .5% | 1 | 1.5% |
| Relationship status | | | | |
| Not have a relationship | 101 | 50.0 % | 30 | 43.5 % |
| Have a relationship | 79 | 39.1 % | 28 | 40.6 % |
| Sharing the same home with a partner | 12 | 5.9 % | 6 | 8.7 % |
| Engaged | 10 | 5.0 % | 5 | 7.2 % |

3.3.1.1.3. Examining the Validity and Reliability of the Forgiveness Scale

Under this title, validity (construct validity and convergent validity), and reliability (inter-item and test-retest reliability) of the Forgiveness Scale was examined and reported. For construct validity CFA results were given, for convergent validity

parallel tests method was used with the Forgiveness Inventory by Gordon and Baucom (2003). For interitem reliability Cronbach's alpha of the Forgiveness Scale was measured and for test re-test reliability the forgiveness scale was given the participant in 3 weeks interval.

3.3.1.1.3.1. Construct Validity of the Forgiveness Scale

CFA was used to ensure the factor structure of the Turkish version of the Forgiveness Scale. The CFA results showed a poor fitting model with $\chi^2(90) = 304.39$, $p < .001$ and $\chi^2/df = 3.38$; RMSEA = .12, $p_{Close} < .05$ CFI = .67, TLI = .61 and SRMR = .11. Item parceling was used on CFA because it could be used with questionnaires which have at least 5 items, and this technique helps to have a less crowded data set (Kline, 2011). In the Forgiveness Scale, to have parcels, three or more items are collected to have a total score. Marsh, Hau, Balla, and Grayson (1998) suggested that when the sample size is larger than 200, a small number of parcels are acceptable. When the data is non-normal, using skewness and kurtosis values give better factor solution (Bandalos & Finney, 2001). Item parcels were formed by using the opposite levels of skewness and kurtosis values which is called as item-to-construct balance (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). Therefore, in the present study, four item parcels were created for Forgiveness Scale according to skewness values of the items of the scale in the model testing. Three parcels of the scale had four items and one of it had three items. In other words, in the present study, one factor structure Forgiveness Scale was used with four indicators. Then, it still showed a poor model fit $\chi^2(2) = 7.70$, $p < .05$ and $\chi^2/df = 3.85$, RMSEA = .13, $p_{Close} > .05$ CFI = .98, TLI = .94 and SRMR = .03.

In order to improve the model, modification indices were tested, and it was observed that the error covariance of parcel 1 - parcel 3 was freely estimated and the covariance of errors of these parcels was related. After that, it showed an adequate fit $\chi^2(1) = 1.64$, $p > .05$ and $\chi^2/df = 1.64$, RMSEA = .06, $p_{Close} > .05$ CFI = .99, TLI = .99, and SRMR = .01. Standardized estimates ranged between .55 and .87.

3.3.1.1.3.2. The Convergent Validity

It was examined with the parallel tests method. Forgiveness Inventory by Gordon and Baucom (2003), which measures the injured partners' progress, was used as a parallel test. The information about Forgiveness Inventory was given below.

3.3.1.1.3.2.1. The Forgiveness Inventory (FI)

The Forgiveness Inventory (FI) was developed in order to measure the forgiveness level of offended partners according to 3-stage forgiveness model by Gordon and Baucom (2003). FI is 25 items 5 point Likert Type scale (1, almost never to 5, almost always) and with 3 subscales Stage I-Impact (attack on the partner, feeling overwhelmed), Stage II-Search for Meaning (increased understanding of the event and clearness about emotion), Stage III-Recovery (giving up the negative thoughts and feelings, and deciding the next steps). The Cronbach's alpha level of the scale for three stages is .85, .76, .75, respectively. The translation and the adaptation of the scale to the Turkish language and culture were made by Özgün (2010) with 284 married individuals sample. It was found valid and reliable. The construct validity of the scale done by CFA and it find valid. Global Self-Report of Forgiveness (GSRF) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) were used to test convergent and concurrent validity of the FI. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for internal consistency of the three subscales of FI were .79, .60, and .70, respectively.

In the present study, Cronbach alpha of the subscales was .67, .76 and .63. The score of the Forgiveness Scale was compared with the Forgiveness Inventory. The Pearson correlation coefficient between Forgiveness Scale and Forgiveness Inventory's three subscales were found as $-.51$ ($p < .01$), $-.21$ ($p < .05$) and $.46$ ($p < .01$). According to Green, Salkind, and Akey (2000), correlation coefficients of .10 shows small, .30 shows medium and .50 shows large effect size; therefore, Forgiveness Scale and Forgiveness Inventory's three subscales showed correlation). Table 3.4. show the correlations between the Forgiveness Scale and subscales of Forgiveness Inventory.

Table 3.4.

Correlations between the Forgiveness Scale and Subscales of Forgiveness Inventory

| | Forgiveness Scale |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Stage I-Impact | -.51** |
| Stage II-Search | -.21* |
| Stage III-Recovery | .46** |

Note. *p < .05 **p < .01

3.3.1.1.3.3. Internal Reliability of the Forgiveness Scale

The reliability coefficient for the total questionnaire estimated by Cronbach’s alpha was .82. The internal consistency coefficients for the subscales of the Forgiveness Scale were .79 for the Absence of Negative and .72 for the Presence of Positive subscales. The internal consistency results were shown on Table 3.5.

3.3.1.1.3.4. Test re-Test Reliability Analysis

In order to examine test-retest reliability, three weeks later than the first application, 69 participants from these 202 participants filled in only the Forgiveness Scale. The participants used nicknames to match the data sets for test-retest. In the second data collection from the same participants, 45 (65.2%) of the participants were female and 24 (34.8%) of them were male. The age range of the participants were from 18 to 35 with the average of 23.99 (SD=5.43). Of the 69 participants, 44 (63.8%) were cheated on by their partners and 25 (36.2%) were suspicious that they had been cheated on by their partners. Demographic information of the participants in second data collection were given on the Table 3.3. Pearson correlation coefficients between the first and second times had been found as .76 (p<.01) for the total scale, for the Absence of Negative subscale .73 (p<.01) and for the Presence of Positive subscale .69 (p<.01). Test-retest reliability correlations were shown on Table 3. 5.

Table 3.5.

Internal Consistency and Test-Retest Reliability Correlation of the Forgiveness Scale

| Scale | Internal Consistency Cronbach's α | Test re-test Correlation (r) |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Forgiveness Scale | .82* | .76* |
| Subscales | | |
| Absence of Negative | .79* | .73* |
| Presence of Positive | .72* | .69* |

Note. * $p < .01$. Internal Consistency $N=202$, Test re-test reliability $N=69$.

3.3.2. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)

The PANAS was developed in order to measure positive and negative affect by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). In the present study, the Negative Affect (NA) scale of PANAS was used to measure the reactions to infidelity. The PANAS has listed emotions and the participants are rating for the frequency they have experienced them. The PANAS has 20 items which are 5-point Likert-scale (1 "very slightly or not at all" to 5 "extremely"), 10 items on positive affect (PA), and 10 items on negative affect (NA) scales. Sample items for the positive affect subscale are "strong", "excited," and for the negative affect subscale are "ashamed", "nervous" (Appendix C). The reported reliability scores were ranging from .86 to .90 for positive affect dimension and .84 to .87 for negative affect dimension. Moreover, the test-retest reliability of both of the subscales showed stability, and it had high correlations with related constructs which ensured concurrent validity.

Gençöz (2000) conducted the Turkish adaptation of the scale. The internal consistency coefficient of the Turkish version was found .83 and .86 for PA, and NA, respectively. Test-retest reliability was .40 for PA, and .54 for NA. Moreover, it had

significant correlations with related constructs [Beck Depression Inventory (-.48 with PA, .51 with NA) and Beck Anxiety Inventory (-.22 with PA, .47 with NA)] which ensured convergent validity. In the present study, only negative affect (NA) scale was used to measure the emotional reactions of the participants after they had experienced an infidelity in their dating relationships.

3.3.2.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the PANAS

First, by using CFA, original factor structure was tested, but only with negative emotions dimension. According to the results, a poor fitting model was seen ($\chi^2(35) = 565.68, p < .001$) and $\chi^2/df = 16.16$. Other fit indices were also poor with RMSEA value .19, CFI value .72, TLI value .63, $p_{Close} < .05$ and SRMR = .11. Item parceling could be used on CFA with questionnaires which have more than 5 items (Kline, 2011). In the model testing, four item parcels were created according to skewness values of the items of the negative emotions. The first two parcels had three items, and the last two parcels had two items. In other words, in the present study, the Negative Affect Subscale of the PANAS questionnaire was used with four indicators.

The results of CFA indicated an inadequate fit with ($\chi^2(2) = 35.97, p < .05$) and $\chi^2/df = 17.99$. Moreover, RMSEA = .20, $p_{Close} < .05$, CFI = .96, TLI = .88, and SRMR = .04 were found. Therefore, modification indices were checked, and it was seen that the error covariance of parcel 3 - parcel 4 was freely estimated. Then, covariance of errors of these parcels was linked. Results of CFA showed a good fitting model ($\chi^2(1) = 1.62, p > .05$) and $\chi^2/df = 1.62$. Other fit indices, RMSEA value .04, $p_{Close} > .05$, CFI value .99, TLI value .99, and SRMR value .01 were found. Standardized estimates ranged between .65 and .87.

3.3.2.2. Reliability of the PANAS

The reliability scores of negative affect subscale of the PANAS was evaluated with Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient and found as .86.

3.3.3. The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS)

The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) was developed by Neff (2003a) in order to measure self-compassion. In the current study, this scale was used to measure the self-compassion of the participants. SCS consists of 26 items with six subscales which are self-kindness, self-judgment, and awareness of common humanity, isolation, mindfulness and over-identification. Total score of SCS would represent a participant's overall level of self-compassion, and the scores of the subscales would represent one by one level of self-kindness, self-judgment, and awareness of common humanity, isolation, mindfulness and over-identification. It is 5-point Likert scale ranging from almost never (1) to almost always (5). Some sample items are as follows: "When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am", "When something upsets me, I try to keep my emotions in balance" (Appendix D). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the overall scale was .92, and for the subscales, they were .78, .77, .80, .79, .75, and .81, respectively. Test-retest reliability coefficient for the overall scale was .93, and for the subscales were .88, .88, .80, .85, .85, and .88, respectively (Neff, 2003a). Test construct validity was proved by finding high correlations with similar tests.

The Turkish adaptation of the scale was done by Deniz, Kesici and Sümer (2008). The Turkish version of the scale has a different structure than the original scale in that it has 24 items and it doesn't have subscales. For the Turkish version, internal consistency coefficient was reported as .89 and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found .83 (Deniz et al., 2008). Test convergent validity was proved by finding high correlations with similar tests.

3.3.3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the SCS

CFA was used to test one factor structure of the SCS. It showed a poor fitting model $\chi^2(252) = 2167.66$, $p < .001$ and $\chi^2/df = 8.60$, $RMSEA = .13$, $pClose < .05$, $CFI = .60$, $TLI = .57$, and $SRMR = .11$. According to Kline (2011), item parceling on CFA can be

used with questionnaires which have more than 5 items; therefore, for the SCS, item parceling was used. In the model testing, four item parcels were created according to skewness values of the items of the scale. Each of these four parcels had six items. Therefore, in the present study, SCS was used with four indicators. Then, the results of CFA model had an adequate fit model $\chi^2(2) = 6.68$, $p < .05$ and $\chi^2/df = 3.34$, $RMSEA = .07$, $p_{Close} > .05$, $CFI = .99$, $TLI = .99$, and $SRMR = .01$. Standardized estimates ranged between .85 and .91.

3.3.3.2. Reliability of the SCS

The reliability score of the SCS was evaluated with Cronbach's alpha. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha of the scale was .91.

3.3.4. The Ruminative Response Scale (RRS)

The Ruminative Response Scale (RRS), a subscale of the Response Style Questionnaire, was developed by Nolen-Hoeksema and Morrow (1991). The RRS is a 22-item 4-point rating scale [ranging from '1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always)], which measures the ruminative tendencies, responses to depressed mood flaring on the self, symptoms or possible causes and consequences of their mood. Test-retest reliability scores of the RRS (Nolen-Hoeksema, Parker, & Larson, 1994) and internal consistency values (Nolen-Hoeksema & Morrow, 1991) show good values. The internal consistency of the scale was found .89 and test-retest reliability showed the correlation of .62.

Treynor, Gonzalez, and Nolen-Hoeksema (2003) eliminated the similar items of the Ruminative Responses Scale, and they recommended 10 items with 2 factors, namely brooding and reflection, each of which contains 5 items. The sample item for the reflection subscale is "Go away by yourself and think about why you feel this way" and for the brooding subscale, it is "Think 'What am I doing to deserve this?'" (Appendix E). This short version of the Ruminative Response Scale's internal

consistency coefficient for Reflection subscale is $\alpha = .72$ and for Brooding subscale, it is $\alpha = .77$; and the test-retest correlation for Reflection subscale, it is $r = .60$, and for Brooding subscale, it is $r = .62$ (Treyner et al., 2003).

The Turkish adaptation of the short version of the Ruminative Response Scale was conducted by Erdur-Baker and Bugay (2012). They reported Cronbach's alpha of the short version RRS as .85 and for the subscales reflection and brooding .77 and .75, respectively. Both of the single factor long version and two factor short versions are valid and reliable to use in Turkish culture and have a significant positive correlation between them ($r = .70$, $p < .001$) (Erdur-Baker, & Bugay, 2012). In the present study, one factor structure of the short version of the Ruminative Response Scale was used to measure ruminative tendencies of the participants who had experienced infidelity because brooding and reflection subscales work in the same way in Turkish adaptation study (Erdur-Baker & Bugay, 2012) and in the current study.

3.3.4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the RRS

In the present study, one factor short RRS was used. According to the results of CFA, poor fitting model was seen ($\chi^2(35) = 254.57$, $p < .001$) and $\chi^2/df = 7.27$, RMSEA value .12, $p_{Close} < .05$, SRMR = .06, CFI value .88, TLI value .84. Item parceling could be used on CFA with questionnaires which have more than 5 items (Kline, 2011). In the model testing, five item parcels were created according to mean values of the items. All of the parcels had two items. In other words, in the present study, the Ruminative Response Scale was used with five indicators. Then, CFA showed a better model fit ($\chi^2(5) = 21.59$, $p < .001$) and $\chi^2/df = 4.32$. Rest of the fit indices were RMSEA value .09, $p_{Close} < .05$, SRMR = .02, CFI value .99, TLI value .97. Modification indices had been tested to improve the model, and it was seen that the error covariance of parcel 1 - parcel 5 was freely estimated and that the covariance of the errors of these parcels was related. Then, an acceptable model fit ($\chi^2(4) = 11.63$, $p < .05$) and $\chi^2/df = 2.91$, RMSEA value .07, $p_{Close} > .05$, SRMR = .01, CFI

value .99, TLI value .98 was found. Standardized estimates of the RRS had a range between .58 and .87.

3.3.4.2. Reliability of the RRS

The reliability scores of the scale and subscales were evaluated with Cronbach's alpha, and in the current study they were found as .80 for reflection subscale, .76 for brooding subscales and .87 for the one factor structure.

3.3.5. The Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM)

The Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM) was developed to measure cognitive appraisal of stress by Peacock and Wong (1990). In the present study, it was used to measure cognitive appraisal of stress after experiencing infidelity. It is a 24-item Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 5 (a great amount). The theoretical dimensions of the SAM are in two categories: primary appraisal of a stressful situation is threat, challenge and centrality, and secondary appraisal is perceptions of controllable-by-self, controllable-by others and uncontrollable (Appendix F). The Cronbach alpha coefficients for internal consistency of the subscales range between .51 to .90 among university students (Peacock & Wong, 1990). According to Anshel, Robertson and Caputi (1997), the Cronbach alpha coefficients for internal consistency of the subscales range between .65 and .90. Peacock and Wong (1990) stated that the questionnaire has validity. Moreover, they added that the appraisals can change with time; therefore, the scale is not appropriate to investigate test re-test reliability.

The Turkish version of the scale was studied by Durak and Senol-Durak (2013) and found with five factors. These subscales are primary appraisal (threat and challenge) and secondary appraisal (controllable-by-self, controllable-by others and uncontrollable). A sample item for threat subscale is "Does this situation make me feel anxious?", for challenge subscale, it is "Does this situation have important consequences for me?", for controllable-by-self, it is "Do I have the ability to do

well in this situation?”, controllable-by others, it is “Is there someone or some agency I can turn to for help?” and for uncontrollable, it is “Is this a totally hopeless situation?” The scale was found valid and reliable. In the sample of university students, the internal consistency coefficients of the factors of threat, challenge, self-control, other-control, and uncontrollability were found .81, .70, .86, .81, .74, and in the sample of adults they were found .83, .68, .84, .80, .74, respectively. The SAM evaluates the cognitive appraisals of specific and global sources of stress (Durak, 2007).

3.3.5.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the SAM

The original factor structure of the adapted scale was tested with five dimensions. The results showed a poor fitting model ($\chi^2(242) = 978.35$, $p < .001$) and $\chi^2/df = 4.04$. Other fit indices were RMSEA value .08, $p_{Close} < .05$, SRMR = .08 CFI value .87, TLI value .86. When a questionnaire has more than 5 items, item parceling can be used on CFA (Kline, 2011). Therefore, item parceling was used only for the threat subscale. In the model testing, two item parcels, each of which had four items, were created consistent with the means of the items in the threat dimension of the scale. Moreover, the challenge subscale was removed from the scale because it had a low Cronbach’s alpha. In other words, in the present study, the SAM was used with four factors, and one of the factors includes two indicators. Then, the scale was tested with four subscales. The results showed a better fitting model ($\chi^2(84) = 278.77$, $p < .001$) and $\chi^2/df = 3.33$. Other fit indices were RMSEA value .07, $p_{Close} < .05$, SRMR = .05 CFI value .95, TLI value .94. In order to improve the model, modification indices have been examined to see if additional paths can be added to the model. Modification indices results showing an adding correlation between error items of items 16-19, 11-13 were determined. Then, the results showed a better fit ($\chi^2(82) = 229.27$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.80$, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .06, $p_{Close} < .05$, SRMR = .05). Standardized estimates of the threat dimension were between .87 and .97, self-control dimension were between .21 and .90, other-control dimension were between .46 and .98 and uncontrollability dimension were between .46 and .74.

Therefore, the SAM was used with 24 items and four factors; one of the factors includes two indicators.

3.3.5.2. Reliability of the SAM

The reliability scores of subscales were evaluated with Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alphas of threat, challenge, self-control, other-control, and uncontrollability dimensions were .90, .62, .84, .85, and .67, respectively. Although the value of the challenge subscale was not good, the other subscales had high Cronbach alpha. Therefore, the scale was used without the 'challenge' subscale.

3.3.6. Demographic Information Form

This form was designed by the researcher and includes two sections. In the first section, information about the participants – specifically information about their gender, age, education level (0 = Undergraduate, 1 = Master, 2 = Doctorate, 3 = Not university student) and relationship status of the participants (0= not have a relationship, 1 = have a relationship, 2 = sharing the same home with partner, 3 = engaged) were asked.

In the second section, information about the infidelity experiences was gathered. These questions were as follows:

- Has your partner ever cheated on you? (0 = Yes, 1 = No),
- How did you discover that you had been cheated on?
- Are you still together with your partner who cheated on you? (0 = Yes, 1 = No),
- Was it a cyber infidelity? (0 = Yes, 1 = No),
- Was it an emotional or a sexual infidelity (0 = Exactly an emotional relationship, 1 = Mostly an emotional relationship, 2 = an emotional relationship rather than a sexual relationship, 3 = a sexual relationship, 4 = a sexual relationship rather than an emotional relationship, 5 = Mostly a sexual relationship, 6 = Exactly a sexual relationship) (Appendix G). After the pilot study, (3 = not sure) was added as a third

alternative response in addition to the previously mentioned two questions which were; “Did your partner cheated on you? (0 = Yes, 1 = No)” and “Was it a cyber infidelity? (0 = Yes, 1 = No)”.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Before collecting data, forms were prepared for the Ethics Committee of the Middle East Technical University, then the Committee approved the ethical principles for conducting research. The data for pilot study were collected during the 2013-2014 academic year's spring semester in three months by the researcher for the adaptation of the Turkish version of the Forgiveness Scale. Three weeks later, the same participants were contacted, again in the same way, and data of the Forgiveness Scale were collected in one week. After the pilot study was finished, most of the data of the main study were collected in the classes during the fall semester of 2014-2015 by a graduate student, and the rest of data were collected again in the same period via “survey.metu.edu.tr.” Results of the analysis revealed no significant difference between online and paper-based data. Therefore, both data sets were collapsed. The process of the main study was continued after taking permission from the instructor of each class and a weekly data collection program was made. According to the weekly program, all data were gathered in three months. Before distributing the questionnaires, the purpose of the study was explained. Although the criterion of the study was experiencing an infidelity in a romantic relationship with an opposite sex partner as an offended partner, this was not asked in the classroom to the students before giving the data gathering forms. The data gathering forms have questions for both of the groups that were cheated on and that were not cheated on. The participation in the study was voluntary. The administration of the data gathering forms was done during class hours and took approximately 35 minutes.

3.5. Description of Variables

Negative affect: The total score received from the Negative Affect subscale of Positive and Negative Affect Schedule.

Threat: The total score received from the threat subscale of Stress Appraisal Measure.

Controllable-by-self: The total score received from the Controllable-by-self subscale of the Stress Appraisal Measure.

Controllable-by others: The total score received from the Controllable-by others subscale of the Stress Appraisal Measure.

Uncontrollable: The total score received from the Uncontrollable subscale of the Stress Appraisal Measure.

Rumination: The total score received from the short version of the Ruminative Response Scale.

Forgiveness: The total score received from the Forgiveness Scale.

Self-compassion: The total score received from the Self-compassion Scale.

3.6. Data Analysis

The aim of the current study was to examine the emotional reactions to infidelity by considering the predictor roles of cognitive appraisal, rumination, self-compassion and forgiveness. Structural equation modeling (SEM) technique was used to test this model and these relationships on the model. Firstly, the data were screened, and missing value analysis (MVA) was conducted. Afterwards, necessary assumptions, which are normality, outliers, multicollinearity, linearity, and homoscedasticity were checked. Next, descriptive analyses were conducted and bivariate correlations among variables were checked. Then, in order to test the impact of gender difference and form of infidelity on negative reactions to infidelity, two-way ANOVA was conducted. After that, in order to test whether other demographics have difference on reactions to infidelity, ANOVAs were conducted. All of these analyses except SEM were tested by PASW Version 18 (SPSS Inc., 2009). Confirmatory factor analyses

were employed in order to test the measurement model by using AMOS Version 18 (Arbuckle, 2009). In the next step, AMOS 18 was used to conduct SEM (Arbuckle, 2009) and multi-group comparison analysis was conducted to test whether or not the model was invariant across genders.

3.6.1. Terminology of SEM

The terminology of SEM is explained below.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a group of techniques which test previous research findings between variables or relationships between variables based on theory (Byrne, 2010). With both of the SEM techniques (exploratory and confirmatory procedures), researchers can analyze both observed (manifest) and unobserved (latent) variables. SEM is more powerful than multiple regressions because of eliminating measurement error (Kline, 2011).

Latent Variables are unobserved hypothetical constructs (Kline, 2011). Manifest Variables are observed indicators that are items and item parcels. Latent variables have two categories: exogenous and endogenous variables (Byrne, 2010). Exogenous Latent Variables are independent variables that form change on the other variables of the model. Endogenous Latent Variables are dependent variables that are influenced directly or indirectly by the exogenous variables in the model. The exogenous variable of the present study was self-compassion; endogenous variables were rumination, forgiveness, threat, controllable-by-self, controllable-by others, uncontrollable and negative affect.

The relationships between latent variables and their indicators are tested by Measurement Model (Byrne, 2010). The relationships between unobserved variables are tested by Structural Model and the mix of measurement model and a structural model is named full model (Kline, 2011).

SEM had four steps, namely model specification, model identification, model estimation, and model evaluation (Kline, 2011). In the first step which is called Model Specification, hypothesized model is designed as a structural model. Model Identification is the second step in which the computer program ensures estimates for each parameter so as to fit the model theoretically. The hypothesized model and observed model are compared in the Model Estimation step. In the Model evaluation step, the fit indexes are used to evaluate the model. In the present study, these fit indexes, namely Chi-square value, ratio of χ^2/df , Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA), Bentler Comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) were used to evaluate the model.

3.7. Limitations

The present study has several limitations. First of all, most of the data were collected from university students in Ankara during classes and the rest of them by online survey with purposive sampling that causes a limited generalizability for the results. When the data are collected with non-random sampling methods, different results may be reached with different samples because emotions can be sensitive and changeable according to the culture and time. Therefore, a study with random sampling can have better generalizability for the results. In addition, although the sample size was above the limit 200, it was not a large sample because it was difficult to reach participants who could be included in this sample. Secondly, self-report measurement tools were used in the present study. Self-report tools have the problem of social desirability; and social desirability problem may confound the results. On the other hand, it is the only way of measuring the emotions of the participants. Thirdly, the present study was not longitudinal; it was done only once. However, the emotions after the infidelity are changeable over time, and in this study that process was not tested. Fourthly, no causal relationship can be established among the variables because of the correlational nature of the study. For this reason, the present study cannot display causal associations among the variables. Fifthly, this study has

an only cognitive appraisal, rumination, forgiveness and self-compassion but some other factors might play a role in emotional reactions to infidelity. Based on these limitations, the findings need to be cross-validated, so they should be evaluated considering these limitations. Moreover, further research should consider these limitations.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The analyses and the findings of the study are presented in this chapter. The analyses of the study took place in two steps. Two different sets of data were utilized in each step. The first step was the pilot testing of the reliability and validity of the forgiveness scale which was translated and adapted for this study. The results of the first step were presented in the previous chapter. This chapter presents the results of the second step with the goal of testing hypotheses of the study.

The second set of data was gathered for this step and used for reliability and validity tests of the questionnaires, assumptions checks, preliminary analyses, descriptive analyses, and tests of measurement model and structural model. Missing value analysis, checking for the outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity were in assumptions checks of the study. Preliminary analyses covers the descriptive analyses which included the characteristics of the participants that experienced infidelity in their romantic relationship and relationship between demographic information of the participants and negative emotional reactions. Then, in order to prove the validity of the measurement instruments of the study, the measurement model was tested and the results were explained. Lastly, the structural equation model (SEM) was tested, and findings were presented.

4.1. Assumptions of SEM

Before conducting the main analyses data were screened, missing data and influential outliers were checked. The adequacy of the sample size was checked for the analysis, and then normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, the normality of residuals and multicollinearity which are the assumptions of SEM were checked.

4.1.1. Missing Data and Sample Size Adequacy

Firstly, the data were screened to handle the problem of missing value. There were 67 cases with many missing values, and they were eliminated. Then, the data was controlled to find out the participants who experienced infidelity in their romantic relationship and missing values. During that process, out of 1257 participants, 824 of them were eliminated because they did not experience infidelity. When the scales were given to the participants in order not to decipher them, the question if they had experienced infidelity or not was not asked. Therefore, with 433 participants, the Little's MCAR test (Little & Rubin, 1987) was calculated. According to the results of Little's MCAR test, the results were significant for the scales that means they did not have missing at random. The missing values less than 5% for each case; therefore, data imputation through EM algorithm was applied to handle the problem of missing data. According to Kline (2011), the sufficient sample size to conduct SEM is 200. In the present study, sample size is 433. Thus, it is enough to conduct SEM.

4.1.2. Influential Outliers

Firstly, univariate outliers were checked by calculating the z-scores for all variables. Only one of the cases was out of the range of -3.29 to +3.29 which can call outlier, according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Then, multivariate outliers were checked by Mahalanobis distance values. There were two cases which had $p < .001$; therefore, they called as multivariate outliers. From these two cases, one case was a univariate outlier, too. These cases were eliminated from the data set because they are not many. After that, the data set had 431 cases.

4.1.3. Normality

Univariate normality assumption was checked by skewness and kurtosis values, histograms and Q-Q plots. According to Kline (2011), a skewness value larger than 3 and a kurtosis value larger than 10 can be problematic because those show a non-

normal distribution. In the present study, all skewness and kurtosis values were in the expected range (Table 3.6.). The values below these criteria that Kline (2011) indicated can be analyzed with maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. There were no skewness and kurtosis values above +3 and below the -3; therefore, ML estimation was used for the present analysis. A visual view of histograms and Q-Q plots showed that sample distribution in the present study was nearly normal.

Table 4.1.

Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis Values for Items and Parcels

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Skewness</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>Kurtosis</i> | <i>SE</i> |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| threat1 | 11.81 | 3.90 | -.08 | .12 | -.82 | .24 |
| threat2 | 12.00 | 4.39 | -.12 | .12 | -.96 | .24 |
| rum1 | 4.74 | 1.72 | .30 | .12 | -.78 | .24 |
| rum2 | 4.59 | 1.48 | .35 | .12 | -.28 | .24 |
| rum3 | 4.80 | 1.66 | .31 | .12 | -.69 | .24 |
| rum4 | 4.81 | 1.75 | .26 | .12 | -.72 | .24 |
| rum5 | 4.74 | 1.60 | .13 | .12 | -.51 | .24 |
| forg1 | 8.55 | 2.74 | .06 | .12 | -.36 | .24 |
| forg2 | 10.37 | 3.04 | .25 | .12 | .10 | .24 |
| forg3 | 10.28 | 3.16 | .17 | .12 | -.14 | .24 |
| forg4 | 13.59 | 3.17 | -.25 | .12 | -.22 | .24 |
| selfcom1 | 18.61 | 4.17 | .01 | .12 | -.39 | .24 |
| selfcom2 | 18.25 | 4.38 | .00 | .12 | .02 | .24 |
| selfcom3 | 18.66 | 4.47 | .12 | .12 | -.40 | .24 |
| selfcom4 | 18.60 | 4.76 | -.01 | .12 | .02 | .24 |
| negative1 | 9.04 | 2.83 | -.31 | .12 | -.41 | .24 |
| negative2 | 9.25 | 2.75 | -.27 | .12 | -.29 | .24 |
| negative3 | 5.38 | 2.43 | .29 | .12 | -.89 | .24 |
| negative4 | 5.45 | 2.26 | .26 | .12 | -.74 | .24 |
| uncont1 | 2.54 | 1.35 | .40 | .12 | -1.11 | .24 |
| uncont2 | 2.82 | 1.37 | .03 | .12 | -1.25 | .24 |
| other3 | 2.90 | 1.40 | -.03 | .12 | -1.25 | .24 |
| selfcont7 | 1.97 | 1.26 | 1.05 | .12 | -.18 | .24 |
| selfcont11 | 3.92 | 1.05 | -.72 | .12 | -.27 | .24 |
| selfcont13 | 3.90 | 1.07 | -.76 | .12 | -.26 | .24 |

Table 4.1. (cont.)

| | | | | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|-----|------|-----|
| other14 | 3.34 | 1.27 | -.31 | .12 | -.89 | .24 |
| other15 | 3.30 | 1.27 | -.33 | .12 | -.90 | .24 |
| uncont16 | 2.07 | 1.12 | .87 | .12 | .06 | .24 |
| uncont19 | 2.07 | 1.19 | .82 | .12 | -.46 | .24 |
| selfcont20 | 3.96 | 1.08 | -.82 | .12 | -.15 | .24 |
| other21 | 3.35 | 1.26 | -.31 | .12 | -.91 | .24 |
| selfcont22 | 3.83 | 1.06 | -.73 | .12 | -.13 | .24 |

Multivariate normality was tested by running Mardia's tests (Kline, 2011). According to Byrne (2001), it is usual to find non-normal data. For the most of the variables in the study, the Mardia's coefficients were non-normal. Therefore, bootstrapping was used to cope with non-normality by eliminating the effects of it. "*Bootstrapping* can be used to construct an empirical distribution of model test statistics that incorporates the non-normality of the data and relieves researchers from relying on the theoretical X^2 distribution and its underlying assumptions" (Finney & Distefano, 2006).

4.1.4. Linearity and Homoscedasticity

Histograms, normal P-P plots, scatterplots and partial regression plots of residuals were used to check these assumptions. The visual inspection of plots showed approximately oval shapes that can show random patterns (Stevens, 2009); therefore, the plots showed that assumptions were not violated.

4.1.5. Multicollinearity

Bivariate correlations, squared multiple correlations, VIF (variance inflation factor) and tolerance values were used to check multicollinearity of the variables. When variables correlate more than required, multicollinearity is a problem (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). All of the correlations ranged between -.50 and .62 (Table 3.7.), and all of the correlations were lower than .90. According to Kline (2011), squared

multiple correlations coefficients must be lower than .85. In the present study, it ranged between .14 and .48. VIF values must be lower than 10, and tolerance values must be higher than .10 (Kline, 2011). All of the VIF values range between 1.16 and 1.89, and tolerance values ranged between .52 and .86. Therefore, multicollinearity assumption was not violated.

Table 4.2.

Bivariate Correlations among the Variables

| | Rumination | Threat | Uncontrollability | Self-control | Other-control | Negative Affect | Self-compassion | Forgiveness |
|-------------------|------------|--------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Rumination | - | | | | | | | |
| Threat | .47** | - | | | | | | |
| Uncontrollability | .32** | .56** | - | | | | | |
| Self-control | -.27** | -.36** | -.44** | - | | | | |
| Other-control | -.11* | -.06 | -.11* | .33** | - | | | |
| Negative Affect | .56** | .62** | .51** | -.26** | -.05 | - | | |
| Self-compassion | -.50** | -.33** | -.19** | .26** | .07 | -.27** | - | |
| Forgiveness | -.50** | -.46** | -.36** | .31** | .15** | -.48** | .52** | - |

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01

4.2. Descriptive Analyses and Preliminary Analysis

In this section, before conducting the main analyses, means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of the variables and reliability of the questionnaires were presented, and a series of ANOVAs were run to check the relationship between the

demographic information of the participants and the negative emotions after experiencing infidelity.

4.2.1. Means and Standard Deviations

The mean scores and standard deviations of the variables were shown in Table 3.8. The mean score for the Negative Affect Subscale of PANAS was 28.99 (SD= 8.77), for the Threat subscale of SAM the mean score was 23.96 (SD=7.99), for Uncontrollability subscale of SAM it was 9.39 (SD= 3.57), for Self-control subscale of SAM it was 17.65 (SD=4.33), for Other-control subscale of SAM it was 12.85 (SD=4.29), for the Self-compassion Scale it was 74.40 (SD = 16.54), for the Rumination Response Scale it was 23.49 (SD = 6.68), and for the Forgiveness Scale it was M = 41.08 (SD = 8.87).

Table 4.3.

Means and Standard Deviations of the Variables and the Maximum and Minimum Values of the Scales

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| Negative Affect | 28.99 | 8.77 | 10 | 50 |
| Treat | 23.96 | 7.99 | 8 | 40 |
| Uncontrollability | 9.39 | 3.57 | 4 | 20 |
| Self-control | 17.65 | 4.33 | 5 | 25 |
| Other-control | 12.85 | 4.29 | 4 | 20 |
| Self-compassion | 74.40 | 16.54 | 24 | 120 |
| Rumination | 23.49 | 6.68 | 10 | 40 |
| Forgiveness | 41.08 | 8.87 | 15 | 75 |

4.2.2. Bivariate Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients among scores of forgiveness, rumination, self-compassion, threat, self-control, other-control, uncontrollability and negative affect were presented in Table 3.7. Cut off points for the correlation: ± 0.10 is small, ± 0.30 is

medium, and $\pm .50$ is a large correlation (Field, 2005). Negative emotions after experiencing infidelity increases when the rumination, threat, and uncontrollability increases, and when self-control, self-compassion and forgiveness decreases. Negative emotions was not correlated with other-control variables. Rumination was positively correlated with threat, and uncontrollability and negatively correlated with self-control, other-control, self-compassion and forgiveness. Forgiveness is positively correlated with self-control, other-control, and self-compassion and negatively correlated with rumination, threat and uncontrollability. Self-compassion was positively related to self-control and negatively correlated with threat and uncontrollability.

4.2.3. Preliminary Analysis

Firstly, in order to explore the impact of gender and form of infidelity on negative emotions a two-way between groups ANOVA was conducted. Homogeneity of variance assumption was not violated as seen on Levene's test's result [$F(11, 399) = 1.68, p = .08$]. Subjects were six groups on form of infidelity (exactly an emotional relationship, mostly an emotional relationship, an emotional relationship rather than a sexual relationship, a sexual relationship rather than an emotional relationship, mostly a sexual relationship, exactly a sexual relationship). The interaction effect between gender and form of infidelity was not statistically significant, [$F(5, 399) = .61, p = .70$]. There was a statistically significant main effect for gender [$F(1, 399) = 4.24, p = .04$]; however, the effect size was small (partial eta squared = .01). Results showed that females ($M = 29.75, SD = 8.57$) felt negative emotions more than males ($M = 27.80, SD = 8.94$) after experiencing infidelity. The main effect for form of infidelity, $F(5, 399) = 2.15, p = .06$ did not reach statistical significance. The results of the two-way ANOVA were presented in Table 3.9.

Then, in order to explore whether negative emotions shows differences according to education level, if the infidelity was cyber or not, how they discovered that they had been cheated on, if the participant was still together with the person who had cheated,

and current relationship status of the participants one-way ANOVAs were conducted. Homogeneity of variance assumption was violated only for age; therefore, alpha level was set as .04. According to the results of ANOVAs, none of the variables had a significant mean difference on negative emotions. The results of the one-way ANOVAs were presented in Table 3.10. Finally, to explore the relationship between age and negative emotions, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. The correlation was not significant, and correlation coefficient ($r = .01$) was found between age and negative emotions.

Table 4.4.
Two-Way ANOVA Results for the Negative Emotions

| Source | SS | df | MS | F | p | Partial η^2 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----|--------|------|-----|------------------|
| Gender | 322.10 | 1 | 322.10 | 4.24 | .04 | .011 |
| Form of infidelity | 814.51 | 5 | 162.90 | 2.15 | .06 | .026 |
| Gender x Form of infidelity | 229.76 | 5 | 45.95 | .61 | .70 | .008 |
| Within groups | 30305.37 | 399 | 75.95 | | | |
| Total | 383680.00 | 411 | | | | |

Table 4.5.
One-Way ANOVA Results for the Negative Emotions

| Variable and source | SS | MS | Df | F | p | η^2 |
|---------------------|--------|-------|----|-----|-----|----------|
| Education level | | | | | | |
| Between | 220.80 | 73.60 | 2 | .96 | .41 | .007 |

Table 4.5. (cont.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|----------|--------|-----|------|-----|------|
| | Within | 32531.66 | 76.55 | 426 | | | |
| Infidelity cyber or not | Between | 56.62 | 28.31 | 2 | .37 | .69 | .002 |
| | Within | 32704.81 | 76.41 | 428 | | | |
| How they discovered that they had been cheated on | Between | 356.98 | 59.49 | 6 | .80 | .57 | .013 |
| | Within | 27291.53 | 74.57 | 366 | | | |
| Still with their partners | Between | 425.82 | 141.94 | 3 | 1.85 | .14 | .013 |
| | Within | 31698.20 | 76.75 | 413 | | | |
| Current relationship status | Between | 535.41 | 178.47 | 3 | 2.37 | .07 | .016 |
| | Within | 32226.02 | 75.47 | 427 | | | |

4.3. Results of the Model Testing

In this section, the results of the measurement model and the hypothesized structural model and trimmed model with direct and indirect effects are presented.

4.3.1. Measurement Model

Measurement model examines the relationships among the observed and latent variables and their indicators; the measurement model is basically a confirmatory

factor analysis (CFA). Results of CFA showed a good fit of the measurement model ($X^2(430) = 1189.84$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df\text{-ratio} = 2.77$, $CFI = .92$, $TLI = .90$, $RMSEA = .06$, $p_{Close} < .05$, and $SRMR = .06$). All the regression weights were significant, and all standardized estimates were above .40 except for one. Moreover, there was no multicollinearity between variables. The other-control variable did not have a significant correlation with negative emotions; therefore, it was sifted from the study. Then, the measurement model was tested again (Figure 2). Results of CFA showed a good fit of the measurement model ($X^2(324) = 925.33$, $p < .001$, $X^2/df\text{-ratio} = 2.86$, $CFI = .92$, $TLI = .91$, $RMSEA = .065$, $p_{Close} < .05$, and $SRMR = .06$). All the regression weights were significant, and all standardized estimates were ranged between .46-.94. except for one which was .20 (Table 3. 11.). The correlations between latent variables are shown in Table 3.12.

Table 4.6.

Standardized Regression Weights of the Final Measurement Model

| | | | Estimate | CI | p |
|------------|------|-------------------|----------|---------|-----|
| forg4 | <--- | Forgiveness | .66 | .57-.74 | .00 |
| forg3 | <--- | Forgiveness | .75 | .61-.87 | .00 |
| forg2 | <--- | Forgiveness | .52 | .39-.64 | .00 |
| forg1 | <--- | Forgiveness | .83 | .77-.89 | .00 |
| rum5 | <--- | Rumination | .70 | .64-.76 | .00 |
| rum4 | <--- | Rumination | .77 | .71-.82 | .00 |
| rum3 | <--- | Rumination | .88 | .84-.91 | .00 |
| rum2 | <--- | Rumination | .78 | .73-.82 | .00 |
| rum1 | <--- | Rumination | .64 | .56-.70 | .00 |
| threat2 | <--- | Threat | .89 | .85-.92 | .00 |
| threat1 | <--- | Threat | .94 | .91-.98 | .00 |
| uncont19 | <--- | Uncontrollability | .59 | .48-.68 | .00 |
| uncont16 | <--- | Uncontrollability | .53 | .43-.63 | .00 |
| uncont2 | <--- | Uncontrollability | .46 | .36-.55 | .00 |
| uncont1 | <--- | Uncontrollability | .74 | .66-.81 | .00 |
| selfcont22 | <--- | Self-control | .89 | .84-.92 | .00 |
| selfcont20 | <--- | Self-control | .88 | .85-.92 | .00 |
| selfcont13 | <--- | Self-control | .86 | .81-.91 | .00 |

Table 4.6. (cont.)

| | | | | | |
|------------|------|-------------------|-----|---------|-----|
| selfcont11 | <--- | Self-control | .85 | .80-.89 | .00 |
| selfcont7 | <--- | Self-control | .20 | .11-.29 | .00 |
| negative4 | <--- | Negative Emotions | .77 | .78-.82 | .00 |
| negative3 | <--- | Negative Emotions | .69 | .63-.75 | .00 |
| negative2 | <--- | Negative Emotions | .83 | .78-.87 | .00 |
| negative1 | <--- | Negative Emotions | .85 | .80-.89 | .00 |
| selfcom4 | <--- | Self-compassion | .91 | .88-.93 | .00 |
| selfcom3 | <--- | Self-compassion | .90 | .87-.92 | .00 |
| selfcom2 | <--- | Self-compassion | .90 | .87-.92 | .00 |
| selfcom1 | <--- | Self-compassion | .85 | .82-.88 | .00 |

Table 4.7.

Latent Correlations in the Measurement Model

| | Forgiveness | Rumination | Self-compassion | Threat | Self-control | Uncontrollability | Negative Affect |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Forgiveness | - | | | | | | |
| Rumination | -.62*** | - | | | | | |
| Self-compassion | .58*** | -.52*** | - | | | | |
| Threat | -.51*** | .53*** | -.34*** | - | | | |
| Self-control | .38*** | -.37*** | .28*** | -.45*** | - | | |
| Uncontrollability | -.47*** | .42*** | -.24*** | .68*** | -.57*** | - | |
| Negative Affect | -.59*** | .65*** | -.32*** | .66*** | -.30*** | .62*** | - |

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

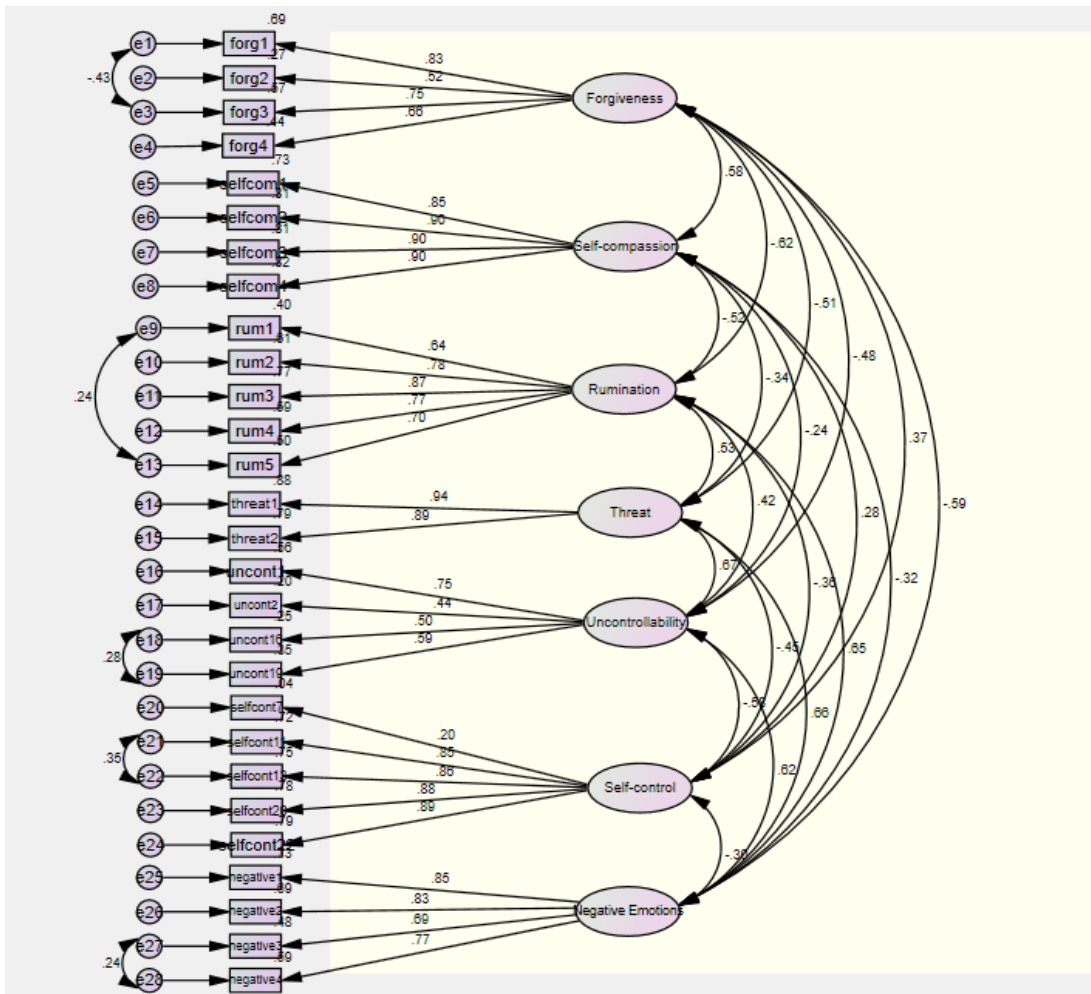


Figure 4.1. Standardized estimates of the measurement model

4.3.2. Hypothesized Structural Model

The hypothesized structural model aimed to discover the relationships among the self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal and emotional reactions to infidelity. Bootstrapping method, which is helpful in handling the effects of non-normal data, with 2000 bootstrapped samples and 95% confidence interval to estimate indirect effects in mediating relationships was used to test the hypothesized structural model. The same fit indexes [The Bentler Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square of Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), model chi-square (χ^2) and chi-

square/ degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df -ratio) values] which were used in CFA were used to test the hypothesized structural model, too.

Although the chi-square was significant, the results showed acceptable fit of the hypothesized structural model ($\chi^2(324) = 925.33$, $p < .001$, χ^2/df -ratio = 2.85, CFI = .92, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .065, $p_{\text{Close}} < .05$, and SRMR = .06). Furthermore, all of the indicators' (items and parcels) factor loadings were significant and explained their latent variables with a range of factor loadings between .21 and .94. To be reader friendly, only the latent variables were given on the hypothesized structural model, which is shown in Figure 3. A more detailed model was shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5 estimates for direct effects were presented.

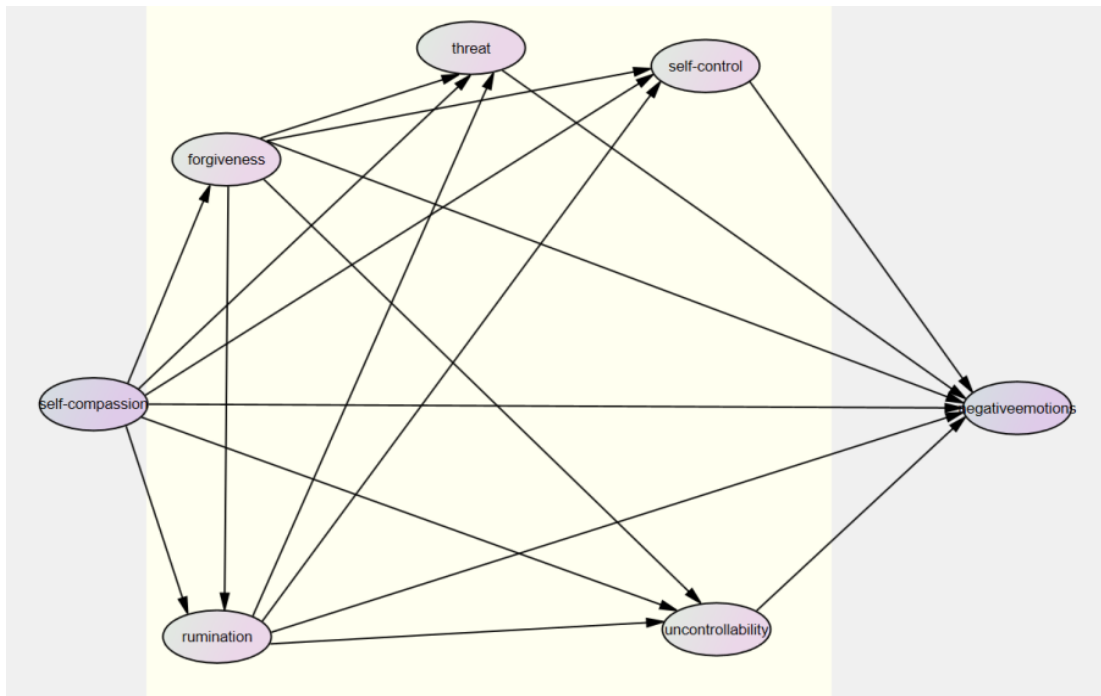


Figure 4.2. Hypothesized structural model

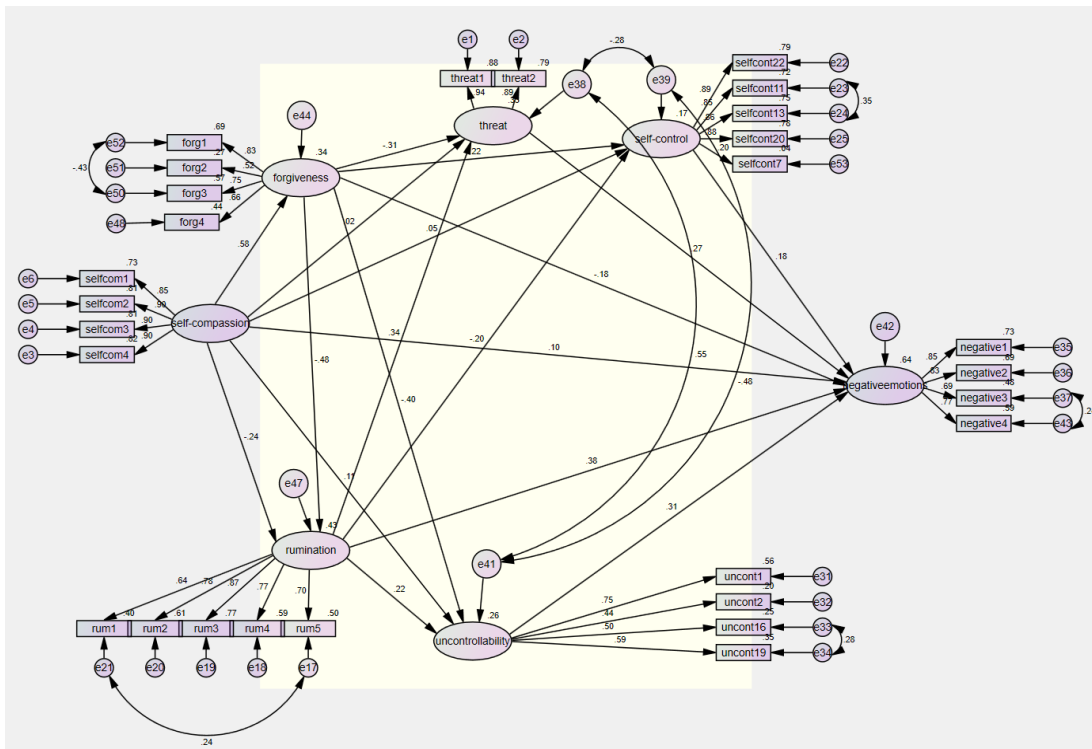


Figure 4.3. Hypothesized Structural Model

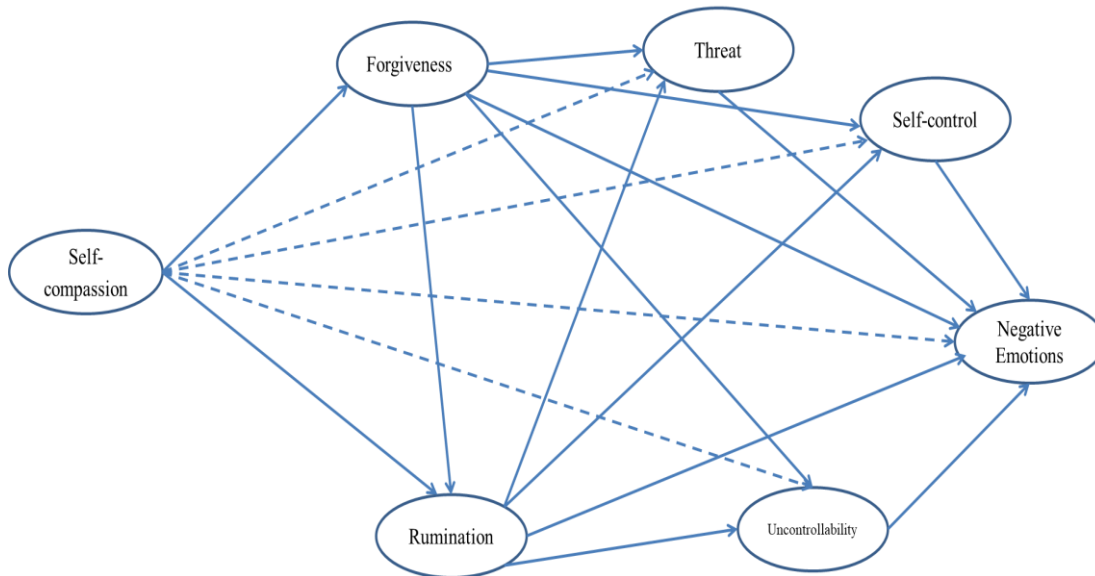


Figure 4.4. Hypothesized structural model with significant and non-significant paths

4.3.2.1. Direct Effects of the Hypothesized Structural Model

The variables with significant direct effects on emotional reactions to infidelity were forgiveness ($\gamma = -.18, p < .05$), rumination ($\gamma = .38, p < .01$), uncontrollability ($\gamma = .31, p < .01$), self-control ($\gamma = .18, p < .01$) and threat ($\gamma = .27, p < .01$). According to those results, when forgiveness increases, negative emotions decrease; when rumination decreases, negative emotions after experiencing infidelity decrease, too. Moreover, low uncontrollability is related to low negative emotions, low self-control is related to low negative emotions and low threat is related to low negative emotions. Direct effect of self-compassion on forgiveness ($\gamma = .58, p < .01$) was significant, which means when self-compassion raises, the chances of forgiving the partner increases, too. Direct effect of self-compassion on rumination was significant ($\gamma = -.25, p < .01$): when self-compassion increases, rumination decreases. Direct effects of self-compassion on negative emotions, self-control, threat and uncontrollability were not significant, contrary to the suggested structural model. Direct effect of forgiveness on rumination ($\gamma = -.48, p < .01$) was significant: when forgiveness increases, rumination decreases. Direct effects of forgiveness on self-control ($\gamma = .22, p < .05$), uncontrollability ($\gamma = -.40, p < .01$) and threat ($\gamma = -.31, p < .01$) were significant. These mean that when forgiveness increases, self-control increases, and threat and uncontrollability decrease. Rumination had a significant direct effect on threat variable ($\gamma = .34, p < .01$), on self-control variable ($\gamma = -.20, p < .05$) and uncontrollability variable ($\gamma = .23, p < .05$). It means when rumination raises, threat variable and uncontrollability variable increase while self-control variable decreases. All of the direct effects are shown in Table 3.13.

4.3.2.2. Indirect Effects of the Hypothesized Structural Model

There are indirect effects between some variables. The indirect effect of self-compassion on rumination through forgiveness was negative and significant ($-.28$). More clearly, individuals who had high self-compassion and after experienced infidelity forgive the partner, who were less ruminating. Although self-compassion

Table 4.8.

Standardized Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

| | | SC | F | R | U | SC | T | NE |
|----|-----------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|
| F | Direct effect | .58** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .58** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| R | Direct effect | -.25** | -.48** | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.28** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.52** | -.48** | - | - | - | - | - |
| U | Direct effect | .11 | -.40** | .23* | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.35** | -.11* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.24** | -.51** | .23* | - | - | - | - |
| SC | Direct effect | .05 | .22* | -.20* | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | .23** | .10* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .28** | .32** | -.20* | - | - | - | - |
| T | Direct effect | .02 | -.31** | .34** | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.36** | -.17** | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.34** | -.48** | .34** | - | - | - | - |
| NE | Direct effect | .10 | -.18* | .38** | .31** | .18** | .27* | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.42** | -.42** | .13* | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.32** | -.60** | .50** | .31** | .18** | .27** | - |

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. (F=Forgiveness, R= Rumination, U= Uncontrollability, SC= Self-compassion, T=Threat, NE= Negative emotions)

did not have a significant direct effect on some variables, it had an indirect effect. The indirect effect of self-compassion on threat was negative (-.36), the indirect effect of self-compassion on uncontrollability was negative (-.35), and the indirect effect of self-compassion on self-control was positive (.23) with two possible pathways; through rumination or through forgiveness. In other words, the participants with high self-compassion and forgive their partners; did not perceive that situation as a threat, or did not perceive it as “a situation out of control” or perceive it controllable by themselves.

According to another pathway; participants who have higher self-compassion and did not ruminate, did not perceive that situation as a threat, or did not perceive the situation out of control or perceive it controllable by themselves. Moreover, self-compassion had a significant negative total indirect effect on negative emotions with three paths: through rumination to uncontrollability or to self-control or to threat, or with six paths: through forgiveness to rumination and uncontrollability or to rumination and self-control or to rumination and threat. The total indirect effect of self-compassion through the nine paths that were the same as described above on negative emotions was significant (-.42).

The indirect effect of forgiveness on uncontrollability was negative (-.11), its indirect effect on threat was negative (-.17), and its indirect effect on self-control was positive (.10) through rumination. In other words, the participants who forgive their partners did not ruminate; and they did not perceive that situation as a threat. Furthermore, the participants who forgive their partners and had low rumination perceived the situation as a situation in their control; they did not perceive it out of control. Rumination had an indirect effect (.13) on negative emotions with possible three paths; through uncontrollability, self-control and threat. All of the effects are shown in Table 3.13. Structural model with only significant paths were presented below with the standardized estimates (Figure 6).

Squared multiple correlations (R^2) for the hypothesized structural model were calculated to show how much variance was accounted for in the latent variables. Self-compassion was accounted for 34% variance in forgiveness. Furthermore, 43% of the variance in rumination was explained by self-compassion and forgiveness. Self-compassion, forgiveness and rumination accounted for 26% of the variance in uncontrollability, 17% of the variance in self-control and 33% of the variance in threat. Moreover, 64% of the variance in negative emotions was explained by self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, uncontrollability, self-control and threat. Squared multiple correlations (R^2) were given in Table 3.14.

Table 4.9.

Squared Multiple Correlations for the Hypothesized Structural Model

| | Forgiveness | Rumination | Uncontrollability | Self-control | Threat | Negative emotions |
|-------|-------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|
| R^2 | .34 | .43 | .26 | .17 | .33 | .64 |

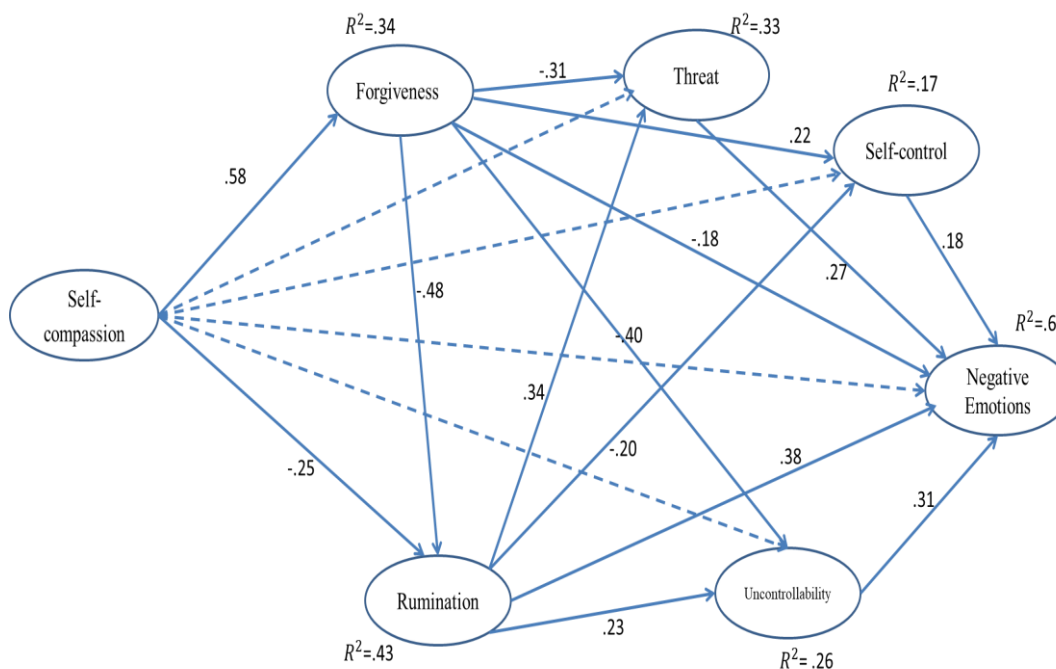


Figure 4.5. Standardized estimates of the Model

4.3.3. Results for Trimmed Model

As shown in the results of the test of the hypothesized model, some paths were non-significant in the model. Therefore, model trimming was conducted, and non-significant paths were eliminated from the model. Results of the trimmed model had acceptable fit indices. Chi-square test, $\chi^2(328) = 934.90$, $p < .001$) and the χ^2/df was 2.85. CFI was .92, TLI value was .91, RMSEA value was .065, and the SRMR value was .05. Chi-square difference test was used to check which model was better by examining the statistical significance of the change after deleting the nonsignificant paths. Chi-square difference test was significant $\Delta\chi^2(4) = 9.56$, $p = .05$. Therefore, the trimmed model was not used because it has differences with the proposed model. The rest of the analyses will continue with the proposed model.

4.3.4. Testing for the Structural Invariance of the Model across Gender

The results of ANOVA showed gender difference on the negative emotions; therefore, multi-group comparison analysis was completed in order to test whether the final model was invariant for these two groups. As used while testing the hypothesized model and the trimmed model, bootstrapping method was used to handle multivariate non-normality, on the multi-group comparison analysis. In order to measure if the final model was invariant or not across the gender, χ^2 test was conducted. A significant difference was found ($\Delta\chi^2(39) = 74.37$, $p < .01$) between females and males, which means the final model was not invariant across females and males.

The direct effects between the variables were compared according to gender, and the direct effects between variables for females (Figure 7) and for males (Figure 8) were presented. Stronger relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness for females ($\gamma = .59$, $p < .05$ for females, $\gamma = .51$, $p < .05$ for males) than males were found. Stronger relationship between forgiveness and rumination for females ($\gamma = -.58$, $p < .05$ for females, $\gamma = -.40$, $p < .05$ for males) than males were found.

The direct effect of self-compassion on threat was significant ($\gamma = -.21, p < .05$) for males whereas it was not significant for females. The direct effect of forgiveness on uncontrollability ($\gamma = -.52, p < .01$), threat ($\gamma = -.48, p < .01$) and self-control ($\gamma = .22, p < .05$) were significant for females, but it was not significant for males. Moreover, the direct effect of rumination on self-control ($\gamma = -.30, p < .01$) and negative emotions ($\gamma = .36, p < .05$) was significant for females while it was not significant for males. The direct effect of self-control ($\gamma = .26, p < .01$) and uncontrollability ($\gamma = .44, p < .01$) was significant for females while it was not significant for males.

According to comparisons of the indirect effects on model for females and males showed that the total indirect effect of the self-compassion on negative emotions was the same for females and males ($\gamma = -.42, p < .05$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of self-compassion on rumination through forgiveness was stronger for females ($\gamma = -.34, p < .05$) than males ($\gamma = -.20, p < .01$). The indirect effect of self-compassion on threat was stronger for females ($\gamma = -.40, p < .05$) than males ($\gamma = -.24, p < .05$). The indirect effect of self-compassion on self-control was significant for females ($\gamma = .28, p < .05$), not for males. On the other hand, the indirect effect of self-compassion on uncontrollability was significant for males ($\gamma = -.26, p < .05$), not for females.

The indirect effect of forgiveness through rumination on self-control was significant for females ($\gamma = .17, p < .05$) whereas it was not significant for males. The indirect effect of forgiveness through rumination on threat was significant for males ($\gamma = -.15, p < .05$), but not for females. Furthermore, the indirect effect of forgiveness on negative emotions was stronger for females ($\gamma = -.49, p < .01$) than males ($\gamma = -.25, p < .05$). The direct, indirect and total effects are presented for females in Table 3.15. and males in Table 3.16.

4.3.4.1. Squared Multiple Correlations (R^2) of the Model for Females and Males

Squared multiple correlations (R^2) for the model were calculated for females and males to show how much variance was accounted for in the latent variables for both of the genders; and the results are shown in Table 3.17. Self-compassion accounted

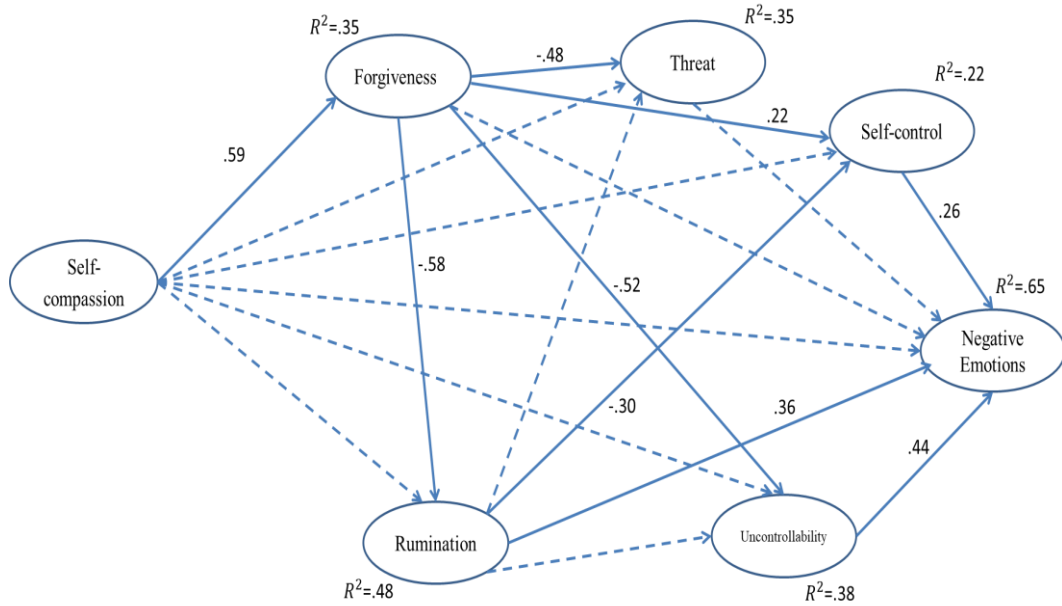


Figure 4.6. Standardized estimates of the final model for females

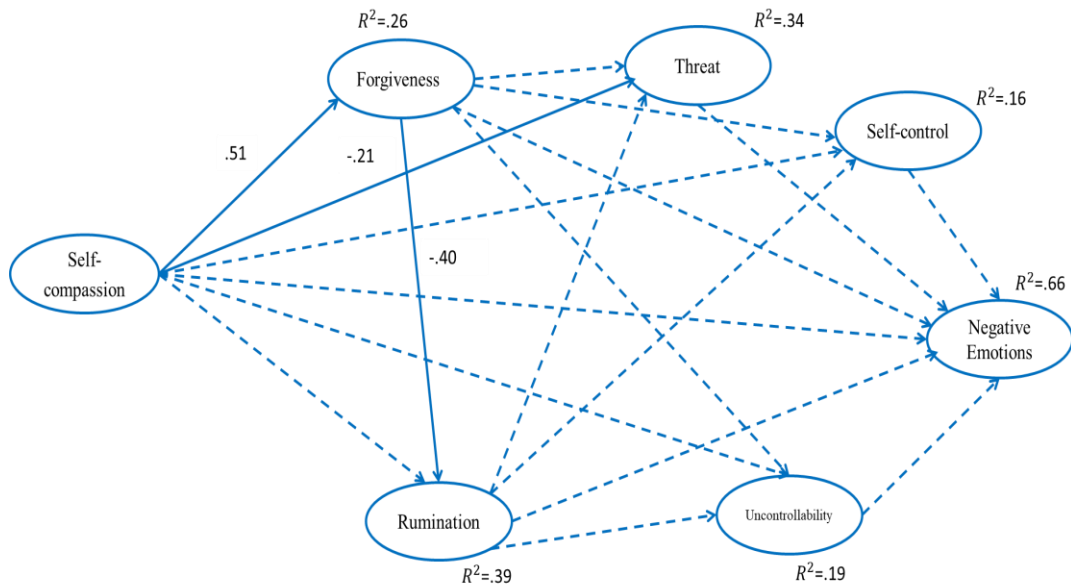


Figure 4.7. Standardized estimates of the final model for males

Table 4.10.

Standardized Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of the Model for Females

| | | SC | F | R | U | SC | T | NE |
|----|-----------------------|--------|--------|-------|------|------|-----|----|
| F | Direct effect | .59* | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .59* | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| R | Direct effect | -.17 | -.58* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.34* | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.51* | -.58* | - | - | - | - | - |
| U | Direct effect | .17 | -.52* | .24 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.43 | -.14 | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.26* | -.66* | .24 | - | - | - | - |
| SC | Direct effect | -.01 | .22* | -.30* | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | .28* | .17* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .28** | .39* | -.30* | - | - | - | - |
| T | Direct effect | .12 | -.48* | .23 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.40* | -.13 | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.28** | -.61* | .23* | - | - | - | - |
| NE | Direct effect | .16 | -.25 | .36* | .44* | .26* | .16 | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.42* | -.49** | .06 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.26** | -.74* | .42* | .44* | .26* | .16 | - |

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. (F=Forgiveness, R= Rumination, U= Uncontrollability, SC= Self-compassion, T=Threat, NE= Negative emotions)

Table 4.11.

Standardized Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of the Model for Males

| | | SC | F | R | U | SC | T | NE |
|----|-----------------------|--------|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| F | Direct effect | .51* | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .51* | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| R | Direct effect | .32 | -.40* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.20** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.52* | -.40* | - | - | - | - | - |
| U | Direct effect | .02 | -.31 | .19 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.26* | -.08 | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.24** | -.39* | .19 | - | - | - | - |
| SC | Direct effect | .22 | .25 | .01 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | .12 | -.01 | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | .34* | .25 | .01 | - | - | - | - |
| T | Direct effect | -.21* | -.08 | .39 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.24* | -.15* | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.45** | -.23 | .39 | - | - | - | - |
| NE | Direct effect | -.03 | -.16 | .30 | .20 | .13 | .40 | - |
| | Total Indirect effect | -.42* | -.25* | .19 | - | - | - | - |
| | Total effect | -.45* | -.41* | .49* | .20 | .13 | .40 | - |

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. (F=Forgiveness, R= Rumination, U= Uncontrollability, SC= Self-compassion, T=Threat, NE= Negative emotions)

for 35% variance in forgiveness for females and 26% variance for males. Moreover, 48% of the variance in rumination was explained by self-compassion and forgiveness for females and 39% of the variance for males. Self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination accounted for 38% of the variance in uncontrollability for females, 19% of the variance for males; 22% of the variance in self-control for females, 16% of the variance for males; 35% of the variance in threat for females, and 34% of the variance for males. Moreover, 65% of the variance in negative emotions was explained by self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, uncontrollability, self-control, and threat for females and 66% of the variance for males.

Table 4.12.

Squared Multiple Correlations for the Final Structural Model for Females and Males

| | Forgiveness | Rumination | Uncontrollability | Self-control | Threat | Negative emotions |
|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|
| Female R^2 | .35 | .48 | .38 | .22 | .35 | .65 |
| Male R^2 | .26 | .39 | .19 | .16 | .34 | .66 |

4.4. Summary of the Results

The aim of the current study was to discover the nature of the relationships among offended partners' self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal [primary appraisal (threat), secondary appraisal (self-control and uncontrollability)], and negative emotions as reactions to infidelity testing a model. The model was tested through structural equation modeling techniques. Most of the relationships between the variables were within expectations. The relation between descriptive variables and negative emotions after infidelity were measured before model testing. Results indicated significant mean difference on negative emotions after infidelity only for gender. Then, the model tested. The results of the model presented the following:

1. Self-compassion had a positive direct effect on forgiveness and a negative direct effect on rumination. Although self-compassion did not have a significant

direct effect on negative emotions, it had an indirect effect on it through other variables. Also, self-compassion did not directly affect self-control, uncontrollability and threat. Rather, it had an indirect effect on them.

2. Forgiveness had a positive direct effect on self-control and on the other variables had negative direct effect (rumination, negative emotions, threat, and uncontrollability).

3. Rumination had a negative direct effect on self-control; however, it had a positive direct effect on uncontrollability, threat and negative emotions.

4. Cognitive appraisal's dimensions (self-control, uncontrollability and threat) had a positive direct effect on negative emotions.

5. The model showed difference across gender.

The results of the present study were discussed in the light of the related literature in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The discussion comprises three sections. In the first section, the results of the study were discussed in the light of related literature by considering the hypothesis of the present study. The second section presents the implications of the results for future research and practice. The third section contains recommendations for further studies and the limitations of the present study.

5.1. Discussion of the Findings

Relationships are important in humans' lives. Especially romantic relationships provide many positive gains, such as greater well-being, fewer mental health problems, less stress and faster healing. However, sometimes romantic relationships may end up causing psychological distress. Infidelity in romantic relationships is one of the common causes of psychological distress (Johnson, 2003; Hall & Fincham, 2009).

The related studies have cumulated evidence that people with infidelity experiences report negative reactions, including depression (Gordon et al., 2004) and anxiety disorders (Cano, & O'Leary, 2000). On the other hand, literature suggests that individuals' reports of negative reactions to infidelity may differ in terms of nature and severity as some people manifest much milder reactions and recover relatively faster. For example, women appear to react more negatively to emotional infidelity than men (Fernandez et al., 2006). Men show more sexual jealousy than women regardless of the infidelity type (Bendixen et al., 2015). Moreover, men have had higher scores on homicidal/suicidal feelings, but women have had higher scores on undesirable/insecure feelings (Shackelford et al., 2000). However, what variables are

responsible for these individual differences remain unclear, including which variables may play roles in gender differences.

Therefore, this study aimed to understand the nature of the relationship between infidelity and its psychological outcomes. With the help of the related literature, a model explaining this relationship was constructed and tested in this thesis. The variables selected for the present study were self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal [primary appraisal (threat), secondary appraisal (self-control and uncontrollability)], and emotional reactions to infidelity. The model proposes that when offended partners are more self-compassionate, forgive the unfaithful partner and perceive the situation as a situation under their control, they experience less negative emotions. On the other hand, when they ruminate more, perceive the situation as a threat and perceive the situation as a situation that cannot be controlled by anyone, they feel more negative emotions. Moreover, the variables of forgiveness, rumination, self-compassion, and the control are likely to be responsible for gender differences in reactions to infidelity. The hypothesized structural model is shown in Figure 3, which can be found in Chapter 4.

The results of the model tested via SEM are presented in Figure 5 in Chapter 4. According to the results, when offended partners forgive the unfaithful partner, they feel a lower level of negative emotions; on the other hand, when they ruminate more, perceive the situation as a threat, and perceive the situation as a situation that cannot be controlled by anyone, their negative emotions are stronger. Interestingly, offended partners' negative emotions are stronger in cases where they perceive the situation as controllable by themselves. That is, perceiving the situation as controllable by themselves (self-control) was not negatively related to negative emotions as it was expected. When the offended partners perceive the situation as controllable by themselves, they show a higher level of negative reactions. The results of the model show that only self-compassion is not related to negative reactions; however, it is related to negative emotional reactions through other variables. Furthermore, across males and females, different variables are related to negative emotions. These variables could explain the difference in negative emotional reactions across gender.

Figure 9 shows the “significant paths”, “significant paths through other variables”; and “positive and negative relationships between variables.”

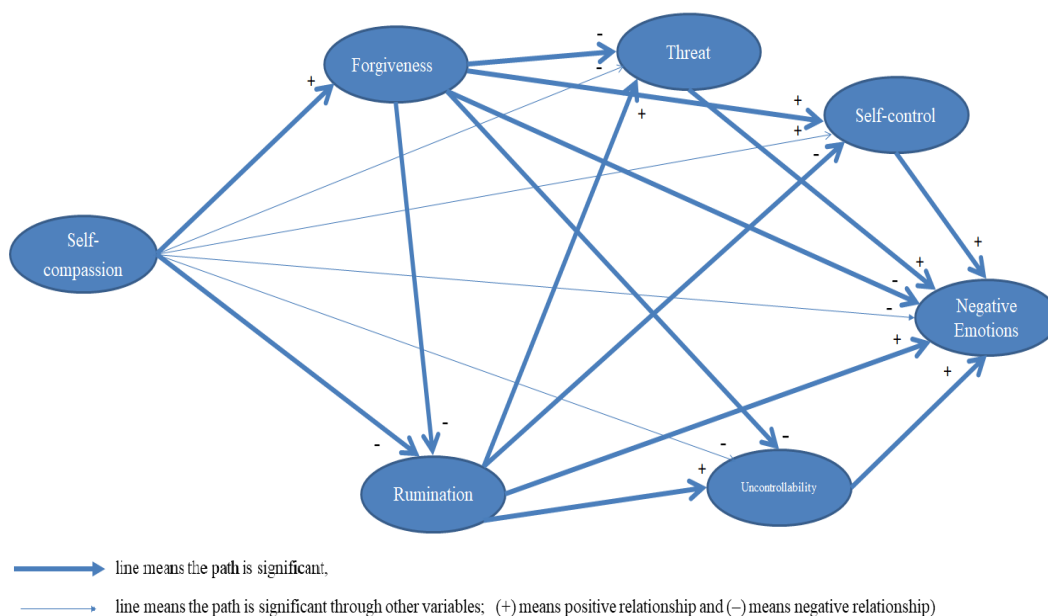


Figure 5.1. Direct and indirect relations, and non-significant relationships between self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisals (threat, self-control, uncontrollability) and negative emotional reactions

The findings of the study that were summarized above have shed lights on many important points. Before discussing the results of the model testing, some of the preliminary results should be noticed. Although it may not be a systematic reliable prevalence rate, the results of the study indicate that infidelity is not uncommon among Turkish population between the ages of 18 and 38. In the present study, 273 people out of 1257 participants reported that they were cheated on and 158 of them reported that they “believed that they were cheated on”. Therefore, in total, 431 of the participants discovered that they had been cheated on, or they had suspicions about their partner had been cheating on them. This is 34.29 % of the total participants. These results are very similar to Hall and Fincham’s study (2009). They found that 35% of college students had infidelity in their present dating relationship. On the other hand, some studies found higher rates in dating relationships. For instance, in the study of Allen and Baucom (2006), 69% of the participants reported

they had experienced some any kind of infidelity in the last two years. The reasons for finding different percentages in the present study than some other studies could be related to the definition of infidelity, which can change from person to person or the method of reaching the participants. There is not any consensus on the definition of infidelity (Blow & Hartnett, 2005b) and self-reported infidelity rates are high because people have different perceptions for infidelity (Mattingly et al., 2010). In the present study, participants reported that if their partner had cheated on them, an extradyadic behavior may be accepted as infidelity for some people, but for others it may not. Therefore, the prevalence can change from study to study easily.

Two-way ANOVA was utilized to examine the impact of gender and form of infidelity (sexual or emotional) on negative emotions. The only significant result confirms the gender differences in reactions to infidelity as females reported more negative emotions than males. In other words, females show more severe negative emotional reactions than males. Previous researchers, such as Cano and O'Leary (2000), pointed out that in a marriage, women are more likely to report major depression after discovering infidelity. Previous studies reported gender differences in terms of the types of the reactions manifested, as well. For example, Shackelford et al. (2000) found that men's scores are higher in the following domains mentioned in the study: content, homicidal/suicidal, happy, and sexually aroused. However, women's scores are higher in the following domains: nauseated/repulsed, depressed, undesirable/insecure, helpless/abandoned, and anxious.

Furthermore, the previous studies related to gender and the offended partner's emotional reactions to infidelity were focused on mostly the difference in emotional and sexual infidelity (e.g. Shackelford et al., 2000). In the present study, the model was tested for the gender for all types of infidelity because males and females did not show different reactions to different forms of infidelity (sexual or emotional). Based on these preliminary findings, in this study, the suggested model was tested to see whether it may help to explain gender differences in severity of negative reactions to infidelity.

The lack of significant gender difference in the forms of infidelity (sexual or emotional) was rather unexpected as the majority of existing studies reported gender differences. However, a few studies, such as Berman and Frazier (2005), reported that there is no gender difference among victims of infidelity in their reactions to sexual or emotional infidelity. Some other studies indicated that women reported more negative reactions to emotional infidelity as men reported more negative emotions to sexual infidelity (e.g. Shackelford et al., 2000; Groothof et al., 2009). In the present study, gender and the forms of infidelity (sexual or emotional) did not have a significant relationship. This non-significant relationship might stem from the way that the type of infidelity was asked to the participants. When the participants were asked to answer a forced-choice paradigm, men and women showed different reactions to sexual and emotional infidelity (e.g. Schützwohl, 2004); however, when the question is not forced-choice, men and women report negative feelings in reaction to any kind of infidelity, regardless of the fact that it is sexual or emotional. (e.g., Lishner, Nguyen, Stocks, & Zillmer, 2008).

The results of the SEM analyses revealed that forgiveness, rumination, cognitive appraisal (threat, self-control and uncontrollability) variables were direct whereas self-compassion was not a direct predictor of the emotional reactions to infidelity. Self-compassion was not related to negative emotional reactions of the offended partner; that means, self-compassionate and not self-compassionate offended partners do not have difference in negative emotional reactions. The overall fit of the model was acceptable even though some of the paths were non-significant. When the non-significant paths were trimmed on the model, the trimmed model had differences with the proposed model. Therefore, results from the proposed model were discussed in this chapter. In this section, firstly direct relationships, secondly indirect relationships of the model and then the structural invariance of the model across gender were discussed.

5.1.1. Discussion of the Direct Relationships

The results showed that forgiveness, rumination, uncontrollability, self-control, and threat variables were related to emotional reactions to infidelity; however self-compassion was not related to emotional reactions to infidelity. According to the results, the individuals with the tendency to forgive the unfaithful partner report relatively less severe negative reactions than others. This finding is consistent with the results of the previous studies. Previous studies showed that forgiveness has a negative relationship with depression and anxiety (Hargrave, 1994), and traumatic symptoms of the offended partners (Gordon et al., 2005). Forgiveness helps people to handle the painful emotional results after interpersonal injuries (Baskin & Enright, 2004). Forgiveness is for the offended partner to reduce his/her suffering, it is not forgetting the affair, or it does not always mean reuniting. Forgiveness is helpful because it focuses on empathy, humility, commitment and apology (McCullough, 2000) and with the help of empathy, humility, commitment and apology, the couple can gain trust, solidarity and connection again (Fife, Weeks, & Stellberg-Filbert, 2013). By considering what had been given above, an individual who forgive the unfaithful partner has a lower level negative emotions after the infidelity.

Moreover, when an individual forgives the partner, he/she ruminates less about the event. That is consistent with the findings of this study. Higher levels of forgiveness were related to lower level of rumination and these both were significantly correlated to level of negative emotions but in an opposite direction. Previous studies confirm negative correlations between rumination and forgiveness (Berry et al., 2005; Berry et al., 2001). When an individual has an enhanced tendency to forgive the partner, he/she is more likely to think that the event is under their control. They think it is less of a threat and less uncontrollable, and they have a lower level negative emotions.

Most of the studies accept forgiveness as an outcome of a socio-cognitive process; however, some of them accept it as an initiator of socio-cognitive changes (Wenzel, Turner, & Okimoto, 2010). The findings of Wenzel, Turner, and Okimoto's (2010)

study show that forgiveness of an offender makes it easier to evaluate the event in a calmer mood. However, after a person discovers infidelity, when he/she ruminates about it, negative emotions raise and that do not let forgiveness (Edmondson, 2004). The results also revealed that people with ruminative tendencies are more likely to report negative reactions following infidelity. Rumination raises the negative emotions about the event, which can avert forgiveness (Edmondson, 2004). When people encounter a difficult life event, rumination can play a role in an increase in the risk of psychological problems. Moreover, Onayli et al., (2016) find that when brooding and reflection are low, which are aspects of rumination, the negative affect is low. Specifically, people with a tendency to ruminate have also a tendency to feel a higher level of negative emotions after the discovery of their partner's infidelity. Therefore, rumination is helpful in understanding the underlying reasons for different individual reactions to infidelity.

Cognitive appraisal is found to be related to negative emotional reactions as well. When the offended partners perceive infidelity as a threat, they feel a higher level of negative emotions. When they perceive infidelity as a situation that cannot be controlled by anyone, they feel a higher level of negative emotions. Negative affect is related to threat and uncontrollability (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Dopke & Milner, 2000). According to the results, as expected, the perception that the event is less uncontrollable has close links with reporting a lower level of negative emotions. One of the reasons why uncontrollable events are stressful is that they cannot be prevented (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1996). Moreover, when the event is less threatening to the individuals, they will experience less severe negative emotions. Threat appraisal seems to be a reason for negative emotions, such as anxiety or fear (Folkman, 2008).

Wang et al. (2012) stated that when the infidelity is perceived as a severe threat, high emotional distress is experienced. In addition, Durak (2007) found that threat is positively correlated with negative emotions. According to the present study, when individuals think the event is less out of their control (higher perception of self-

control), they report more severe negative emotions. In other words, when the offended partners perceive infidelity as controllable by themselves, they feel a higher level of negative emotions. The self-control perception is positively related to positive emotions, and it is not related to negative emotions (Durak, 2007). Furthermore, as the level of personal control on an event increases, depression decreases (Dağ, 1990).

However, in the present study, self-control perception and negative emotional reactions to infidelity are positively related. After discovering infidelity, when an individual thinks he/she can control the event, he/she feels more negative emotions. Literature shows that people can manage the negative feeling if they can control the situation; however, in infidelity, they cannot control their partners' behaviors. That may be the reason of why they feel a higher level of negative emotions. Although some cases are largely controllable and predictable, they are still stressful because these events or situations are based on the limits of one's abilities and forces the concept of "self" (Dağ, 1990). Moreover, in Turkish culture, most people believe in destiny, and this can be seen in many Turkish idioms (Onat, 2005). Instead of having the responsibility for an event, thinking that the event is a part of their destiny lets people have a lower level of negative emotions. Perceiving the infidelity as something that they can control, might cause people to feel guilty and think responsible for the event. These thoughts and feelings could be the reasons for negative emotions.

The results further suggested that self-compassion has a relationship with forgiveness and rumination. When an offended partner is more self-compassionate, he/she can have an enhanced tendency to forgive the unfaithful partner, and he/she have less tendency to ruminate about infidelity than the others who are less compassionate. Previous studies support that self-compassion lowers rumination (Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007). Moreover, higher self-compassion is related to higher forgiveness (Neff & Pommier, 2013).

Contrary to the purposed model, self-compassion was not related to negative emotional reactions; however, with the roles of forgiveness, rumination and cognitive appraisals (threat, self-control and uncontrollability), self-compassion and negative emotional reactions to infidelity were related to each other. The direct and indirect effects on emotional reactions to infidelity were shown in Figure 10. In the literature, there is only one study (see Dhastbozorgi, 2018) showing the relationship between self-compassion and reactions to infidelity, and according to this study, self-compassion therapy is helpful for emotion regulation after infidelity. It was expected that self-compassion is related to the negative emotions after discovering infidelity. Since there are other variables which are related to both, this relationship was expected to be significant. Less self-compassionate people have more negative self-feelings than self-compassionate people (Leary et al., 2007).

Baker and McNulty (2011) claimed that there are contrasting effects of self-compassion; it may help people to be far from negative feelings; on the other hand, it may decrease the motivation to correct the problems in relationships. Self-compassion is necessary for healing identity and motivates the person to go against vulnerability; therefore, after infidelity, the best way to follow is self-compassion to handle the situation (Stosny, 2013). Self-compassion has positive relations with wanted outcomes (Petersen, 2014), negatively related to negative emotions (Neff et al., 2005; Neff, et. al., 2007), and had a strong relationship with negative emotions after a bad event (Leary et al., 2007). Therefore, negative emotions after discovering betrayal were expected to be related to self-compassion negatively. Self-compassion can be beneficial during coping with a negative life event, and it is related with lower negative affect. When self-compassionate people experienced a negative life event, they do not tend to ruminate about it (Leary et al., 2007). Furthermore, people who treat themselves kindly were expected to have lower level negative emotions than those who treat themselves harshly. Moreover, these two variables are related to other variables, such as guilt and shame, which are feelings that a partner can experience after discovering infidelity. Moreover, common humanity, which is an aspect of self-compassion, is also related to negative emotions after a bad event (Leary et al., 2007).

On the other hand, as known from Neff (2003a), self-compassion can help the individual to be more resilient by promoting healthy behaviors in a situation which is less threatening. This may be the reason why self-compassion and negative emotions are not related in the present study and they are related through other variables. Participants can see infidelity as a big threat, so this does not let them develop healthy behaviors. Moreover, self-compassion has a relationship with negative emotions after infidelity only with the help of other variables; threat may explain this indirect relationship.

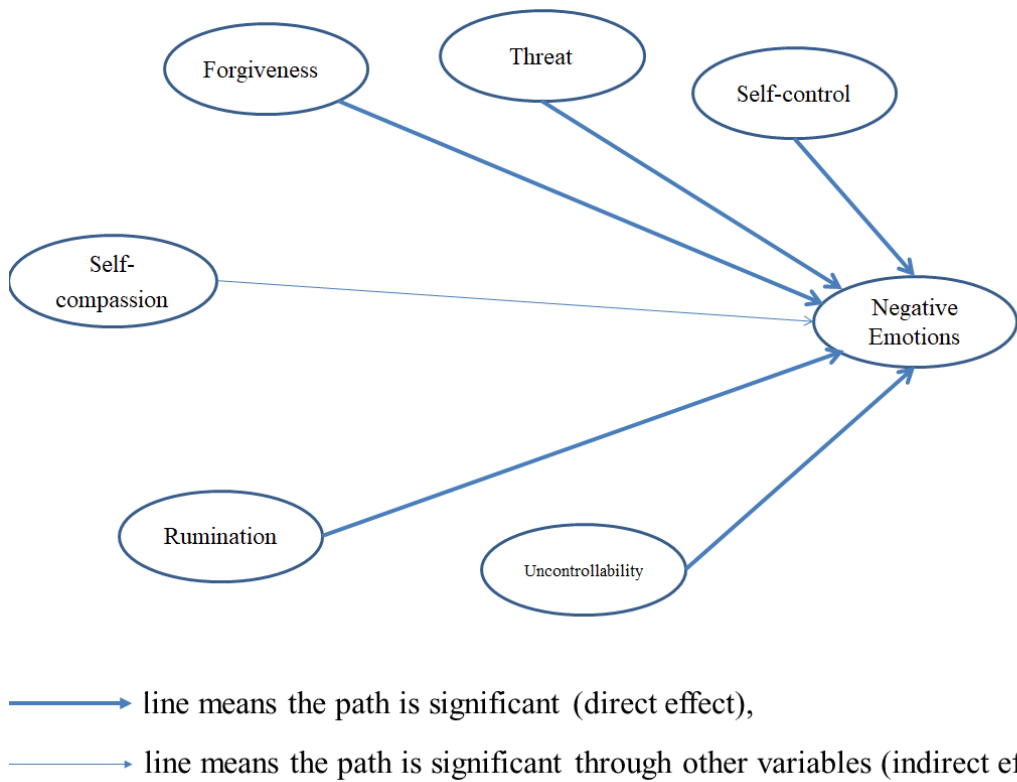


Figure 5.2. Direct and indirect relations between endogenous variables and exogenous variable

5.1.2. Discussion of the Indirect Effects

There are significant indirect effects between some variables in the model. The indirect effects can be seen in Figure 9. In this section, only the significant indirect

effect of self-compassion on negative emotional reactions are discussed. To put it more explicitly, the relationship between self-compassion and negative emotional reactions to infidelity through other variables were discussed. Self-compassion did not have a relationship with some variables; however, it had a relationship with them through some other variables. Self-compassion is negatively correlated to negative emotional reactions through several path ways, including forgiveness, rumination, threat, self-control and uncontrollability. This means that self-compassionate offended people show lower level negative emotional reactions to infidelity if they forgive their unfaithful partner, they are not ruminative, they do not perceive infidelity as a threat, they perceive the event as something that they cannot control and if they do not perceive it as uncontrollable by anybody. It is not certain exactly by which path the relationship can be explained.

Self-compassion is related to negative emotions after experiencing a negative life event (Neff et al., 2005); however, in the present study, after the infidelity, self-compassion needs other variables to have a relationship with negative emotional reactions. When an individual is more self-compassionate, he/she has less tendency to ruminate (Raes, 2010) and more tendency to forgive others (Neff & Pommier, 2013). Moreover, when there is a situation which is not a big treat, the individual can have a lower level of negative emotions with the help of self-compassion (Neff, 2003a). However, self-compassion does not relate directly to threat. They have an indirect relationship through forgiveness and rumination. By considering these findings, it can be asserted that people perceive infidelity as a severe threat, so self-compassion does not relate to negative emotions without the other variables. Moreover, forgiveness and rumination should have roles in the relationship between self-compassion and threat.

In the present study, 64% of the variance in negative emotions was explained by all the variables of the study: self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, uncontrollability, self-control and threat. Therefore, these variables explain more than half of the variance in negative emotions. In other words, the relationships of

self-compassion, forgiveness, rumination, uncontrollability, self-control, and threat can explain negative emotional reactions to infidelity together. By considering the strong effects of the variables on the emotional reactions to infidelity and literature review, two possible path ways from the nine path ways have been discussed. In the first possible path way, self-compassion is indirectly related to negative emotional reactions to infidelity through forgiveness and rumination as shown in Figure 11. That means when an individual is self-compassionate, he/she is more likely to have a lower level of negative emotions if he/she has a higher tendency to forgive the partner and a lower tendency to ruminate.

According to the results, self-compassion has a relationship with forgiveness and rumination; and they have relationships with negative emotional reactions. High self-compassion is related to lower rumination (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007) and higher forgiveness (Neff & Pommier, 2013). Moreover, rumination raises the negative emotions about the event, which can avert forgiveness (Edmondson, 2004). As shown in the literature, self-compassion, forgiveness and rumination are related to one another. Moreover, negative emotional reactions are related to forgiveness (Lusterman, 1998) and rumination (Edmondson, 2004). These strong relationships could be helpful to self-compassionate people to have a lower level of negative emotions.

The second possible path way between self-compassion and negative emotional reactions to infidelity is through forgiveness, rumination and threat as shown in Figure 12. A self-compassionate person could have a lower level of negative emotions if he/she has a higher tendency to forgive the partner, a lower tendency to ruminate and lower perception that the situation is a threat. Different than the previous path way, here, threat had a role. Self-compassion is not related directly to

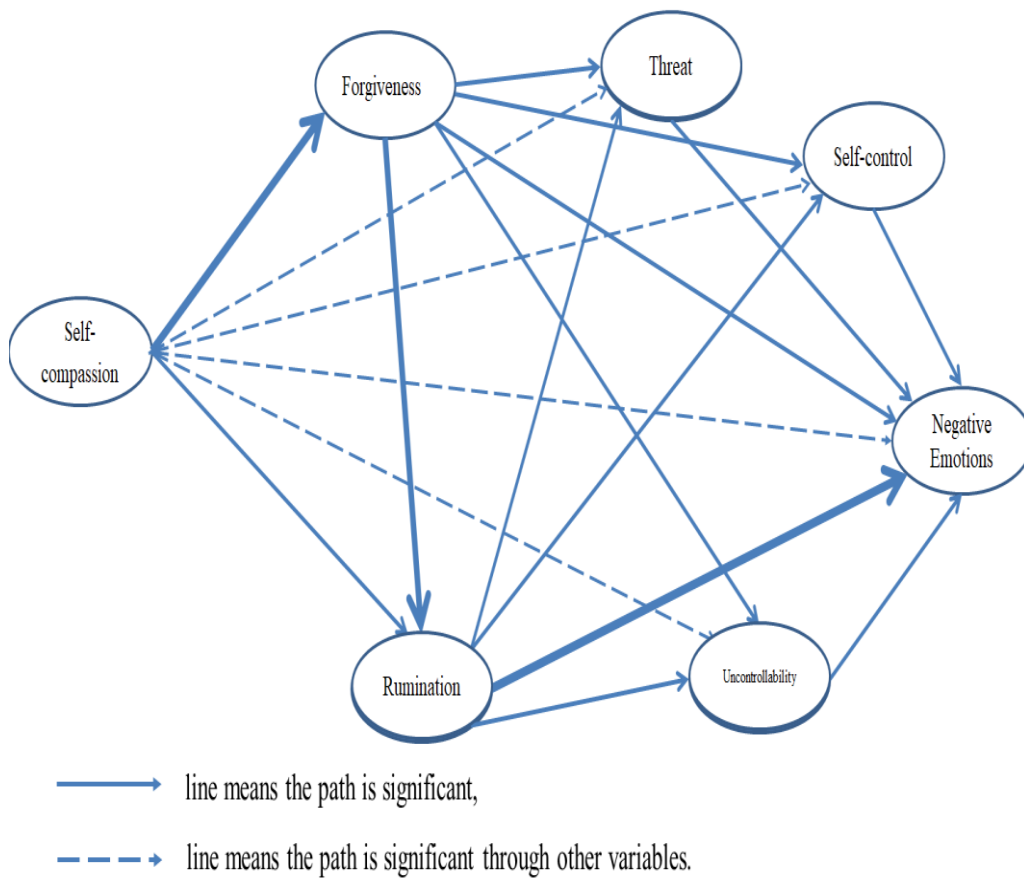


Figure 5.3. Path from self-compassion to negative emotional reactions to infidelity through self-compassion and rumination

threat appraisal; however, self-compassion and threat appraisal are related through forgiveness and rumination. Threat appraisal is directly related to negative emotional reactions to infidelity. Threat appraisal is a cause of negative emotions, such as anxiety or fear (Folkman, 2008). Self-compassion can be helpful in promoting healthy behaviors if an event is less threatening (Neff, 2003a). Therefore, individuals who are self-compassionate perceive the situation less threatening by considering the relationship through forgiveness and rumination. In this way, their self-compassion could help them deal with their negative emotions better.

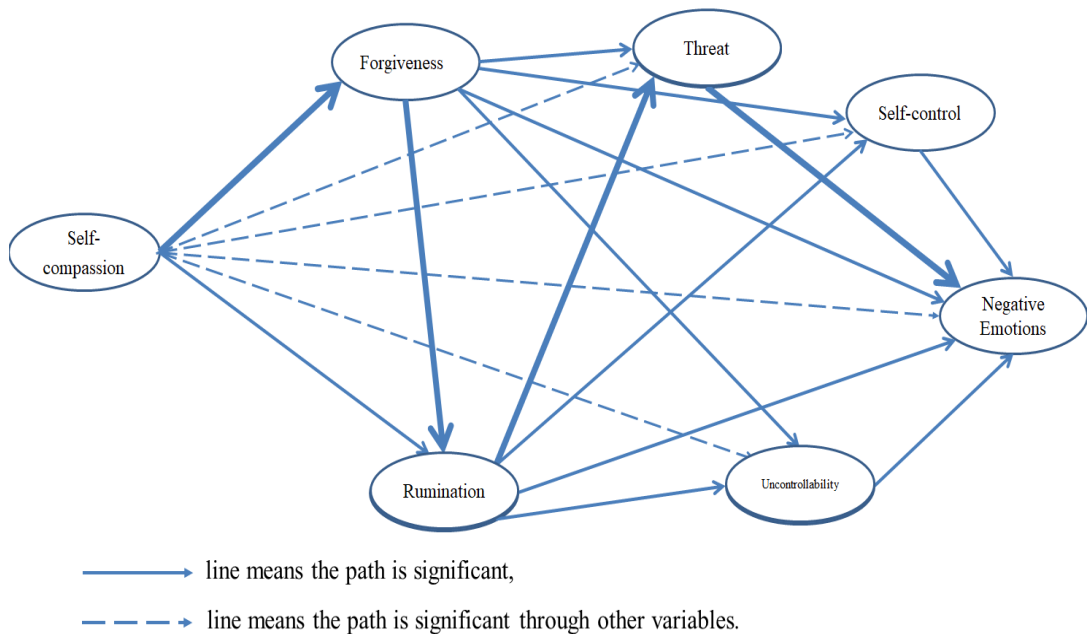


Figure 5.4. Path from self-compassion to negative emotional reactions to infidelity through self-compassion, rumination and threat

5.1.3. Structural Invariance of the Model across Gender

In this section, the results of gender difference for the model were discussed. According to the results, a significant difference was found between females and males, which means that the final model was not invariant across females and males. In other words, the model is different for males and females. Before the model testing, in the preliminary analyses, women showed higher level of negative emotions than men. The reason for this difference could be the fact that women tend to be less self-compassionate and more ruminative. According to the models for both of the genders, the common results are as such: the self-compassion level of the participants and tendency to forgive do not show any relationships with having negative emotions. However, for both genders, self-compassion and forgiveness are related to negative emotional reactions indirectly. Moreover, a stronger positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness for females than males were

found. A stronger negative relationship between forgiveness and rumination for females than males was found.

The interesting result for males is that none of the variables are directly related to negative emotional reactions as shown in Figure 8 in the chapter 4. This means that self-compassion level, forgiveness level, rumination level, perceiving the situation as a threat or not, perceiving the situation as controllable by self or perceiving the situation as something that cannot be controlled by anybody do not have any direct relationship with showing severe negative emotional reactions to infidelity for males. However, self-compassion, forgiveness and rumination have an indirect relationship with negative emotional reactions. Therefore, when all of them are together, they explain more than half of the variance (66%) of the negative reactions. Moreover, when males are self-compassionate, they are less likely to perceive infidelity as a threat.

For females, the results were different than males as shown in Figure 7 in the chapter 4. Rumination is directly related to negative emotional reactions to infidelity. This means that when a woman is ruminative, she has more severe negative emotions than other women who are not ruminative. Furthermore, when a woman perceives infidelity as something that can be controlled by herself, she has a higher level negative emotions, and when she perceives infidelity as something that is not controllable by anybody, again, she has a higher level negative emotions. Moreover, the relationship between rumination and negative emotional reactions can be explained through perceiving the situation as controllable by herself. In other words, when a woman is ruminative and perceives infidelity as something that she can control, she has a higher level of negative emotions.

Although only the variables that have been mentioned above have a direct relationship with negative emotional reactions, again, as in the males, all variables together explain more than half of the variance (65%) of negative emotional reactions. Interestingly, when a woman has a higher tendency to forgive, this is not

related to having a lower level of negative emotions after discovering infidelity. On the other hand, as seen in results of the female model, self-compassion and forgiveness have an indirect relationship with negative emotional reactions through several path ways. Although there are differences in the relationships between variables as explained above, the variance in negative emotions explained by the variables of the study did not have a big difference across gender (i.e., 65% for females and 66% for males).

Finding different models for females and males could be explained by the relationship between self-compassion and threat. High self-compassionate men perceive infidelity less threatening, but this is not valid for high self-compassionate women. According to Neff (2003a), when a situation is not a big threat, self-compassion of the individual could help in controlling negative emotions. Therefore, this may be the reason for having different models.

5.2. Implications for Research and Practice

It is very common to have a romantic relationship, and during this relationship, there is a possibility to be cheated. When an individual discovers the betrayal, he/she may need support. The present study has some implications for research and counseling. The results of the study should help for psychological counselors because the relationship problems are common among the adult population (Erdur-Baker & Bıçak, 2006; Erdur-Baker, Aberson, Drapper, & Barrow, 2006). The studies related to the treatment of clients who seek counseling after experiencing infidelity are limited, and the options for treatment are inadequate (Blow & Hartnett, 2005a). Moreover, how to overcome negative emotions after infidelity is a necessary area to study because individuals who were cheated on are more likely to report psychological problems including even depression or PTSD (Gordon et al., 2004). The majority of current study's participants are university students with the age range of 18 and 35; therefore, counselors can use the information from this study when they are working with this age group.

The demographic information, personal traits and cognitive appraisals of the clients can give an idea to counselors, so this would be helpful to understand which characteristics make it difficult to overcome negative emotions. For example, the present study shows that ruminative and unforgiving attitude and perceiving the infidelity as something that can be controlled by oneself causes an individual to have more severe negative emotional reactions. Therefore, these groups can be seen as risk groups. Furthermore, it would be easier to improve treatments by considering the related variables with negative reactions after the infidelity.

Counselors can empower cheated clients' self-compassion, help them handle rumination or improve the ability for forgiveness, which can be part of a self-development and help the client to be able to cope with difficult conditions. In this way, clients can recognize that cognitive appraisal, self-compassion, rumination and forgiveness have significant roles in dealing with negative emotional reactions to infidelity.

The variables which were selected for this study are risk or protective personal factors, and they can be used to clarify individual differences to infidelity. These variables are important for the counselors to understand the clients who are under risk. For instance, it is known that women have higher negative cognitive appraisal (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004), higher rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 1999) and lower self-compassion (Neff, 2003a) than men. Therefore, the relationship between gender and reactions to infidelity may be related to such personal factors (Simon & Nath, 2004). Cognitive appraisal, rumination, forgiveness and self-compassion, which seem to have links with the negative emotions of women, can explain the gender differences in reactions to infidelity.

Therefore, the current study can be helpful for professionals in the field of psychological counseling to understand what variables are related to an individual's negative emotional reactions to romantic infidelity; and in this way, they can improve treatments by considering romantic infidelity concerns, so they can help couples before or after experiencing infidelity. Moreover, in the lectures for counselor education, subject related to infidelity and the model of the present study could be

discussed to teach the counselor candidates why reactions of people after discovering infidelity vary.

This study should be an important contribution to the national and international literature with its proposed and tested models. It should help further studies by generating new research questions to be posed and new hypotheses to be tested by using new methodologies and different samples as mentioned in the following section.

5.3. Recommendations for Further Research

The present study has several further recommendations. First of all, the present study was not longitudinal; however, over time, emotions can change after the infidelity. Therefore, a longitudinal study could be conducted to measure their emotions to see the differences in time. Secondly, self-report measurement tools have the problem of social desirability, and this can confuse the results. However, this is a way of measuring emotions. Furthermore, most of the studies related to self-compassion and romantic relationships used self-report measurement tools, like the present study (e.g. Neff & Beretvas, 2013). Different methodological approaches can be used to collect data as objective coding of behavior.

Thirdly, there are not enough studies about infidelity in Turkey; however, this is an event many people experience. In the further studies, it could be better to collect data from both partners who were cheated on and who cheated on in order to measure the experiences of both parties. In this way, it would be possible to have more information about infidelity in Turkey. Moreover, male participants mostly did not want to participate in a study related to infidelity. The reason why they did not want to participate can be the subject of another research study.

Fourthly, in order to increase the generalizability, participants who are affected by different demographic, environmental and cultural factors can be reached by random sampling. Furthermore, the current study did not search about LGBTI relations. In further studies, it would be important to have a sample with LGBTI participants.

Fifthly, although the variables in the present study explained more than half of the variance on emotional reactions to infidelity, there is an unexplained part. In the further studies, other variables could be used to explain emotional reactions to dating infidelity, such as self-forgiveness and co-rumination. Furthermore, in the present study, most of the variables had mediator roles. Further studies can search the relationships among these variables.

Moreover, the current study tried to explain why people show different emotional reactions to infidelity in romantic relationships. It was found that self-compassionate people with the help of other variables show less negative severe emotions to infidelity. According to the knowledge of the researcher, this relationship was found for the first time, in the present study. To better understand this relationship, further studies should consider using other variables (e.g. self-forgiveness and coping strategies) as mediators.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL LETTER FROM MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

FEN BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL AND
APPLIED SCIENCES

 ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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03.03.2014

Gönderilen : Doç. Dr. Özgür Erdur BAKER
Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen
IAK Başkanı



İlgi : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlik Bölümü öğrencisi Selin Onaylı'nın "Aldatmaya Gösterilen Duygusal Tepkiler: Cinsiyet Farkı ile Bilişsel Değerlendirme Ruminasyon, Öz-Anlayış, ve Affetmenin Aracı Rolü" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

03/03/2014



Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
(UEAM) Başkanı
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

B. SAMPLE ITEMS OF FORGIVENESS SCALE

| Size bilerek haksızlık yapan ya da kötü davranan birine nasıl tepki verdiğinizi düşünün. Burada haksızlık ya da kötü davranış ile kastedilen, karşıdaki kişinin bilinçli olarak yaptığı davranışlardır. Aşağıdaki cümlelere ne kadar katılmaktasınız? | Kesinlikle | Katılmıyorum | Kararsızım | Katılıyorum | Kesinlikle |
|---|------------|--------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Bu kişinin bana nasıl bilerek haksızlık yaptığını düşünmekten kendimi alamıyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Zamanımı bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiden intikam almanın yollarını bulmaya çalışarak geçiririm. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiyi hatırlattıkları için, belli kişi ve/veya yerlerden uzak dururum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiyle karşılaşırsam kendimi huzursuz hissetmem. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiye olan kızgınlığım geçti. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Bu kişinin bilerek yaptığı haksız davranışlarıyla ilgili duygusal yaralarımın çoğunun iyileştiğini düşünüyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiye şefkat/merhamet duyuyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Bana bilerek haksızlık yapan kişiye gelecekte başkalarının adil davranmasını umuyorum. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

C. SAMPLE ITEMS OF NEGATIVE AFFECT SUBSCALE OF PANAS

| Bu ölçek farklı duyguları tanımlayan bir takım sözcükler içermektedir. Yaşamınızın bir döneminde yaşamış olduğunuz aldatılma olayına göre nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünüp her maddeyi okuyun. Uygun cevabı her maddenin yanında ayrılan yere işaretleyin. Cevaplarınızı verirken aşağıdaki puanları kullanın. | Çok az veya hiç | Biraz | Ortalama | Oldukça | Çok fazla |
|--|-----------------|-------|----------|---------|-----------|
| 2. Sıkıntılı | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Mutsuz | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Suçlu | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Ürkmüş | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Asabi | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Utanmış | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Sinirli | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

D. SAMPLE ITEMS OF SELF-COMPASSION SCALE

| Lütfen her bir maddeyi ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınızı verilen 5'li derecelendirme ölçeğini kullanarak yanıtlayınız. | Hiçbir zaman | Nadiren | Bazen | Çoğu zaman | Her zaman |
|---|--------------|---------|-------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Kendimi kötü hissettiğimde, kötü olan her şeye takılma eğilimim vardır. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Yetersizliklerimi düşünmek kendimi daha yalnız ve dünyadan kopuk hissetmeme neden olur. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Benim için önemli bir şeyde başarısız olduğumda, yetersizlik hisleriyle tükenirim. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Zor zamanlar geçirdiğimde kendime daha katı (acımasız) olma eğilimindeyim. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Kendimi bir şekilde yetersiz hissettiğimde kendi kendime birçok insanın aynı şekilde kendi hakkında yetersizlik duyguları yaşadığını hatırlatmaya çalışırım. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Çok sıkıntılıysam, kendime ihtiyacım olan ilgi ve şefkati gösteririm | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Acı veren bir şey olduğunda, durumu dengeli bir bakış açısıyla görmeye çalışırım. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Sevmediğim yanlarımı gördüğümde kendi kendimi üzerim. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Ben mücadele halindeyken diğer herkesin işlerinin benimkinden kolay gittiğini hissetme eğilimim vardır. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Bir şey beni üzdüğünde, duygusal olarak bunu abartırım. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. Kendi kusur ve yetersizliklerime karşı hoşgörülüyümdür. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

E. SAMPLE ITEMS OF RUMINATION SCALE

| Aşağıdaki ifadelere katılıp katılmadığınızı verilen derecelendirmeyi gözönüne alarak işaretleyiniz. | Hiçbir zaman | Bazen | Çoğunlukla | Her zaman |
|--|--------------|-------|------------|-----------|
| 2. Son zamanlarda yaşadığınız olayları analiz edip “Kendimi niye böyle üzgün hissediyorum” diye ne kadar sık düşünüyorsunuz? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Bir köşeye çekilip “neden bu şekilde hissediyorum” diye ne kadar sık düşünüyorsunuz? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Son zamanlarda yaşadığınız olaylar hakkında “keşke daha iyi sonuçlansaydı” diye ne kadar sık düşünüyorsunuz? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. “Neden olayları daha iyi idare edemiyorum” diye ne kadar sık düşünüyorsunuz? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Ne kadar sık, tek başına bir yere gidip duygularını anlamaya çalışıyorsunuz? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

F. SAMPLE ITEMS OF STRESS APPRAISAL MEASURE

| Bu anket, daha önce tanımladığınız aldatılma olayı hakkındaki düşüncelerinizle ilgilidir. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Lütfen, durum hakkındaki ŞU ANKI düşüncelerinize göre değerlendirme yapınız. Her bir soruyu sizin için uygun rakamı işaretleyerek değerlendiriniz. | Hiç | Biraz | Ortalama | Oldukça | Çok fazla |
|---|-----|-------|----------|---------|-----------|
| 2. Bu, sonuçlarından hiç kimsenin kaçamayacağı bir durum mu? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Bu durum, beni endişelendiriyor mu? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Bu durumun benim üzerimde olumlu bir etkisi olacak mı? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Bu durumun sonuçlarından ne kadar etkileneceğim? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Bu durumun sonuçları olumsuz olur mu? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Bu durumun sonuçları olumsuz olur mu? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Bu sorunla baş etmek için bana yardım edebilecek bir kaynağım var mı? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Bu durumla ilgili bir şey yapabilmek herhangi bir kişinin gücünü aşar mı? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Bu, ne kadar tehdit edici bir durum? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Bu durumla baş edebilir miyim? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. Bu durumda başarılı sonuçlar elde etmek için gerekli becerilere sahip miyim? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Bu durumun benim üzerimde olumsuz bir etkisi olacak mı? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

G. SAMPLE ITEMS OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Bu kısımda sizinle ilgili genel bilgiler sorulmaktadır. Lütfen her bir maddeyi okuyup durumunuzu en iyi yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz ya da boşlukları doldurunuz.

2. Yaşınız: _____

4. Üniversite öğrencisiyseniz, kaçınıcı yılınızdasınız? _____

6. Şimdiki veya daha önceki romantik ilişkiniz süresince partneriniz tarafından aldatıldınız mı?

Evet Hayır Belki

9. Partnerinizle hala beraber misiniz?

Evet Hayır

11. Partnerinizin yaşadığı/ yaşadığını düşündüğünüz bu ilişkiyi nasıl yorumlarsınız.

- Tamamen cinsel bir ilişki
- Ağırlıklı olarak cinsel bir ilişki
- Duygusallıktan çok cinsel bir ilişki
- Cinsellikten çok duygusal bir ilişki
- Ağırlıklı olarak duygusal bir ilişki
- Tamamen duygusal bir ilişki

H. CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information

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Education

| Degree | Institution | Year of Graduation |
|--------|--|--------------------|
| MS | METU, Educational Sciences | 2010 |
| BS | Hacettepe University, Elementary Math Education | 2005 |

Work Experience

| Year | Place | Enrollment |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2017- ... | Mitat Enç Secondary School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Students | Middle School Math Teacher |
| 2012-2017 | Celal Bayar Minority Secondary and High School | Middle School Math Teacher |
| 2011-2012 | Gulpinar Middle School | Middle School Math Teacher |
| 2010-2011 | Turkish Parliament (TBMM) | Deputy Advisor and Assistant |
| 2006-2010 | Istiklal Middle School | Middle School Math Teacher |

Foreign Languages

English: Recent TOEFL score is 227 (computerized test) (corresponding to 567 in paper-based exam, corresponding to 97 in IBT), 2006.

Greek: Certificate of attainment in Greek B1, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2014.

PUBLICATIONS

Articles

- Onaylı, S.,** Erdur-Baker Ö. & Kordoutis, P. (2016). The relation between rumination and emotional reactions to infidelity in romantic relationships, *Athens Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(1), 53-64.
- Onaylı, S. &** Erdur-Baker, Ö. (2013). Mother - daughter relationship's links to daughter's self-esteem and life satisfaction, *Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Journal*, 5 (40), 167-175. (2013).
- Onaylı, S. &** Erdur-Baker, Ö. (2013). Mother-daughter relationship and daughter's self-esteem, *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 327-331.
- Onaylı, S.,** Erdur-Baker, Ö. & Aksöz, İ. (2010). The Turkish adaptation of the Mother-Adult Daughter Questionnaire, *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 1516-1520.

Book chapters

- Barutçu Yıldırım F. & **Onaylı, S.** (2016). Tez sürecinde karşılaşılan zorluklar [Difficulties encountered in writing thesis or dissertation]. In Ö. Demirel & S. Dinçer (Eds.) *Eğitim bilimlerinde yenilikler ve nitelik arayışı* (pp.677-690). Ankara: Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık

Onaylı, S. & Barutçu, K. F. (2013). Self-esteem and self types. In D. Halkias (Eds.) *Psychology and the search for certainty in everyday life* (pp.181-193). Athens: Athens Institute for Education and Research.

Presentations at International Conferences

Onaylı, S. & Erdur-Baker, Ö. (2016, May). *Self-compassion as a mediator of the relationship between rumination and trait anxiety*. Paper presented at ATINER 10th Annual International Conference on Psychology, Athens, Greece.

Onaylı, S., Erdur-Baker Ö. & Kordoutis, P. (2014, July). *The relation between rumination and emotional reactions to infidelity in romantic relationships*. Paper presented at ATINER International Conference on Turkey and Turkish Studies, Athens, Greece.

Onaylı, S. & Erdur-Baker, Ö. (2012, May). *Mother-daughter relationship and daughter's self-esteem*. Paper presented at III. World Conference on Psychology, Counseling and Guidance, İzmir, Turkey.

Onaylı, S. & Barutçu, F. (2011, May). *Self-esteem and self types*. Paper presented at ATINER 5th Annual International Conference on Psychology, Athens, Greece.

Onaylı, S., Erdur-Baker, Ö. & Aksöz, İ. (2010, April). *The Turkish adaptation of the Mother-Adult Daughter Questionnaire*. Paper presented at I. World Conference on Psychology, Counseling and Guidance, Antalya, Turkey.

Professional Affiliations

- Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association, since 2017
- Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), since 2011

I. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

1. GİRİŞ

Yaşam boyunca yakın ilişkiler kurmak en temel insani ihtiyaçlardan biridir (Baumeister & Leary, 1995); ve romantik bir ilişki, mutluluğu (Hendrick, 2004) ve hayata dair tatmin duygusunu (Argyle, 1987) arttırma gücüne sahip olan bu yakın ilişkilerden biridir. Pek çok yetişkin, bir romantik ilişki arayışındadır ve böyle bir ilişki kurunca bunu devam ettirmeye çaba gösterir. Knox ve Schacht'a göre (2008), romantik bir ilişkinin gelişimi toplumsal, psikolojik, fiziksel ve bilişsel faktörler tarafından etkilenir. Bir ilişkiyi kurduktan sonra bu ilişkinin sürdürülmesi de önemlidir. Samimiyet seviyesi, dahil olma hissi, partnerler arasındaki benzerlikler ve fiziksel çekicilik gibi farklı faktörler, tatmin edici bir ilişkinin sürdürülmesini etkileyebilir (Hendrick, 2004). Bireyler, ilişkilerinden yüksek oranda tatmin olduklarında, ilişkilerine yüksek derecede yatırım yaptıklarında ve yeterli alternatifleri bulunmadığında, ilişkilerine bir bağlılık geliştirirler (Bui, Peplau, & Hill, 1996). Rusbult'a göre (1983), düşük derecede bir tatmin duygusu, düşük seviyede bir yatırım ve daha fazla alternatif olduğunda, bu, çözülme için sebepler bulunabilir.

İnsanlar aidiyet duygularını tatmin etmek için ilişkiler kurarlar, ancak Blow ve Harnett'e göre (2005a), ilişkilerin %25'i bir çeşit romantik aldatma ile sonlanmaktadır. Aldatmanın esas oranı, gözlemlendiği halinden daha yüksektir (Johnson, 2003). Flört ilişkilerindeki aldatma üzerine yapılan çalışmaların çeşitli sonuçları şöyledir: erkeklerin %30'u, kadınların %34'ü (Feldman & Caufmann, 1999), erkeklerin %75'i ve kadınların %68'i (Wiederman & Hurd, 1999), erkeklerin %33'ü ve kadınların %31'i (Allen & Baucom, 2004), ve üniversite öğrencilerinin %35'i (Hall & Fincham, 2009) partnerlerini aldatmışlardır. Aldatmanın ne kadar yaygın olduğuna dair istatistiki bilgiler Türkiye'de yetersizdir. Yeniçeri ve Kökdemir (2006), bir Türk üniversitesinde 18 ila 38 yaş aralığındaki öğrenciler arasındaki aldatma oranını %19.6 olarak bulmuştur. Aynı çalışmada, katılımcıların %17.3'ü partnerlerinin kendilerini aldattığını belirtmiştir. Onaylı, Erdur-Baker ve Kordoutis

(2016) tarafından yapılan başka bir Türk çalışması, 18 ila 49 yaş aralığındaki 210 gönüllü katılımcının %34.3'ünün partnerleri tarafından aldatıldığını bildirmiştir. Buna ek olarak, Toplu-Demirtaş ve Finchman (2017) tarafından, Türkiye'de 18 ila 28 yaş aralığındaki üniversite öğrencileri arasında yapılan yakın tarihli bir çalışmada, katılımcılara partnerlerini daha önce hiç aldatıp aldatmadıkları sorulmuş, ve flört ilişkisi içindeki kadınların %13.2'sinin ve erkeklerin de %15.7'sinin partnerlerini aldattıkları bildirilmiştir.

Aldatılma derin duygusal yaralara ve çiftlerin kişilerarası ilişkilerinde hasara yol açabilir (Wang, King, & Debernardi, 2012); bu hasar ilişki üzerinde (Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999), aldatılan taraf üzerinde (Shackelford, LeBlanc, & Drass, 2000) ve aldatan taraf üzerinde de (Hall & Fincham, 2009) olabilir. Ayrıca, aldatıldıktan sonra ayrılmaya neden olabilir (Hall & Fincham, 2006). Aldatılan partnerler gücenme, öfke ve depresyon gibi çeşitli olumsuz duygular yaşarlar. Ayrıca, aldatılma sonrasında, güvenlerini ve benlik saygılarını kaybederler; ve kişisel ve cinsel özgüvenleri azalır (Charny & Parnass, 1995). Aldatılmanın sonuçları inancın ve samimiyetin kaybolması olabilir; ve aldatma çocuklarla, arkadaşlarla veya ebeveynlerle olan ilişkileri de etkiler (Wang, King, & Debernardi, 2012). Shackelford, LeBlanc, ve Drass'a göre (2000), aldatılma yaşadktan sonra, aldatılan partner sıklıkla olumsuz duygular yaşar.

Aldatma farklı biçimlere bürünmüş gibi görünmektedir, ve tanımı da bu biçimlere göre değişmektedir. Üç çeşit aldatma şöyle tanımlanmıştır: sadece cinsel aldatma, sadece duygusal aldatma, ve cinsel-duygusal aldatma (Thompson, 1984). Kadınlar ve erkekler aldatılmaya farklı tepkiler gösterir (Shackelford, LeBlanc, & Drass, 2000; DeSteno & Salovey, 1996; Hupka & Bank, 1996). Partnerin cinsel aldatma yaşaması erkekleri kadınları üzdüğünden daha fazla üzerken, partnerin duygusal aldatma yaşaması kadınları erkekleri üzdüğünden daha fazla üzer (Groothof, Dijkstra, & Barelds, 2009).

İnsanların aldatılmaya nasıl tepki verdikleri ve bununla nasıl baş ettikleri birtakım değişkenlerle bağlantılı olabilir. Şu ana dek, konuyla ilgili literatür, aldatılma karşısında gösterilen olumlu ve olumsuz tepkileri etkileyen birtakım değişkenleri ortaya koymuştur, ancak bu çalışma, kişilik özelliklerine, bilhassa, öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon ve bilişsel değerlendirmeye odaklanmaktadır. Öncelikle, seçilen bu değişkenler, büyük bir dereceye kadar kişisel özellik değişkenleridir; ve bu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri araştırmak, cinsiyete bakmaksızın aldatılma karşısında verilen tepkilerdeki bireysel farklılıkların ardındaki nedenleri anlamamıza yardımcı olacaktır. Ayrıca, bu değişkenler, aldatılma karşısındaki tepkilerde cinsiyete göre değişiklik görülmesini de açıklayabilir.

Öz-şefkat, bu tez çalışması için seçilen değişkenlerden biridir. Ne yazık ki, öz-şefkat ile aldatılmaya verilen tepkiler arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyen araştırmalar yetersizdir. Ancak, öz-şefkat aldatılma ile baş etmede yardımcı olan bir duygudur. Steven Stosny'nin *Aldatmadan Sonra Yaşamak ve Sevmek: Duygusal İstismar, Gerçekleri Gizleme, Aldatılma ve Kronik Gücenme ile Nasıl Başa Çıkılır* (2013) başlıklı kitabı, aldatılma sonrasında öz-şefkatin rolünün önemine işaret etmiştir. Öz-şefkat, bizim insanlığımızı, dirençliliğimizi ve güçlü noktalarımızı tanımamıza ve büyüme, iyileşme ve gelişmeye odaklanmamıza yardımcı olur. Öz-şefkat üç ana faktöre sahiptir: öz-nezaket, ortak insanlık hissi ve bilinçli farkındalık (Neff, 2003a). Bu yüzden, öz-şefkate sahip bir birey, acı verici veya stress yaratan bir sorun olsa da, soruna ortak insanlık hissi ve nezaketle yaklaşır. Öz-şefkat sağlıklı bir psikolojik işleyişle pozitif bir şekilde bağlantılıdır çünkü bir birey bu üç faktörü (öz-nezaket, ortak insanlık hissi ve bilinçli farkındalık) içerecek şekilde öz-şefkate sahipse, bu birey zayıf noktalarını kabul eder ve onları bastırmaya çalışmaz.

Neff ve Pommier'e göre (2013), daha yüksek öz-şefkat daha yüksek derecede affetme ile bağlantılıdır. Konuyla ilgili çalışmalar, affetmenin ilişkileri geliştirmede çok önemli bir faktör olduğunu bildirmiştir. Affetme şunlara yardımcı olmaktadır: kabahatli kişiye karşı duyulan öfkenin dışarı atılmasına (Hargrave, 1994) ve ilişkinin iyileştirilmesine ve duygusal olarak iyileşmeye (DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993) veya intikam olmaksızın iyileşmeye, ve inciten tarafın gitmesine izin vermeye

(Fitzgibbons, 1986; Smedes, 1984). Affetme psikolojik iyileşme ile (Hargrave, 1994) ve kendini iyi hissetme ile pozitif bir ilişkiye sahipken (Worthington, 2003), depresyon ve kaygı ile (Hargrave, 1994) ve incinen tarafın travma semptomlarıyla negatif bir ilişkiye sahiptir (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2005). Battleson'a göre (1997), çiftler aldatılma deneyiminden sonra bir arada kalırlarsa, böyle bir karar vermelerindeki en kritik faktörlerden biri affetmedir.

Ruminatif olma eğilimi, bu çalışmaya dahil edilen değişkenlerden biridir. Ruminasyon, pasif ve kendini tekrar eden bir şekilde üzüntü semptomlarına odaklanan döngüsel bir düşünüş örüntüsüdür ve sorunları çözmek veya düzeltmek için bir adım atmamaktır (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1998). Ruminatif kimselerin, olumsuz anıları tetikleyen ve sorunları çözmek için gereken motivasyonu azaltan olumsuz bir ruh haline sahip olma olasılıkları daha yüksektir (Ward, Lyubomirsky, Sousa, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2003). Buna ek olarak, ruminasyon, insanların üzüntüyle baş etmeye çalışırken uyumsuz stratejiler uygulamalarına yol açar (Lymbursky & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991) ve ruminatif kimseler planları gerçekleştirme konusunda karamsardırlar (Ward, Lyubomirsky, Sousa & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2003).

Son olarak, bilişsel değerlendirme aldatılmaya karşı tepkileri açıklayan yararlı teorilerden biridir (Wang, King, & Debernardi, 2012). Araştırmacıların bu teoriyi aldatılma bağlamında kullanmaya henüz yeni başlamış olmalarına rağmen, teori stresle baş etme stratejilerini açıklamak için yaygın şekilde ve başarıyla kullanılmaktadır. Lazarus ve Folkman'ın çalışmasında (1984), birincil ve ikincil değerlendirmeler tanımlanmış ve birbirinden ayırt edilmiştir. Birincil değerlendirmede, birey bir olayın tehdit edici olup olmadığına karar verir. İkincil değerlendirme, baş etme kaynakları ve alternatiflerin değerlendirilmesidir. Wang, King, and Debernardi'nin aldatılmaya verilen tepkilerle ilgili olan çalışmasında (2012), bilişsel değerlendirmenin iki boyutu olarak sadece olaya önem verme ve olayı tehdit edici bir olgu olarak algılama bölümleri araştırılmıştır. Romantik aldatılmaya verilen tepkiler, tehdidin öneminin ve seviyesinin değerlendirildiği bilişsel süreçle bağlantılıdır. Eğer bir birey aldatılma ile karşı karşıya kalırsa ve bu aldatılmayı bir tehdit olarak algılayorsa, üzüntünün seviyesi yüksek olur. Ancak,

aldatılma birey için önemliyse, birey olumsuz hislere sahip olsa bile daha aktif adımlar atacaktır (Wang, King, & Debernardi, 2012). Wang, King, ve Debernardi'ye göre (2012), aldatılmaya verilen tepkiler kişiden kişiye değişebilir. Bazı insanlar daha pasif bir şekilde tepki gösterip durumu inkar etmeye veya durumdan kaçmaya çalışırken, diğer bazı insanlar daha intikamcı bir tarzda tepki verirler veya agresif bir tavır sergilerler.

Bu değişkenlerdeki cinsiyet farklılıklarına gelince, öz-şefkat değişkeni kadınların erkeklerden daha düşük seviyede öz-şefkate sahip olduklarını göstermektedir (Neff, 2003a). Neff'e göre (2003) kadınlar daha çok kendini yargılama eğilimine sahipler, kendilerini daha izole hissetmekte ve olumsuz duygularıyla ilgili olarak daha az bir farkındalığa sahipler. Konuyla ilgili çalışmaların çoğu, affetme değişkeni ile ilgili olarak cinsiyete dayalı bir fark bildirmemiştir (Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O'Connor, & Wade, 2001; Macaskil, Maltby, & Day, 2002; Toussaint, & Webb, 2005). Sadece birkaç çalışma cinsiyet konusunda fark bildirmiştir. Buna ek olarak, kadınların erkeklerden daha fazla ruminasyon eğilimleri olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır (Allgood-Merten, Lewinsohn, & Hops, 1990; Blanchard-Fields, Sulsky, & Robinson-Whelen, 1991; Nolen-Hoeksema, Larson, & Grayson, 1999; Nolen-Hoeksema, Parker, & Larson, 1994). Ayrıca, kadınlar erkeklerden daha yüksek derecede olumsuz bilişsel değerlendirmeye sahiptir (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004). Kadınlar olayı erkeklerden daha yüksek bir tehdit (Anshel, Jamieson, & Raviv, 2001), ve gelişim için bir fırsat olarak değerlendirirler (Durak, 2007).

Kısaca belirtmek gerekirse, bu çalışma, aldatılmaya olan tepkilerin öz-şefkat, ruminasyon, affetme ve bilişsel değerlendirme adlı bazı özellik değişkenleriyle olan ilişkisini inceleyerek bu tepkileri daha iyi anlamayı, ve aldatılmaya olan tepkilerde cinsiyete bağlı farklılıkların altında yatan sebepleri test etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu çalışma, öz-şefkat, ruminasyon, affetme ve bilişsel değerlendirme ile, aldatılma karşısında verilen tepkiler arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkileri modellemek için bahsi geçen değişkenleri ilk kez bir araya getirmiştir.

1.1. Çalışmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın amacı, aldatılan partnerlerin öz-şefkati, affediciliği, ruminasyonu ve bilişsel değerlendirmesi [birincil değerlendirme (önem verme ve tehdit olarak algılama), ikincil değerlendirme (kendilik kontrolü, olayı diğerleri tarafından sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama ve olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama)] ile, aldatılmaya karşı duygusal tepkiler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Ortaya koyulan doğrudan ve dolaylı ilişkilere göre, bu çalışma, öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon ve bilişsel değerlendirmenin aldatılmaya karşı olan olumsuz duygusal tepkiler üzerindeki rollerini ve erkek ve kadınlar için değişmezlik durumunu açıklayan kavramsal bir model sunmaktadır.

1.2. Çalışmanın Önemi

Aldatmanın toplumda belirsiz bir rolü vardır. Aldatma ahlaksız bir eylem olarak kabul edilmesine rağmen (Treas & Gieson, 2000; Jankowiak, Nell & Buckmaster, 2002), medya tarafından eğlendirici bir konu olarak sunulmaktadır. Bir çift ilişkilerinde sadakatsizlik yaşadığında, her iki partner de (hem aldatılan partner hem de aldatan partner) bilişsel ve duygusal sorunlardan muzdarip olur; üstelik, çoğu çift tam iyileşme yaşayamaz (Charny & Parnass, 1995). Aldatılma deneyimi, incinen partnerin ilişkide karşısındakine güven ve güvenlikle ilgili inançları sorgulamasına yol açar (Abrahm Spring, 1996; Brown, 1991; Glass & Wright, 1997; Gordon & Baucom, 1999). Ayrıca, partner bazı Travma Sonrası Stres Bozukluğu semptomları gösterebilir, ve bu onun hayatını tehdit edebilir (Amerikan Psikiyatri Derneği, 2000). Aldatılma travmatik tepkilere (Gordon & Baucom, 1999; Lusteran, 1998); ve aldatılanlardan daha yüksek bir oranda aldatanlar üzerinde depresif ve travma sonrası semptomoloji görülse de (Hall & Fincham, 2009), aldatmaya dair bilimsel bilgiler, bu çalışmadaki değişkenleri içeren modeller ve aldatılmanın sonuçlarıyla baş etme yollarıyla ilgili bilgiler kısıtlıdır. Ayrıca, önceki çalışmaların çoğu aldatılma karşısında verilen tepkilerdeki cinsiyete bağlı farklılıklara işaret etse de, bu tarz cinsiyete bağlı farkların sebepleri henüz açıkça ortaya koyulmamıştır. Bu çalışma şu amaçları gütmektedir: a) öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon, bilişsel değerlendirme ve aldatılma karşısında verilen duygusal tepkiler arasındaki doğrudan ve dolaylı

ilişkileri incelemek, b) cinsiyetler arasında değişmezliği öne sürülen modeli yapısal model değişmezliği ile test ederek aldatılma karşısında verilen tepkilerdeki cinsiyet farklılıklarını incelemek. Ortaya çıkarılan doğrudan ve dolaylı ilişkilere dayanarak, çalışmadaki değişkenler ile aldatılmaya verilen olumsuz tepkiler arasındaki olası ilişkileri açıklayan bir model test edilmiş, ve modeldeki cinsiyet farklılığı tartışılmıştır. Böylelikle, test edilmiş bir modelin eşlik ettiği bu çalışma, seçilen değişkenler ile bireylerin aldatılma karşısında verdikleri tepkiler arasındaki ilişkinin ne kadar güçlü olduğunu göstermiştir.

Seçilmiş olan değişkenler risk ve kişisel koruma faktörleri olarak düşünülmüştür, ve bunlar, bireyler aldatılma gibi üzücü deneyimlere tepki verirken bireysel farklılıkların açıklanmasında kullanılabilir. Bu değişkenlerin önemi (üzüntüye karşı tampon oluşturma veya önde gelen bir risk faktörü olma şeklinde olabilir), psikolojik danışmanlar risk altındaki danışanlarının profilini çıkarırken daha da artacaktır.

Önerilen ve test edilen model ulusal ve uluslararası literature önemli katkılarda bulunacaktır. Gelecek araştırmacılara düşünülmesi gereken yeni araştırma konuları temin ederek ve/veya yeni metodolojilerle ve farklı örneklerle sonuçları doğrulayarak onlara yardımcı olacaktır. Bu çalışma, söz konusu değişkenlerin aldatılmaya verilen tepkilerinin açıklanmasına olan katkılarını incelemek üzere bu değişkenlerin hepsini bir araya getiren ilk araştırma olacaktır. Buna ek olarak, bilişsel değerlendirme, affetme, ruminasyon ve öz-şefkatin rollerini göz önünde bulundurarak cinsiyet ile aldatılmaya verilen tepkiler arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyen bir araştırma bulunmamaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmanın esas önemi, konuyla ilgili nicel veri sağlamak olacaktır.

Bunlara ek olarak, aldatma konusunda Türkiye nüfusu için yapılan pek az çalışma bulunmaktadır. Özellikle flört ilişkilerinde aldatma konusunda yapılan çalışmaların sayısı çok kısıtlıdır. Bu çalışmanın yazarının bilgisi dahilinde, bu araştırmalar arasından yalnızca bir tanesi (Onaylı, Erdur-Baker ve Kordoutis, 2016) aldatılan partnerlerin duygularını incelemiştir; diğer çalışmalar çoğunlukla aldatan tarafa

odaklanmaktadır. Bu yüzden, bu çalışma, Türkiye’deki aldatma literatürü içinde, öz-şefkat, ruminasyon, affetme, bilişsel değerlendirme ve romantik ilişkilerdeki aldatılma karşısında verilen tepkiler konusundaki büyük boşluğun doldurulmasına yardımcı olacaktır. Buna ek olarak, Affetme Ölçeği’nin (Rye, 1998) Türk kültürüne yapılan uyarlaması da, bu çalışmanın bir diğer önemli unsurudur.

2. YÖNTEM

2.1. Örneklem ve Veri Toplama İşlemi

İlişkilerinde aldatılmış olan üniversite öğrencileri flört ilişkilerinde aldatılmaya verilen tepkileri incelemek için bir örneklem olarak seçilmiştir. Amaçlı örneklem yöntemi kullanılmış, ve flört ilişkilerinde aldatılan veya aldatıldığı yönünde şüpheleri olan katılımcılar çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Analizin sonucu, partnerleri tarafından aldatılan veya aldatılmış olduğundan şüphelenen katılımcılar arasında önemli bir fark göstermemiştir. Böylece iki grup katılımcı verisi birlikte kullanılmıştır.

Veri toplamadan önce, araştırma yapmak için etik ilkelere onay almak amacıyla Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu için gerekli formlar hazırlanmıştır. Çalışma için üç set veri toplanmıştır. İlk set veri, 202 katılımcıyla Affetme Ölçeği’nin Türkçeye adapte edilmesi için yapılan pilot çalışmada kullanılmıştır. İkinci set veri, 69 katılımcı içermektedir ve Affetme ölçeğinin test-tekrar test güvenilirliğini incelemek için toplanmıştır. Üçüncü set veri, esas çalışma için toplanmıştır. Bu sette 431 katılımcı bulunmaktadır. Katılımcıların yaşları 18 ila 38 arasında değişmekte ve ortalama yaş 24.41’dir (SD=5.78). Katılımcılar arasından 291 kişi (%67.5) kadın ve 140 kişi (%32.5) erkektir. Yaşadıkları durumu “siber aldatma/ sadakatsizlik” olarak tanımlayan kişi sayısı 89’dur (%20.6). 262 kişi (%60.8) bunu siber olarak adlandırmamıştır, ve 80 kişi (%18.6) bunun siber olarak adlandırmanın doğru olup olmadığı konusunda emin değildir. Katılımcıların bazıları (116 kişi, %26.9) partnerinin başka bir insanla geliştirdiği ilişkiyi “duygusaldan ziyade cinsel bir ilişki” olarak tanımlamıştır. 76 kişi (%17.6) bunu “çoğunlukla cinsel bir ilişki” olarak, 66 kişi (%15.3) “çoğunlukla duygusal bir ilişki” olarak, 59 kişi (%13.7) “kesinlikle cinsel bir ilişki” olarak, 54 kişi (%12.5) “cinsel bir ilişkiden ziyade duygusal bir

ilişki” olarak, ve 40 kişi (%9.3) “kesinlikle duygusal bir ilişki” olarak adlandırmıştır. Katılımcıların 20’si (%4.6) bu soruya cevap vermemiştir.

2.2. Veri Toplama Araçları

Bu çalışmada, veri toplamak için şu belgeler kullanılmıştır: Affetme Ölçeği, Affetme Ölçeği (Özgün, 2010) (sadece pilot çalışmada kullanıldı), Pozitif ve Negatif Duygu Ölçeği, Stres Değerlendirme Ölçeği, Ruminasyon Ölçeği, Öz-anlayış Ölçeği ve demografik bilgi formu. Pilot çalışmada, veri toplamak için Affetme Ölçeği, Affetme Ölçeği (Özgün, 2010) ve demografik bilgi formu kullanılmıştır. İlk bilgi toplama esnasında, 202 katılımcının 130’u (%64. 4) kadın, 72’si (%35.6) erkektir. İkinci veri toplama aşamasında, 69 katılımcıdan 45’i (%65.2) kadın, 24’ü (%34.8) erkektir.

Affetme Ölçeği: Affetme Ölçeği, kabahati olan belli bir kimseye karşı bağışlayıcılığı ölçmek amacıyla Rye (1998) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Affetme Ölçeği, 15 madde ve iki alt ölçekle (Olumsuzun Bulunmadığı 10 madde, ve Olumlunun Bulunduğu 5 madde), 5 puanlık Likert tarzında bir ölçektir (Rye, Loiacono, Folck, Olszewski, Heim, & Madia, 2001). Ölçeğin Cronbach alfası .87’dir; test-tekrar test güvenilirliği açısından ölçek güvenilir (0.80) ve ölçeğin geçerliliği vardır (Rye, Loiacono, Folck, Olszewski, Heim, & Madia, 2001).

Ölçeğin Türkçeye uyarlanması bu çalışmada yapılmıştır. Dolayısıyla, aldatılmış olan katılımcıların bağışlayıcılığını ölçmek için Affetme Ölçeği’nin tek faktörlü yapısı kullanılmıştır (Rye, Pargament, Pan, Yingling, Shogren & Ito, 2005). Ölçek maddeleri üç uzman tarafından Türkçeye çevrilmiş, daha sonra tekrar farklı üç uzman tarafından orijinal dili olan İngilizceye çevrilmiştir. Gerekli düzenlemelerden sonra maddelerin son haline karar verilerek Türkçeye çeviri işlemi tamamlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada ölçeğin güvenilirlik katsayısı .82 olarak bulunmuştur, ve birinci ve ikinci sefer arasındaki Pearson korelasyon katsayıları tüm ölçek için .76 ($p < .01$) şeklinde bulunmuştur. Ayrıca ölçeğin tek faktörlü yapısı test edilmiş ve tek faktörlü yapı dört parselli olarak doğrulanmıştır [$\chi^2(1) = 1.64, p > .05$] ve $\chi^2/df = 1.64, RMSEA = .06, pClose > .05$ CFI= .99, TLI= .99, ve SRMR =.01].

Affetme Ölçeği'nin uyumu geçerliliği, paralel testler yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Gordon ve Baucom (2003) tarafından geliştirilen ve Özgün (2010) tarafından Türkçeye çevrilen ve uyarlanan Affetme Ölçeği (Özgün, 2010) paralel test olarak kullanılmıştır. Affetme Ölçeği (Özgün, 2010), 25 maddeden oluşan, 5 puanlık Likert tarzı bir ölçek olup, 3 alt ölçeğe sahiptir. Üç aşama için ölçeğin Cronbach alfası sırasıyla .85, .76 ve .75'tir. Uyarlama sürecinde, evli bireylerden oluşan örneklem kullanılmıştır ve FI'nın üç alt ölçeğinin iç tutarlılık açısından Cronbach alfa katsayıları sırasıyla .79, .60, ve .70 şeklindedir. İş bu çalışmada, alt ölçeklerin Cronbach alfası .67, .76 ve .63 şeklindedir. Affetme Ölçeği'nin skoru Affetme Ölçeği (Özgün, 2010) ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Affetme Ölçeği ile Affetme Ölçeği'nin (Özgün, 2010) üç alt ölçeği arasındaki Pearson korelasyon katsayısı şu şekilde bulunmuştur: -.51 ($p < .01$), -.21 ($p < .05$) ve .46 ($p < .01$).

Pozitif ve Negatif Duygu Ölçeği: Watson, Clark, ve Tellegen (1988) tarafından, olumlu ve olumsuz duyguları ölçmek amacıyla geliştirilmiş 20 maddelik, 5 puanlık bir Likert ölçeğidir. Bu çalışmada, sadece Negatif Duygu ölçeği aldatılmaya verilen tepkileri ölçmek için kullanılmıştır. 10 maddesi Pozitif Duygu ölçeğinde, diğer 10 maddesi Negatif Duygu ölçeğindedir. Gençöz (2000) söz konusu ölçeğin Türkçeye uyarlanmasını gerçekleştirmiştir. Türkçe versiyonun iç tutarlılık katsayısı Negatif Duygu için .86 olarak bulunmuştur. test-tekrar test güvenilirliği .54'tür. Bu çalışmada, Negatif Duygu alt ölçeğinin güvenilirlik skorları, Cronbach alfası korelasyon katsayısı ile değerlendirilmiş ve .86 olarak bulunmuştur. Ayrıca ölçeğin tek faktörlü yapısı test edilmiş ve tek faktörlü yapı dört parselli olarak doğrulanmıştır [$\chi^2(1) = 1.62, p > .05$], $\chi^2/df = 1.62$, RMSEA = .04, $p_{Close} > .05$, CFI = .99, TLI = .99, ve SRMR = .01].

Öz-anlayış Ölçeği: Öz-anlayış Ölçeği Neff (2003a) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Ölçek 26 maddelik, altı adet alt ölçeğe sahip bir ölçektir. Bu ölçek 5 puanlık bir Likert ölçeğidir. Ölçeğin Türkçe uyarlaması Deniz, Kesici ve Sümer (2008) tarafından yapılmıştır. Ölçeğin Türkçe versiyonu, orijinal ölçekten şu açılardan farklıdır: 2

madde eksiktir (toplam 24 maddeden oluşmaktadır) ve alt ölçekleri yoktur. Türkçe versiyon için iç tutarlılık katsayısı .89 olarak bildirilmiştir (Deniz, Kesici & Sümer, 2008). Ölçeğin geçerliliği, benzer testlerle yüksek korelasyonlar bulunarak kanıtlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada, ölçeğin Cronbach alfası .91'dir. Ayrıca ölçeğin tek faktörlü yapısı test edilmiş ve tek faktörlü yapı dört parselli olarak doğrulanmıştır [$\chi^2(2) = 6.68, p < .05$ ve $\chi^2/df = 3.34$, RMSEA=.07, $pClose > .05$, CFI= .99, TLI= .99, ve SRMR =.01].

Ruminasyon Ölçeği: Ruminasyon ölçeği, Nolen-Hoeksema ve Morrow (1991) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. RRS 22 maddelik 4 puanlık bir değerlendirme ölçeğidir. Treynor, Gonzalez, ve Nolen-Hoeksema (2003), ölçeğin benzer maddelerini eleyerek, 2 faktörlü (derinlemesine düşünme ve yansıtma) ve her biri 5 madde içeren 10 maddelik bir versiyon önermişlerdir. Ölçeğin kısa versiyonunun Türkçe uyarlaması Erdur-Baker ve Bugay (2012) tarafından yapılmıştır. Bu araştırmacılar ölçeğin kısa versiyonunun Cronbach alfasının .85 olduğu, ve iki alt ölçek için bu sayıların sırasıyla .77 ve .75 olduğu bildirmişlerdir. Hem tek faktörlü uzun versiyon hem de iki faktörlü kısa versiyon, Türk kültüründe kullanılmaları açısından geçerli ve güvenilirdir, ve aralarında önemli bir olumlu korelasyon bulunmaktadır ($r = .70, p < .001$) (Erdur-Baker, & Bugay, 2012). İş bu çalışmada, ölçeğin tek faktörlü kısa versiyonu kullanılmıştır ve güvenilirlik skoru, tek faktörlü yapı için .87 olarak bulunmuştur. Ayrıca ölçeğin tek faktörlü yapısı test edilmiş ve tek faktörlü yapı dört parselli olarak doğrulanmıştır [$\chi^2(4) = 11.63, p < .05$ ve $\chi^2/df = 2.91$, RMSEA = .07, $pClose > .05$, SRMR= .01, CFI = .99, TLI = .98].

Stres Değerlendirme Ölçeği: Stres Değerlendirme Ölçeği, Peacock ve Wong (1990) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, bireyler aldatılma ile karşılaştıktan sonra stresin bilişsel değerlendirmesini ölçmek için kullanılmıştır. Bu ölçek 24 maddelik, 0'dan 5'e kadar giden Likert tarzında bir ölçektir. Ölçeğin kuramsal boyutları iki kategoride incelenir: birincil değerlendirme ve ikincil değerlendirme. Stresli bir durumun birincil değerlendirmesi önem verme, tehdit olarak algılama ve fırsat olarak değerlendirme. İkincil değerlendirme ise kendilik kontrolü, olayı diğerleri tarafından

sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama ve olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılamayla ilgilidir. Ölçeğin Türkçe versiyonu Durak ve Senol-Durak (2013) tarafından incelenmiştir, ve beş alt ölçek içermektedir. Bu alt ölçekler şu şekildedir: birincil değerlendirme (tehdit olarak algılama ve fırsat olarak görme) ve ikincil değerlendirme (kendilik kontrolü, olayı diğerleri tarafından sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama ve olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama). Üniversite öğrencilerinden oluşan örnekleme, tehdit olarak algılama, fırsat olarak görme, kendilik kontrolü, olayı diğerleri tarafından sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama ve olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama faktörlerinin iç tutarlılık katsayıları sırasıyla .81, .70, .86, .81, ve .74 şeklinde bulunmuştur; ve yetişkinleri içeren örnekleme bu değerler .83, .68, .84, .80, ve .74 şeklinde bulunmuştur. (Durak, 2007). Bu çalışmada, tehdit olarak algılama, fırsat olarak görme, kendilik kontrolü, olayı diğerleri tarafından sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama ve olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama boyutlarının Cronbach alfa'ları sırasıyla .90, .62, .84, .85 ve .67'dir. Fırsat olarak görme alt ölçeğinin değeri iyi olmamasına rağmen, diğer alt ölçekler yüksek Cronbach alfasına sahiptir. Ölçek "fırsat olarak görme" alt ölçeği olmaksızın kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca ölçeğin dört faktörlü yapısı test edilmiş ve dört faktörlü yapı faktörlerden biri iki parsel olarak doğrulanmıştır [$\chi^2(82) = 229.27, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 2.80, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .06, p_{Close} < .05, SRMR = .05$].

Demografik Bilgi Formu: Bu form araştırmacı tarafından tasarlanmıştır, ve iki bölüm içermektedir. İlk bölümde, katılımcılarla ilgili bilgi (katılımcının cinsiyeti, eğitim seviyesi ve ilişki durumu) toplamak için sorular sorulmuştur. İkinci bölümde, aldatılma deneyimleriyle ilgili bilgi toplanmıştır (Partneriniz sizi aldattı mı? Aldatıldığınızı nasıl öğrendiniz? Sizi aldatan partnerinizle hala birlikte misiniz? Bu bir siber aldatma/sadakatsizlik miydi? Bu duygusal bir aldatma mı, cinsel bir aldatma mıydı?)

2.3. Verilerin Analizi

Bu çalışmanın amacı, bilişsel değerlendirme, ruminasyon, öz-şefkat ve affetmenin öngöstergesel rollerini düşünerek aldatılma karşısında verilen duygusal tepkileri incelemektir. Bu modeli ve modeldeki bu ilişkileri test etmek için Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (YEM) tekniği kullanılmıştır. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri, yapısal eşitlik modellemesi ve çok gruplu karşılaştırma analizi AMOS 18 (Arbuckle, 2009) kullanılarak test edilmiştir. Esas analizlerden önce, PASW 18 programı aracılığıyla, çalışmanın varsayımları kontrol edilmiştir ve betimsel analizler yapılmıştır.

3. BULGULAR

3.1. Betimsel Analiz Bulguları

Çalışmanın asıl analizlerine geçmeden önce yapılan ön analizler, romantik ilişkilerinde aldatılma deneyimi yaşayan katılımcıların özelliklerini içeren betimleyici analizleri, ve katılımcıların demografik bilgileri ile olumsuz duygusal tepkileri arasındaki ilişkiyi kapsamaktadır. Öncelikle, cinsiyetin ve aldatmanın biçiminin olumsuz duygular üzerindeki etkisini araştırmak amacıyla, gruplar arasında iki yönlü ANOVA analizleri yapılmıştır. Varyans varsayımının homojenliği Levene test sonuçlarında görüldüğü üzere ihlal edilmemiştir [$F(11, 399) = 1.68, p = .08$]. Maddeler aldatmanın biçimleri açısından altı grup halindedir (Tamamen duygusal bir ilişki, ağırlıklı olarak duygusal bir ilişki, cinsel bir ilişkiden çok duygusal bir ilişki, duygusal bir ilişkiden çok cinsel bir ilişki, ağırlıklı olarak cinsel bir ilişki, ve tamamen cinsel bir ilişki). Cinsiyet ve aldatma biçimi arasındaki ilişki istatistiki olarak anlamlı değildir [$F(5, 399) = .61, p = .70$]. Cinsiyet için istatistiki anlamda anlamlı bir ilişki ortaya çıkmıştır [$F(1, 399) = 4.24, p = .04$], ancak etkinin boyutu küçüktür. Kısmi eta-kare değeri .01 şeklinde bulunmuştur. Sonuçlar şunları göstermektedir: aldatılma deneyimi sonrasında kadınlar ($M = 29.75, SD = 8.57$) erkeklerden daha fazla olumsuz duygular hissetmektedir ($M = 27.80, SD = 8.94$). Aldatılma biçimi için ortaya çıkan esas etki istatistiki olarak önemli bir düzeye ulaşmamıştır. [$F(5, 399) = 2.15, p = .06$]

Sonra, eğitim seviyesine göre, aldatmanın siber olup olmamasına göre, veya kişilerin aldatıldıklarını nasıl öğrendiklerine göre, katılımcının kendisini aldatan kişiyle hala birlikte olup olmamasına göre ve katılımcıların mevcut ilişki durumlarına göre, olumsuz duyguların farklılıklar gösterip göstermediğini araştırmak amacıyla, tek yönlü ANOVA analizleri uygulanmıştır. Anova analizlerinin sonucuna göre, değişkenlerin hiçbirinin olumsuz duygular üzerinde önemli bir ortalama farkı bulunmamıştır. Son olarak, yaş ile olumsuz duygular arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek amacıyla, Pearson korelasyon katsayısı kullanılmıştır. Yaş ile olumsuz duygular arasındaki korelasyon katsayısı “ $r = .01$ ” olarak bulunmuştur böylece ilişkili olmadıkları görülmüştür.

3.2. Model Testi Bulguları

Çalışmada yapısal model testinden önce, kullanılan ölçeklerin modelin içinde birlikte çalıştıklarını doğrulamak amacıyla tüm ölçekler birarada doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ile test edilmiştir. Sonuçlar iyi uyum değerleri göstermiştir ($X^2(430) = 1189.84$, $p < .001$, X^2/df -ratio = 2.77, $CFI = .92$, $TLI = .90$, $RMSEA = .06$, $pClose < .05$, ve $SRMR = .06$). Ayrıca, değişkenler arasında çoklu birlikte doğrusallık bulunmamaktadır. “olayı diğerleri tarafından sağlanacak katkı ile kontrol edilebilir algılama” değişkeninin olumsuz duygular ile önemli bir korelasyona sahip olmadığı görülmüştür; bu yüzden bu, çalışmadan elenmiştir. Daha sonra, yenilenen yapı, doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ile doğrulanmıştır ($X^2(324) = 925.33$, $p < .001$, X^2/df -ratio = 2.86, $CFI = .92$, $TLI = .91$, $RMSEA = .065$, $pClose < .05$, ve $SRMR = .06$).

Hipotezle öne sürülen yapısal model, öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon ve bilişsel değerlendirme ile duygusal tepkiler arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Yapısal eşitlik modeli sonuçlarına göre model kabul edilebilir bir uyum göstermektedir ($\chi^2(324) = 925.33$, $p < .001$, χ^2/df -ratio = 2.85, $CFI = .92$, $TLI = .91$, $RMSEA = .065$, $pClose < .05$, ve $SRMR = .06$). Aldatılma sonrası yaşanan olumsuz duygulardaki varyansın %64’ü, öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon, kontrol edilemezlik, öz-kontrol ve tehdit değişkenleri ile açıklanmaktadır.

ANOVA'nın sonuçları olumsuz duygularda cinsiyete dayalı bir fark göstermiştir; bu yüzden, nihai modelin bu iki grup için değişmezliğinin olup olmadığını test etmek amacıyla, çoklu-grup karşılaştırma analizi yapılmıştır. Nihai modelin cinsiyete göre değişmezliği olup olmadığını ölçmek için χ^2 testi yapılmıştır. Kadınlar ile erkekler arasında önemli bir fark bulunmuştur ($\Delta\chi^2(39) = 74.37, p < .01$) ki bu, nihai modelin kadınlar ile erkekler arasında değişmez olmadığını göstermektedir. İki cinsiyet için değişkenlerde varyansın ne kadar etkisinin olduğunu göstermek için kadınlar ve erkekler için, modelde çoklu korelasyon kareleri (R^2) hesaplanmıştır; ve sonuçlar şunu göstermektedir: kadınlar için olumsuz duygulardaki varyansın %65'i, erkekler için ise %66'sı, öz-şefkat, affetme, ruminasyon, kontrol edilemezlik, kendilik kontrolü ve tehdit değişkenleri ile açıklanmaktadır.

Hipotezle öne sürülen modelde önceden anlamlı ilişkisi olması öngörülen pek çok yol, çalışma sonuçları ile desteklenmiştir. Bu sonuçlara göre:

1. Öz-şefkat affetme üzerinde doğrudan olumlu bir etkiye, ve ruminasyon üzerinde doğrudan bir olumsuz etkiye sahiptir. Öz-şefkat olumsuz duygular üzerinde önemli derecede bir doğrudan etkiye sahip olmasa da, diğer değişkenler aracılığıyla dolaylı bir etkiye sahip olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, öz-şefkat kendilik kontrolü, kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama ve tehdit olarak algılamayı doğrudan etkilememiştir. Bunların üzerinde dolaylı bir etki yaratmıştır.
2. Affetme kendilik kontrolü üzerinde doğrudan bir olumlu etkiye sahip olmuştur ve diğer değişkenler (ruminasyon, negatif duygular, tehdit olarak algılama, kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama) üzerinde olumsuz bir doğrudan etkiye sahip olmuştur.
3. Ruminasyon kendilik kontrolü üzerinde doğrudan bir negatif etki yaratmıştır, ancak olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama, tehdit olarak algılama ve olumsuz duygular üzerinde doğrudan bir olumlu etki yaratmıştır.
4. Bilişsel değerlendirmenin boyutlarının (kendilik kontrolü, olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama ve tehdit olarak algılama) olumsuz duygular üzerinde doğrudan bir olumlu etkiye sahip olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.
5. Model cinsiyetlere göre farklılık göstermiştir. Öz-şefkat ile affetme arasında, ve affetme ile ruminasyon arasında erkeklere nazaran kadınlarda daha güçlü ilişkiler bulunmuştur. Öz-şefkatin tehdit olarak algılama üzerindeki doğrudan etkisi erkekler

için önemli bir etki iken, etki kadınlarda önemli oranda görülmemiştir. Modelde kadınlar ve erkekler için dolaylı etkilerin karşılaştırılmaları yapıldığında, öz-şefkatin olumsuz duygular üzerindeki toplam dolaylı etkisinin kadınlar ve erkekler için aynı olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca, öz-şefkatin affetme yoluyla ruminasyon üzerindeki dolaylı etkisinin erkeklere nazaran kadınlar için daha güçlü olduğu bulunmuştur. Öz-şefkatin kendilik kontrolü üzerindeki dolaylı etkisi kadınlar için önemli bir etkiyken, erkekler için önemli değildir. Diğer yandan, öz-şefkatin olayı kontrol dışı bir olgu olarak algılama üzerindeki dolaylı etkisi erkekler için önemliyken, kadınlar için önemli değildir. Affetmenin ruminasyon yoluyla kendilik kontrolü üzerindeki dolaylı etkisi kadınlar için önemliyken, erkekler için önemli bulunmamıştır. Affetmenin ruminasyon yoluyla tehdit olarak algılama üzerindeki dolaylı etkisi erkekler için önemli iken, kadınlar için önemli bulunmamıştır. Ayrıca, affetmenin olumsuz etkiler üzerindeki dolaylı etkisinin, erkeklere nazaran kadınlar için daha güçlü olduğu görülmüştür.

4. TARTIŞMA

Romantik ilişkiler, kendini daha iyi hissetme, daha az zihinsel sağlık sorunları, daha az stres ve daha hızlı iyileşme gibi pek çok olumlu kazanım sağlar. Ancak, bazen romantik ilişkiler psikolojik stres kaynağı da olabilir. Romantik ilişkilerde aldatma, psikolojik stresin en yaygın sebeplerinden biridir (Johnson, 2003; Hall & Fincham, 2009).

Konuyla ilgili çalışmalar, aldatılma deneyimi yaşayan insanların depresyon (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2004) ve aksiyete bozuklukları (Cano, & O'Leary, 2000) dahil bir takım olumsuz deneyimler yaşadığına dair kanıtlar sunmaktadır. Diğer yandan, literatür, bireylerin aldatılmaya verdikleri olumsuz tepkilere dair bildirimlerinin, doğaları ve ciddiyet boyutu açısından farklılık gösterebildiğini ortaya koymaktadır; bazı insanlar diğerlerine kıyasla daha hafif tepkiler gösterir ve göreceli olarak daha hızlı iyileşir. Ancak, bu bireysel farklılıklardan hangi değişkenlerin sorumlu olduğu hala belirli değildir. Bu tezde, konuyla ilgili literatürün yardımıyla, bu ilişkiyi açıklayan bir model inşa edilmiş, ve bu model test edilmiştir. Bu çalışma için seçilmiş

olan deęişkenler řu řekildedir: öz-řefkat, affetme, ruminasyon, biliřsel deęerlendirme [birinci deęerlendirme (tehdit olarak algılama), ikinci deęerlendirme (kendilik kontrolü ve olayı kontrol dıřı bir olgu olarak algılama)] ve aldatılmaya verilen duygusal tepkiler.

Cinsiyetin ve aldatmanın biçiminin olumsuz duygular üzerindeki etkisi incelenmiştir. Tek önemli sonuç aldatılmaya verilen tepkilerdeki cinsiyete dayalı farklılıkları doğrulamaktadır: kadınlar erkeklerden daha fazla olumsuz duygu bildirmişlerdir. Dięer bir deyiřle, kadınlar erkeklerden daha ciddi boyutlarda olumsuz duygusal reaksiyonlar göstermektedir. Cano ve O'Leay (2000) gibi önceki arařtırmacılar, bir evlilikte, aldatılma deneyiminden sonra kadınların major depresyon bildirme olasılıklarının daha yüksek olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Ayrıca, cinsiyet ve aldatılan partnerin aldatılmaya verdikleri duygusal tepkileriyle ilgili yapılan önceki çalışmalar, duygusal ve cinsel aldatma arasındaki farka odaklanmışlardır (örneğin, Shackelford, LeBlanc, & Drass, 2000). Ancak Berman and Frazier (2005) gibi arařtırmacıların yapmış olduęu bazı çalışmalar, aldatılma kurbanlarının cinsel veya duygusal aldatılmaya karşı verdikleri tepkiler arasında cinsiyete baęlı bir fark bulunmadığını bildirmişlerdir. Dięer bazı çalışmalar kadınların duygusal aldatılmaya daha fazla olumsuz tepki gösterdiğini, erkeklerin ise cinsel aldatılmaya daha çok olumsuz tepki gösterdiğini bildirmiştir (örneğin, Groothof, Dijkstra, & Barelds, 2009). Bu çalışmada cinsiyet ile aldatma biçimleri (cinsel veya duygusal) arasındaki iliřki olmaması, aldatma türünün katılımcılara sorulma biçiminden kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Katılımcılardan zorunlu tercih paradigması cevaplamaları istendiğinde, erkekler ve kadınlar cinsel ve duygusal aldatmaya farklı tepkiler vermişler (örneğin, Schützwohl 2004); ancak, yöneltilen soru zorunlu tercih sorusu olmadığında, erkekler ve kadınlar, aldatmanın cinsel veya duygusal olmasına bakmaksızın, her tür aldatmaya olumsuz tepkiler bildirmişlerdir (örneğin, Lishner, Nguyen, Stocks, & Zillmer, 2008).

Modelin test edilmesinden çıkan sonuçlara göre, aldatılan partnerler, sadakatsiz partneri affettiklerinde, daha düşük derecede olumsuz duygular hissetmektedirler. Diğer yandan, daha fazla ruminasyon yaptıklarında, durumu bir tehdit olarak algıladıklarında, ve durumu hiç kimsenin kontrol edemeyeceği bir durum olarak algıladıklarında, yaşadıkları olumsuz duygular daha güçlü olmaktadır. Bu sonuçlar, beklenen sonuçlardır. Ancak ilginç bir şekilde, incinen partnerlerin, durumu kendileri tarafından kontrol edilebilir olarak algıladıklarında, olumsuz duygularının daha güçlü olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, aldatılan partnerler durumu kendileri tarafından kontrol edilebilir bir durum olarak algıladıklarında, daha yüksek seviyede olumsuz duygular sergilemektedirler. İnsanlar durumu kontrol edebildikleri zaman olumsuz duyguları kontrol edebilirler; ancak, aldatma durumunda, partnerlerinin davranışlarını kontrol edememektedirler. Bazı durumlar büyük oranda kontrol edilebilir ve tahmin edilebilir olsa da, bunlar yine de stres yaratır çünkü bu olaylar ve durumlar kişinin yeteneklerinin sınırlarına dayalıdır ve “kendilik” kavramını zorlar (Dağ, 1990). Ayrıca, Türk kültüründe, insanların pek çoğu kadere inanmaktadır. Bir olay için sorumluluk almak yerine, olayı kaderlerinin bir parçası olarak düşünmek, insanların daha düşük seviyede olumsuz duygular yaşamasına izin vermektedir. Diğer yandan, aldatma olayını kontrol edebilecekleri bir şey olarak algılamak, insanların kendilerini suçlu hissetmelerine ve olaydan sorumlu olduklarını düşünmelerine sebep olabilir. Bu düşünce ve hisler, yaşadıkları olumsuz duyguların sebepleri olabilir.

Modelin sonuçları, sadece öz-şefkatin olumsuz tepkilerle ilişkili olmadığını göstermektedir, ancak bu değişken diğer değişkenler aracılığıyla olumsuz duygusal tepkilerle bağlantılıdır. Çalışmanın başında, öz-şefkatin aldatma durumunu öğrendikten sonra yaşanan olumsuz duygularla bağlantılı olduğunun ortaya çıkması beklenmiştir. Her ikisiyle bağlantılı olan diğer değişkenler de bulunduğu için, bu ilişkinin önemli olduğu öngörülmüştür. Daha az öz-şefkate sahip olan insanlar, öz-şefkatli olan insanlara kıyasla kendileriyle ilgili daha fazla olumsuz duygular hissetmektedirler (Leary et al., 2007). Baker ve McNulty (2011) ise, öz-şefkatin zıt etkileri olduğunu iddia etmişlerdir: öz-şefkat insanların olumsuz hislerden uzak

durmasına yardım edebilir, ancak diğer yandan, ilişkilerindeki sorunları düzeltme konusundaki motivasyonlarını azaltabilir. Neff'in (2003a) çalışmasından bilindiği üzere, öz-şefkat bireyin daha az tehdit edici olan bir durumda daha sağlıklı davranışlar geliştirmesini teşvik ederek bireyin daha dayanıklı olmasına yardımcı olabilir. Wang, King, ve Debernardi (2012), aldatma ciddi bir tehdit olarak algılandığında, yüksek derecede duygusal bir üzüntünün yaşandığını belirtmiştir. Birey daha öz-şefkatli bir kişiye, ruminasyon yapma eğilimi daha düşük (Raes, 2010), ve diğerlerini affetme eğilimi daha yüksek (Neff & Pommier, 2013) olmaktadır. Bu bulgular düşünüldüğünde, insanların aldatmayı ciddi bir tehdit olarak algıladığı, bu yüzden öz-şefkatin diğer değişkenler olmaksızın olumsuz duygularla bağlantılı olmadığı söylenebilir. Ayrıca, affetme ve ruminasyonun, öz-şefkat ile tehdit arasındaki ilişkide rollere sahip olması gerekmektedir. Bu çalışmada öz-şefkat ile olumsuz duygular arasında doğrudan bağlantı bulunmamasının, ancak diğer değişkenler aracılığıyla bağlantılı olmalarının sebepleri bunlar olabilir.

Bunlara ek olarak, erkekler ve kadınlarda, farklı değişkenler olumsuz duygularla bağlantılı durumdadır. Bu değişkenler cinsiyetler arasında olumsuz duygusal tepkilerdeki farkları açıklayabilir. Erkekler için ortaya çıkan şaşırtıcı bir sonuç şu şekildedir: değişkenlerden hiçbiri doğrudan olumsuz duygusal tepkilerle bağlantılı değildir. Ancak, dolaylı ilişkiler bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca, erkekler öz-şefkatli olduklarında, aldatmayı bir tehdit olarak algılama olasılıkları daha düşüktür. Kadınlar için ise durum şöyledir: bir kadın ruminatif olduğunda ve aldatma olayını kendi kontrol edebileceği bir şey olarak algıladığında, daha yüksek derecede olumsuz duygulara sahip olur. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkilerde farklılıklar olsa da, bu çalışmadaki değişkenler tarafından açıklanan olumsuz duygulardaki varyans, cinsiyete göre büyük bir fark göstermemiştir (kadınlar için %65, erkekler için %66). Kadınlar için ve erkekler için farklı modeller bulunması, öz-şefkat ile tehdit arasındaki ilişki ile açıklanabilir. Yüksek oranda öz-şefkate sahip olan erkekler, aldatmayı daha az tehdit edici bir durum olarak algılamaktadır, ancak bu, öz-şefkati yüksek olan kadınlar için geçerli değildir. Neff'e göre (2003a), bir durum büyük bir

tehdit olmadığında, bireyin öz-şefkati olumsuz duygularını kontrol etmesinde yardımcı olabilir.

4.1. Uygulamaya Yönelik Öneriler

Romantik ilişki yaygın görülen bir ilişki türüdür ve bu tür bir ilişki sırasında, aldatılma ihtimali vardır. Bir birey aldatıldığını öğrendiğinde, bu bireyin yardıma ihtiyacı olabilir. Bu çalışmanın konuyla ilgili yapılacak araştırmalar ve verilecekler danışmanlıklar için bir takım önerileri bulunmaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçları psikolojik danışmanlara yardımcı olabilir çünkü ilişki sorunları yetişkin nüfus arasında epey yaygındır (Erdur-Baker & Bıçak, 2006; Erdur-Baker, Aberson, Drapper, & Barrow, 2006).

Aldatıldıktan sonra danışmanlık almak isteyen kişilere yardım verilmesine ilişkin çalışmalar sınırlıdır, ve yardım seçenekleri yetersizdir (Blow & Hartnett, 2005a). Ayrıca, aldatılma deneyiminden sonra olumsuz duyguların üstesinden nasıl gelineceği konusu, üzerinde çalışılması gereken bir konudur, çünkü aldatılan bireylerin, depresyon veya travma sonrası stress bozukluğu dahil, çeşitli psikolojik sorunlar bildirme olasılıkları daha yüksektir (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2004). Bu çalışmanın katılımcılarının çoğu 18 ila 35 yaş arasındaki üniversite öğrencileridir; bu yüzden, danışmanlar bu çalışmadan edindikleri bilgileri bu yaş grubu üzerinde çalışırken kullanabilirler.

Demografik bilgiler, ve danışanların kişilik özellikleri ve bilişsel değerlendirmeleri, danışmanlara bir fikir verebilir, bu yüzden hangi özelliklerin olumsuz duygularla baş etmeyi güçleştirdiğini anlamalarında yardımcı olacaktır. Örneğin, bu çalışma ruminatif olan ve affedici olmayan bir tavrın ve aldatma olayını kişinin kendisi tarafından kontrol edilebilir bir şey olarak algılamasının, bireyin daha ciddi olumsuz tepkiler göstermesine sebep olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu yüzden, bu gruplar risk grupları olarak görülebilir. Buna ek olarak, aldatılma olayından sonra gösterilen olumsuz tepkilerle bağlantılı olan değişkenleri göz önünde bulundurarak aldatılan kişilere yönelik yardım yolları geliştirmek daha kolay olacaktır.

Bu çalışma için seçilmiş olan değişkenler risk ve koruyucu kişilik faktörleridir, ve aldatma karşısındaki tepkilerdeki bireysel farklılıkları açıklamak için kullanılabilir. Bu değişkenler, hangi danışanların risk altında olduklarını anlamaları açısından danışmanlar için önemlidir. Örneğin, kadınların erkeklere kıyasla daha yüksek derecede olumsuz bilişsel değerlendirmeler yaptıkları (Hammermeister & Burton, 2004), daha fazla ruminasyon yaptıkları (Nolen-Hoeksema, Larson, & Grayson, 1999) ve daha az öz-şefkate sahip oldukları (Neff, 2003a) bilinmektedir. Bu yüzden, cinsiyet ile aldatmaya verilen tepkiler arasındaki ilişki, bu tarz kişisel faktörlere bağlı olabilir (Simon & Nath, 2004). Bilişsel değerlendirme, ruminasyon, affetme ve öz-şefkat – ki bunların kadınlardaki olumsuz duygularla bağlantıları var gibi görünmektedir- aldatmaya verilen tepkilerdeki cinsiyete dayalı farklılıkları açıklayabilir.

Danışmanlar aldatılan danışanlarının öz-şefkatlerini güçlendirebilirler, ruminasyonla baş etmelerine yardım edebilirler, veya affetme yeteneklerini geliştirebilir, ki bu da öz-gelişimin bir parçası olabilir ve danışanın zor koşullarla baş edebilmesinde yardımcı olur. Bu şekilde, danışanlar bilişsel değerlendirme, öz-şefkat, ruminasyon ve affetmenin aldatmaya verilen olumsuz tepkilerle baş edebilmelerinde önemli roller oynadıklarını görebilirler.

Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma, hangi değişkenlerin romantik aldatmaya verilen olumsuz tepkilerle bağlantılı olduğunu anlamaları açısından psikolojik danışmanlık alanındaki profesyonellere yardımcı olabilir; ve bu şekilde bu profesyoneller romantik aldatma sorunlarını göz önünde bulundurarak danışanlarına yardım için yeni yöntemler geliştirebilirler, ve çiftlere aldatma öncesi veya sonrasında yardımcı olabilirler. Ayrıca, danışmanlık eğitimlerinin derslerinde, aldatılmayla ilgili konular ve bu çalışmadaki model tartışılarak, danışman adaylarına, insanların aldatıldıklarını öğrendikten sonra neden tepkilerinde farklılıklar görüldüğünü öğretilir.

Bu çalışmanın, önerilen ve test edilen modelleriyle, ulusal ve uluslararası literatüre önemli bir katkısı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Bir sonraki bölümde belirtileceği üzere, bu çalışma, sorulacak yeni araştırma soruları ortaya atılması ve yeni metodolojiler ve

farklı örneklemler kullanmak suretiyle test edilecek yeni hipotezler üretilmesi için fikir vererek, gelecekteki çalışmalara yardımcı olacaktır.

4.2. Sonraki Çalışmalar için Öneriler

Bu çalışmanın birkaç önerisi daha bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle, çalışma deseni boylamsal değildir; ancak şu bir gerçektir ki aldatma olayından sonra, duygular zaman içinde değişebilir. Bu yüzden, zaman içinde duygulardaki farklılıkları ölçmek amacıyla boylamsal bir çalışma yapılabilir.

İkinci olarak, öz bildirim ölçekleri sosyal istenirlik sorununa sahiptir, ve bu durum sonuçları karmaşık hale getirebilir. Ancak, bu tarz ölçekler duyguları ölçmenin bir yoludur. Üstelik, öz-şefkat ve romantik ilişkilerle ilgili çalışmaların çoğu, bu çalışmada olduğu gibi, öz bildirim araçları kullanmışlardır (örneğin, Neff & Beretvas, 2013). Davranışların nesnel kodlaması olarak veriler toplamak için farklı metodolojik yaklaşımlar kullanılabilir.

Üçüncü olarak, Türkiye’de aldatmayla ilgili yeterli sayıda çalışma yoktur; ancak bu, çok sayıda insanın deneyimlediği bir olaydır. Gelecek çalışmalarda, hem aldatılan hem de aldatan partnerlerden veri toplamak, iki tarafın da deneyimleriyle ilgili bilgi toplamak açısından iyi olabilir. Bu şekilde, Türkiye’de aldatma ve aldatılma ile ilgili daha fazla bilgi edinmek mümkün olabilir. Ayrıca, erkek katılımcılar çoğunlukla, aldatmayla ilgili bir çalışmaya katılmak istememişlerdir. Katılmak istememelerinin sebebi, başka bir çalışmanın konusu olabilir.

Dördüncü olarak, genellenebilirliği arttırabilmek için, tesadüfi örnekleme yoluyla, farklı demografik, çevresel ve kültürel faktörlerden etkilenen katılımcılara ulaşılabilir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma LGBTI ilişkileri üzerinde araştırma yapmamıştır. Gelecek çalışmalarda, LGBTI katılımcılarıyla bir örneklem oluşturmak önemli bir adım olacaktır.

Beşinci olarak, bu çalışmadaki değişkenler aldatmaya verilen duygusal tepkilerdeki varyansın yarısından fazlasını açıklasa da, açıklanmamış olarak kalan bir bölüm

vardır. Gelecek alıřmalarda, flört aldatmasına verilen duygusal tepkileri aıklamak iin, kendini affetme ve eřli ruminasyon gibi dięer deęiřkenler kullanılabilir. Ayrıca, bu alıřmada, deęiřkenlerin oęu aracı rollere sahiptir. Gelecekteki alıřmalar bu deęiřkenler arasındaki iliřkileri inceleyebilir.

Yukarıdaki noktalara ek olarak, bu alıřma insanların romantik iliřkilerde aldatılma olayına neden farklı duygusal tepkiler verdięini aıklamaya alıřmıřtır. Öz-řefkatli insanların, dięer deęiřkenlerin yardımıyla, aldatma olayına daha az olumsuz ciddi tepkiler gsterdięi ortaya konulmuřtur. Arařtırmacının bilgisi dahilinde belirtmek gerekirse, bu iliřki bu alıřma ile ilk kez bulunmuřtur. Bu iliřkiyi daha iyi anlayabilmek iin, gelecekteki alıřmalar, dięer bazı deęiřkenleri (rneęin kendini affetme ve bař etme stratejileri) aracı olarak kullanmayı dřünmelidir.

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