

AN ACTOR-PARTNER INTERDEPENDENCE MEDIATION MODEL OF  
EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION ON COMMITMENT VIA SATISFACTION OF  
COUPLES IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION ON COMMITMENT VIA SATISFACTION  
OF COUPLES IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

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## ABSTRACT

### AN ACTOR-PARTNER INTERDEPENDENCE MEDIATION MODEL OF EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION ON COMMITMENT VIA SATISFACTION OF COUPLES IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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M.S., The Department of Educational Sciences, Guidance and Psychological  
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The purpose of the current study is to investigate the mediating role of relationship satisfaction in the relationship between commitment and emotional manipulation. The participants of the current study consist of 221 dating couples (N=442) who are in the period of emerging adulthood between the ages of 18 to 29, and who have been dating for at least 6 months. The convenience sampling technique was utilized. Turkish version of the Investment Model Scale, the Turkish version of the Emotional Manipulation Scale, and the Demographic and Relational Information Form were administered to collect the data.

In the proposed model, the mediating role of relationship satisfaction in the relationship between commitment and emotional manipulation was investigated. To test the current model, Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was conducted. The results of the analyses suggested that the relationship between

commitment and emotional manipulation was partially mediated via relationship satisfaction for both partners. The results of the current study were discussed in light of the literature, implications for theory and practice were given, and recommendations for further research were elaborated.

**Keywords:** emotional manipulation, commitment, satisfaction, investment model, actor-partner interdependence mediation model

## ÖZ

# ROMANTİK İLİŞKİDEKİ ÇİFTLERİN DUYGUSAL MANİPÜLASYONUNUN İLİŞKİYE BAĞLILIKLARINA ETKİSİNDE İLİŞKİ DOYUMLARININ ARACI ROLÜ: AKTÖR-PARTNER KARŞILIKLI BAĞIMLILIK ARACI MODELİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, bağlılık ve duygusal manipülasyon arasındaki ilişkide ilişki doyumunun aracı rolünü araştırmaktır. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları, 18-29 yaşları arasında beliren yetişkinlik döneminde olan ve en az 6 aydır birlikte olan 221 flört eden çiftten (N=442) oluşmaktadır. Uygun örnekleme tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında Yatırım Modeli Ölçeğinin Türkçe versiyonu, Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeğinin Türkçe versiyonu ve Demografik ve İlişkisel Bilgi Formu uygulanmıştır.

Önerilen modelde bağlılık ve duygusal manipülasyon arasındaki ilişkide ilişki doyumunun aracı rolü araştırılmıştır. Mevcut modeli test etmek için Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) yürütülmüştür. Analizlerin sonuçları, bağlılık ve duygusal manipülasyon arasındaki ilişkiye, her iki taraf için de ilişki doyumu yoluyla kısmi aracılık edildiğini ortaya koymuştur. Mevcut çalışmanın



sonuları alanyazın ışığında tartıřılmış, kuram ve uygulamaya yönelik ıkarımlar belirtilmiş ve gelecekteki arařtırmalar için öneriler detaylandırılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** duygusal manipölasyon, baėlılık, doyum, yatırım modeli, aktör-partner karřılıklı baėımlılık modeli

*To myself & to my beloved mother*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

APIM: Actor-Partner Interdependence Model

APIMeM: Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model

IPV: Intimate Partner Violence

DRIF: Demographic and Relational Information Form

EMS: Emotional Manipulation Scale

IMS: Investment Model Scale

RSS: Relationship Stability Scale

CFA: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background to the Study

“We are born into relationships, we live our lives in relationships with others, and when we die, the effects of our relationships survive in the lives of the living, reverberating throughout the tissue of their relationships” (Reis & Rusbult, 2004, p. 33). Therefore, understanding human behaviors in the context of relationships is crucial, yet difficult being able to do so. People develop many kinds of relationships such as relationships with their parents, friends, and with their partners. To understand the human being, not only the individuals but also the relationships that they have shall also be studied. In this sense, people’s romantic relationships may tell a lot about the individual. In the current study, the sample is formed by emerging adults. Emerging adulthood is a period of life that consists of different dynamics to be resolved such as education, work, beliefs, self-development, and relationships; and it is a self-focused period before committing themselves to lasting relationships with others (Arnett, 2015). As emerging adults are in the transition period of their lives from emerging adulthood to adulthood, it is important to rectify their relationship experiences in this period. Fincham and Cui (2011) state that having a satisfying relationship is a developmental task during emerging adulthood, and as Arnett (2000) suggests that it is the time when relationships become more serious, and emerging adults have more intimate and enduring relationships. Therefore, as and when the relationship skills and knowledge of emerging adults are improved, it may also affect their future dating and marriage experiences.

Over the past years, researchers tried to understand the reasons why relationships fall apart, or partners stay together. The love of partners for each other and the happiness that comes from the relationship are the reasons that keep partners together. On the other hand, some relationships do not constitute happiness or that much love towards the partner. In this regard, Rusbult and her colleagues (1998) discussed that relationships do not persist only because of the happiness in the relationship. They discussed three points: persistence with the existence of dissatisfaction; breakups when the relationships are satisfying; and persistence with the existence of relationship fluctuations. Considering these points, it is important to address why some relationships survive, and others fall apart. The basic assumption is that commitment is the key to understanding why relationships continue despite low satisfaction, and there are theories explaining how commitment works in this mechanism. Learned helplessness, traumatic bonding theory, and psychological entrapment were used to explain why abusive relationships continue (Rhatigan et al., 2006), and this is a negative side of commitment that makes individuals trapped in their abusive relationships (Impett et al., 2001; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). Another theory to explain this mechanism is the Investment Model, and it has been found strong in predicting commitment and relationship persistence.

The Investment Model was developed from the Interdependence Theory and uses interdependence concepts in investigating the commitment in relationships (Kelley, 1979; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Dependence is the main feature of the Interdependence Theory, and the level of dependence is the individual's degree of reliance on the relationship. According to Interdependence Theory, dependence grows in two main processes. Individuals become dependent as the relationship satisfaction is experienced at high levels. The satisfaction level is a positive versus negative affect in the relationship experienced by partners, and this satisfaction endures at high levels if an individual's needs are met by their partners (Rusbult et al., 1998). So, the Investment Model states that satisfaction increases when the rewards exist at the low levels of the cost associated with the relationship and low comparison levels (Rusbult et al., 1986a). Nevertheless, satisfaction is not the only determinant of dependence, and it is also influenced by the quality of alternatives. Quality of alternatives is described as the best possible alternative to the current

relationship (Rusbult et al., 1998). That means, an individual's dependence is increased when the satisfaction level remains high, and the individual has no possible alternative rather than the current partner. However, some relationships have lower satisfaction levels with the existence of possible alternatives. Then, one may think that why not break up and move on with the other alternative? Here, another determinant of dependence comes into play which is investment size. Investment size is described as the resources that are attached to the relationship and would be lost if the relationship comes to an end (Rusbult et al., 1998). Considering what has been said regarding the Investment Model, commitment increases in the existence of higher satisfaction levels, lower quality of alternatives along with higher investments. In the current study, only two variables of the Investment Model are focused on: satisfaction and commitment.

Furthermore, empirical studies have shown that commitment is positively correlated with satisfaction and investment size, and negatively correlated with the quality of alternatives (Agnew et al., 1998; Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1998; Whitton & Kuryluk, 2012;). The results of the studies conducted within the Turkish literature are also consistent with the international study results that commitment is predicted by a higher satisfaction level and investment size with the lower quality of alternatives (Büyükşahin & Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Büyükşahin et al., 2005). In addition, the Investment Model also showed consistent results with different samples such as cross-sectional studies with dating, cohabiting, and married heterosexual couples (Buunk, 1987; Büyükşahin & Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Kurdek, 1993; Lin & Rusbult, 1995), homosexual couples (Beals et al., 2002; Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Kurdek, 1991), and emerging adults (Hadden et al., 2018; Lin & Rusbult, 1995; Rusbult, 1980, 1983; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2017a). Furthermore, gender is a significant variable in the current study of its relationship with commitment and satisfaction as well. Stanley and his colleagues (2004) indicated that commitment is far more important in determining outcomes of the relationship for men than women, and men are more driven by commitment while women are affected by love and attachment (Stanley et al., 2010). Several studies indicated that women are more committed to their relationships than men (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999; Rusbult et al., 1998). In another study, men scored higher than women in their investments to their

relationships (Whitton & Kuryluk, 2012). However, a study, which was conducted with Investment Model variables, found that there is no significant gender difference between men and women. As it can be understood, the studies about gender differences are inconsistent with each other. In the current study, gender is also an important variable since the study is conducted with a dyadic approach.

Furthermore, having a romantic relationship can be difficult at times, and it may bring some hardship to the individuals. In some cases, partners' behaviors may be manipulative such as silent treatment, coercion, debasement, and so on. So, having an emotionally manipulative partner is a hard thing and sometimes not easy to recognize. Even if the partners recognize the manipulative behaviors, it may not be easy to leave the partner since they already invested a lot in the relationship and are committed to their relationship. Therefore, studying emotional manipulation is important in terms of understanding manipulative relationship dynamics. First, emotion can be defined in this context. Emotions are responses to the evaluations of internal and external events (Scherer, 1987, 2001, 2005). Individuals need to adapt to complex relationships with others, and they need to facilitate communication; therefore, people are considered socially adaptive beings (Engelberg & Sjöberg, 2005). As a result, emotional skills are essential to adapt to situations, and these skills are considered emotional intelligence. There have been many studies regarding the benefits of emotional intelligence (Austin et al., 2005; Day et al., 2005; Furnham & Petrides, 2003; Salovey et al., 2002); however, there have been studies that explored the dark sides of emotional intelligence (Austin et al., 2007), which is called emotional manipulation. Emotional manipulation is described as the influence on others' behaviors and feelings for an individual's self-interest (Austin et al., 2007). Therefore, it can be said that there are two sides to the coin, and emotional intelligence can be used for the good and the bad. In other words, this influence on others can be shaped to help others or to mistreat them, and emotional manipulation is used to control others' behaviors or feelings to the extent of one's self-gains.

Emotional manipulation can be done both verbally and through action. Twelve tactics were identified by Buss (1987; 1992) as Charm, Reason, Coercion, Silent Treatment, Debasement, Regression, Responsibility Invocation, Reciprocity, Monetary Reward,

Pleasure Induction, Social Comparison, and Hardball. These tactics can be both done by action and verbal means. For example, using the “charm” tactic to make someone act in the way of one’s self-interests can be used verbally, whereas the “hardball” tactic is mostly about violent acts as it can be done by action, but threats can be limited to verbal means as well. In addition to these factors, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors are defined as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) by World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), and these definitions are similar to emotional manipulation. As a result, emotional manipulation can be conceptualized within the frame of Intimate Partner Violence (Alvarez et al., 2015) since emotional manipulation was investigated as a part of different forms of psychological abuse. Therefore, it can be said that emotional manipulation is detrimental in relationships, and it lays the ground for coercion and various forms of IPV. Struckman-Johnson and her colleagues (2003) studied tactics of sexual coercion, and they stated that emotional manipulation and deception were the most frequent tactics among others with that 60% of their participants experienced one of these tactics. In their study (Struckman-Johnson et al., 2003), women (71%) reported their experiences of being subjected to emotional manipulation or lies more than men (44%) reported. In another study, sexual coercion was studied among college students who are currently dating and found out that one of the tactics to coerce the partner was emotional manipulation. The perpetrators told their partners that it is their duty to have sex with them at this stage of their relationships (He & Tsang, 2017). Hence, emotional manipulation was used to persuade the partner what they want. Moreover, gender differences in emotional manipulation have also been investigated and consistent with the study of Struckman-Johnson and her colleagues (2003), it was found that men score higher in emotional manipulation than women (Grieve et al., 2019; Grieve & Mahar, 2010 Hyde & Grieve, 2014; Waddell et al., 2020). Schmitt and her colleagues (2020), in their cross-culture study, also found out that men scored higher in the use of emotionally manipulative tactics than women. In this sense, the cultural differences, and the effect of culture on how individuals perceive emotionally manipulative behaviors are important to address because, in some cultures where women are more obedient in the relationship, their decision process for their relationship can be affected even in the existence of emotional manipulation. Alternatively, women may be the perpetrator of emotional manipulation in some relationships; this may also contradict their beliefs and values

(Oxtoby, 2012), and this contradiction may create a dissonance resulting in an unsatisfactory relationship for both partners.

As Marshall (1996) argued, satisfaction levels are decreased in the presence of psychological violence and the victims' decisions not to stay in the relationship are affected positively. However, this is not the case for every relationship. Sometimes, individuals still decide to stay in the relationship even if the relationship is not satisfying. The relationship between dating violence and commitment is found to be mediated by satisfaction in the relationship (Toplu-Demirtaş et al., 2013). So, individuals who are satisfied with their relationships are expected to be committed to their partners; however, there are relationships with low satisfaction in which partners are still committed to the relationship (Impett et al., 2001), and low satisfaction levels may affect both the victim and perpetrator in this sense. Therefore, the nature of this kind of relationship can be understood by studying emotional manipulation with satisfaction and commitment to have an understanding of why dating relationships continue when the satisfaction levels are low.

Considering the theoretical background and literature reviews, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the mediating effect of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment in dating couples.

## **1.2. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the association between emotional manipulation and commitment through the mediating effect of satisfaction levels of partners in Turkish dating couples who are emerging adults. In other words, the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment via the mediating role of satisfaction was explored.

## **1.3. Research Questions and Hypotheses of the Study**

In the current study, the highlighted research problem is whether commitment is associated with emotionally manipulative behaviors through the mediating role of satisfaction in romantic relationships of emerging adult couples. To conceptualize the



question, the proposed model of the current study is given in Figure 1.1. According to the model, the current study asks the following question:

*R.Q.1* To what extent does satisfaction mediate the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment in dating couples? (See Figure 1.1)

Acknowledging the research question, the following hypotheses are presented in the current study.

### **1.3.1. Actor Effects Hypotheses**

*H1.* Women's and men's commitment to the relationship will be significantly explained by their own emotional manipulation.

*H1a.* There will be a significant negative actor effect of emotional manipulation on their own commitment.

*H2.* The satisfaction of women and men in the relationship will be significantly explained by their own emotional manipulation.

*H2a.* There will be a significant negative actor effect of emotional manipulation on their own satisfaction.

*H3.* The commitment of women and men to the relationship will be significantly explained by their own satisfaction.

*H3a.* There will be a significant positive actor effect of satisfaction on their own commitment.

### **1.3.2. Partner Effects Hypotheses**

*H4.* Women's and men's commitment to the relationship will be significantly explained by their partners' emotional manipulation.

*H4a.* There will be a significant negative partner effect of emotional manipulation on the commitment of the partner.

*H5.* Women's and men's satisfaction in the relationship will be significantly explained by their partners' emotional manipulation.

*H5a.* There will be a significant negative partner effect of emotional manipulation on the satisfaction of the partner.

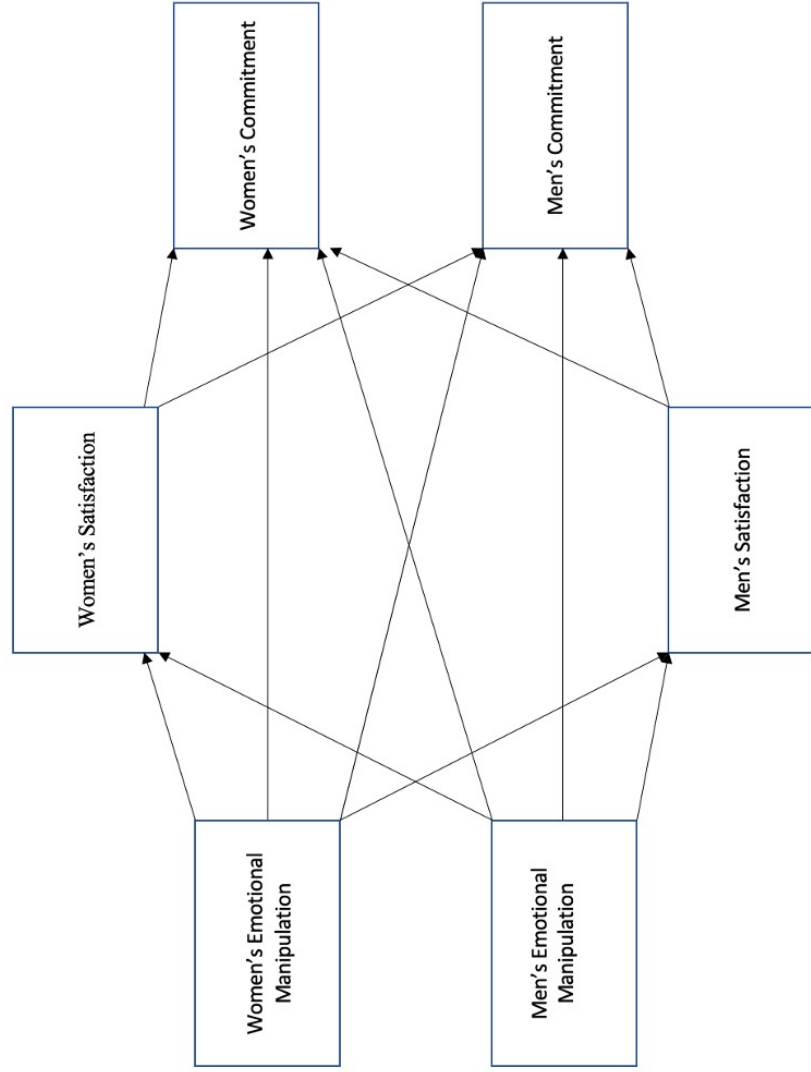
*H6.* Women's and men's commitment to the relationship will be significantly explained by their partners' satisfaction.

*H6a.* There will be a significant positive partner effect of satisfaction on the commitment of the partner.

### **1.3.3. Mediation Hypotheses**

*H7.* Relationship satisfaction will mediate the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment of dating couples.

**Figure 1.1**  
*The Proposed Model of the Current Study*



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

The purpose of the study is to explore the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment through the mediating role of satisfaction of Turkish dating couples who are emerging adults.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the current study is the first attempt in the literature to explore commitment and satisfaction which are investment model variables, with emotional manipulation of couples as a dyadic study. Although people may start their relationships with their best intentions, the relationships may evolve into unhealthy relationships as time goes on. It is expected that when some things go wrong, partners would split up. However, on some occasions, individuals decide to stay in the relationship even if they are not satisfied with their relationship. In this context, the current study tries to find the possible answers to why individuals stay in their relationships when they are not happy, or dissatisfied, and how emotional manipulation and their satisfaction may affect their commitment to the relationship. The studies trying to understand how commitment and satisfaction work in romantic relationships are linked with dating violence types such as physical and psychological violence. In the current study, emotional manipulation was added as a variable since it is not something easy to recognize but devastating for the partner in the long term. The consequences may not be seen directly, however it affects and decreases individuals' self-esteem (Sackett & Saunders, 1999), and it is associated with depression, as Katz and Arias (1999) found out in their longitudinal study. In this respect, the current study is unique to understand the dynamics of manipulative relationships regarding individuals' commitment to and satisfaction in their relationships.

Furthermore, research-wise, the current study contributes to the literature on romantic relationships in its way of conducting the study with both partners as dyadic research. The Actor Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was used in the current study to analyze the relationships between the study variables. The interdependence between couples affecting each other on their commitment and satisfaction levels is worth studying as a dyad. Also, the effect of emotional

manipulation on partners would be understood better considering the effects of both partners interdependently.

Moreover, the results may provide an insight for the individuals that emotional manipulation may play a role in their relationship, so being aware of the signs and reviewing their relationships in terms of how committed they are, and in return how much satisfaction they get from their relationship with their partner. Also, mental health professionals, including psychological counselors and clinical psychologists may benefit from the results that they can be more aware of the dynamics of romantic relationships, how commitment and satisfaction regarding the investment model of partners, and how emotional manipulation may trap the individuals in a relationship. Also, educational implications might be inferred in counseling centers in universities, and they may benefit from the results of similar problems that university students are dealing with in their romantic relationships. As Fincham and his colleagues (2011) states, educational programs about relationships should be given to students as a prevention strategy. The dynamics of emotional manipulation relating to commitment and satisfaction factors shall be understood on a deeper level by counselors and they may use their knowledge and transform it into educational programs in universities.

### **1.5. Definitions of Terms**

The definitions of the terms which were used in the current study are presented in this section. These definitions should be made regarding the variables of the study to have a comprehensive understanding of the current study. Therefore, emotional manipulation, satisfaction, and commitment were defined in the scope of the study.

**Emotional Manipulation:** Austin and her colleagues (2007) described emotional manipulation as controlling others' behaviors and feelings for one's own interest. Hyde and Grieve (2004) described it as the ability to alter others' behaviors and feelings; and divided emotional manipulation as the perceived ability and willingness. In the current study, the focus was on the perceived ability in emotional manipulation, and it was about individuals' beliefs about their ability of emotional manipulation.

**Satisfaction:** Rusbult (1983) defined satisfaction as the extent of positive affect associated with and being attracted to one's relationship.

**Commitment:** Rusbult and Buunk (1993) described commitment as the wish to stay in a relationship with long-term goals and feelings of attachment to one's partner.

**Actor Effect:** Kenny and Ledermann (2010) described actor effect as the individuals' effect of causal variable on their own outcome variable.

**Partner Effect:** Kenny and Ledermann (2010) described partner effect as the individuals' causal variable on their partners' outcome variable.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literature on study variables along with the theoretical framework is presented. The first three sections present the definitions of commitment and satisfaction, theories of commitment and satisfaction (Interdependence Theory and Investment Model), and empirical studies of the Investment Model. The fourth section presents the definition of emotional manipulation, and empirical studies of emotional manipulation. Lastly, a summary of the literature is given along with the reasons to study these variables together.

#### **2.1. Commitment**

Commitment in romantic relationships has been an interest to researchers, and it has been defined in multiple ways by several researchers. The commitment term, itself, can be defined as an intention to continue to act in a line, and relationship commitment, therefore, can be defined as continuing to be in a relationship with the partner. Tran and his colleagues (2019) described commitment as a concept of partners' desire to maintain the relationship and a kind of psychological attachment to the partner along with long-term goals for the relationship and satisfaction as a positive or negative view of the partners' individual experiences in the relationship. Therefore, commitment is a construct that relates to how individuals maintain their relationships and continue to be with their partners (Agnew, 2009). In other words, commitment in romantic relationships has been defined as the intention to maintain the relationship with the partner over time (Johnson, 1973; Rusbult, 1980; Stanley et al., 2010). Acknowledging the various definitions of commitment, commitment to romantic relationships has been described as the intention to stay in the relationship. As Stanley and his colleagues (2010) put together, commitment is the intention to stay together, to plan to have a future and to have a couple's identity in the relationship.

Johnson (1973) states that commitment has two different meanings to specify the concept. The first is a personal dedication to the things that are in a line of action, and it is called personal commitment. In the second meaning, commitment comes from a constraint, and the individual continues to act in that line of action, so that it is a must, and it does not matter if the one is not personally committed or not, and it is called behavioral commitment. In behavioral commitment, behavior is not interested, but the consistency of the behavior matters. Also, behavioral commitment contains two elements: social commitment and cost commitment. Social commitment occurs when a person starts to act in a line of action, and it is in the awareness of other people, that an expectation would occur for that person to continue in that line. These expectations may come from cultural norms or personal expectations from the people in a shared social environment. Social commitment is related to the person's awareness of the expectations, relationship with others who hold those expectations, and the perceived validity of the expectations. Cost commitment, on the other hand, indicates costs that will be faced if the person does not continue the expected line of action. The consequences of the costs may involve the termination of the act, changes in the life of the person, and the loss of invested assets of the person. On the other hand, Heere and Dickson (2008) define commitment from a psychological perspective as an internal state of mind of the individual feeling committed toward an object.

Arriaga and Agnew (2001) define commitment to a relationship as three components: psychological attachment, long-term orientation, and intention to persist, and they examined these components as affective, cognitive, and conative components, respectively. Commitment has been found strongly related to relationship persistence. So, commitment consists of the factors leading the individual to stay in the relationship. A committed partner can be described as having the intention to continue the relationship, feeling attached to the partner, feeling a moral obligation to stay in the relationship, having long-term relationship goals with the partner, making the partner a priority over other parts of life, and having poor alternatives when compared to the current partner. Therefore, they identified commitment as a multidimensional construct. Some other distinctions are made for the factors related to commitment. The first distinction about the commitment process is that if it originated in the relationship or is forced from the outside of the relationship. If it originated in the relationship



itself, it is called endogenous commitment. If it is forced from outside of the relationship, it is called exogenous commitment. These forces might be the pressure coming from close people, or financial issues to be faced if a breakup occurs. The second distinction is about the commitment factors whether they are best understood by objective indicators that can be observed by others such as wedding vows, or by subjective perceptions that couples' perceptions about the relationship will last or not. The third distinction about commitment is defined by the causes of relationship persistence, or the psychological state.

Stanley and his colleagues (2010) discussed two topics regarding relationship commitment: the role of commitment in the stabilization of romantic attachment in the relationship, and the dynamics of commitment formation in romantic relationships. Stanley and Markman (1992) described commitment in two dynamics: dedication and constraint. Dedication can be described as wanting to stay, whereas constraint can be described as having to stay. Stanley and Markman's (1992) model of commitment is also similar to Levinger's (1965) cohesiveness theory: attraction and barrier forces. Dedication refers to the wish to continue the relationship and improves the relationship by sacrificing and investing in the relationship and considering the partner's welfare. However, constraint commitment refers to the constraints that would force the partners to maintain the relationship. Constraint commitment can be divided into structural commitment and moral commitment, which are explained later in this chapter; and the constraints are the reasons why partners do not leave the relationship when they are not happy since it may be too costly to leave the partner, as the Investment Model (Rusbult, 1980) also suggests.

In the current study, the role of emotional manipulation in the prediction of the commitment of partners to their relationships was examined. In line with the purpose of the current study, Rhatigan and her colleagues (2006) reviewed some theories and explained stay/leave decisions in abusive relationships: learned helplessness, traumatic bonding theory, and psychological entrapment. In learned helplessness, victims start to feel hopeless to leave the relationship when their leaving attempts are not successful, thus they do not try to leave the relationship any longer. Traumatic bonding theory suggests that victims experience and develop emotional bonds with

their partner over the abuse, and this results in dependence on the partner. Psychological entrapment implies that the victim tries to improve the relationship; however, abuse continues, so the victim's previous attempts to make things better make the victim stay in the relationship. So, commitment has two sides: positive and negative. The positive side is that it is what makes individuals stay in their relationships, but the negative side is that it is also a factor that traps the individuals in the relationship (Impett et al., 2001; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993).

## **2.2. Satisfaction**

Relationship quality, relationship adjustment, relationship happiness, and some other terms have been used interchangeably, referring to relationship satisfaction, in the literature (Kluwer, 2010). The "relationship satisfaction" term has been studied in terms of happiness, success, quality, cohesion, and adjustment. It refers to individuals' expectations of idealized relationships concerning their cognitive and affective assessments (Worell, 1988). The expectations and beliefs of the individuals influence their interactions and satisfaction in the relationship (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

In the current study, satisfaction is conceptualized within the concepts of the Investment Model. Rusbult (1980) provided theoretical background in understanding relationship satisfaction in romantic relationships via Investment Model. The model was designed to assess individuals' commitment and satisfaction in their different types of relationships by decreasing the costs while increasing the rewards in the relationship (Moore & Campbell, 2020). So, satisfaction is described as the individuals' feelings toward their relationships that the relationship has rewards at low cost, and at the same time quality of the relationship is higher than the comparison level (Rusbult et al., 1986a).

Satisfaction in the relationship among emerging adults is important in the literature. There are three essential features of romantic relationships among young adults as stated by Fincham and Cui (2011). The first one is that having a romantic relationship that gives satisfaction to the individuals is a developmental task; the second is that it is an important aspect of the individual's well-being; and the third is that it is a predictor of later periods in life (Fincham & Cui, 2011). Also, as the characteristics of

romantic relationships change through the period of emerging adulthood, the relationships become more serious and intimate, and last longer (Arnett, 2000).

Regarding relationship literature, various variables have been studied with satisfaction. According to Fehr (2003), commitment and relationship stability have been focused on by researchers in the field. Hendrick and his colleagues (1988) found that individuals who are less satisfied with their relationships were potentially more decisive to leave the relationship. Also, satisfaction was found to be important due to its effects on the decision to stay in the relationship (Hendrick, 2004). In addition, satisfaction was studied with racial differences (Troy et al., 2006), relationship beliefs (Sarı & Korkut-Owen, 2016), emotional dependency and dysfunctional relationship beliefs (Kemer et al., 2016), sexual satisfaction (Lewandowski & Schrage, 2010), attachment (Etcheverry et al., 2013), interpersonal traits (Ault & Lee, 2016), social media channels (Rus & Tiemensma, 2017), emotional intelligence (Mavruk-Özbiçer & Atıcı, 2018), and self-monitoring and self-consciousness (Aslan-Yılmaz, 2019). Furthermore, Mavruk-Özbiçer and Atıcı (2018) found that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and satisfaction among university students. In another study conducted by Etcheverry and his colleagues (2013), satisfaction played a mediating role in the relationship between attachment and commitment. Also, Rhatigan and Axsom (2006) conducted a study with battered women and found that satisfaction was the mediator between psychological abuse and commitment. All in all, the purpose of the current study attempts to understand the relationship between commitment and emotional manipulation via the mediating role of satisfaction, and the literature provides a meaningful background to the current study.

### **2.3. Theories of Commitment and Satisfaction**

Several theories, models, and typologies have been proposed to describe commitment and satisfaction. In line with the purpose of the current study, Interdependence Theory and Investment Model are explained in understanding commitment and satisfaction.

### **2.3.1. Interdependence Theory**

Theories of commitment are rooted back in interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), and it is itself rooted in Social Exchange Theory. Interdependence theory states that the development and persistence of relationships are related to the interdependence which is developed between the partners. Kelley and Thibaut (1959) argue that relationship satisfaction of the partners and the quality of alternatives influence the interdependence level of partners in the relationship. Rusbult (1980) extended this theory in later years as an investment model, and it will be explained within the next stage of this chapter. Rusbult and Buunk (1993) suggest that individuals maintain their relationships because of the benefits of being in the relationship with their partner, and the satisfaction getting from the relationship (Le & Agnew, 2003). Also, it suggests that a mutual dependence occurs between the partners since they both influence each other (Le & Agnew, 2003).

In addition, interdependence theory also discusses how partners build up a couple identity in their relationships (Stanley et al., 2010). In the theory, long-term goals are taken into account in the relationships as an addition to the individual needs of partners, and they call this process acting based on the wishes of both parties (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Levinger (1979) also added that interpersonal dependence strengthens when the partners' satisfactions and dissatisfactions are identified with their satisfactions. However, it does not mean that partners are fully integrated with each other's identities and melted into one identity in the relationship. It is more like developing a we-ness in the relationship (Agnew et al., 1998); in other words, couple identity (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

According to Thibaut and Kelley (1959), individuals determine the quality of their relationships based on: comparison level and comparison level for alternatives. Comparison level refers to the standard to evaluate the quality, and this standard stems from experiences in previous relationships or social observations. That is, the comparison level can be changed via personal experiences. If one's previous relationships are highly satisfactory, then the comparison level would be higher when compared with an individual who had lower satisfaction from previous relationships (Rusbult, 1980; Rusbult & Arriaga, 1999). Therefore, it can be said that when the

outcome levels are higher than the comparison level, individuals are more satisfied with their relationships, whereas if the outcome levels are lower than the comparison level, they are less satisfied with their relationships. On the other hand, a comparison level for alternatives is also a standard that individuals use to evaluate the relationship. In this one, individuals compare their relationships with an alternative relationship. (Rusbult & Arriaga, 1999). That means, that if the comparison level for alternatives is lower than the current relationship, individuals tend to stay in their relationships. When the comparison level for alternatives is higher than the current relationship, then a breakup may likely occur in the existence of a better alternative.

In summary, a stable relationship is developed in which the partners do not expect a lot, meaning having a low comparison level; but get a lot, meaning having positive outcomes and getting satisfaction from the relationship; and have a few attractive alternatives, meaning having a low comparison level for alternatives (Regan, 2011).

### **2.3.2. Investment Model**

The Investment Model was introduced by Rusbult (1980) that commitment and satisfaction were predicted in many types of ongoing relationships. The model stemmed from Interdependence Theory proposed by Kelley and Thibaut (1978). Rusbult (1980) mentioned that concepts of outcome value, comparison level, and alternative value are brought from Interdependence Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), and Rusbult added the commitment factor in the Investment Model; extrinsic investments were mentioned by Schelling (1956) and Becker (1960) prior to the Investment Model; Rubin (1975) mentioned a concept named as “entrapment” which reminded the commitment; finally, Blau (1967) mentioned all the concepts in the Investment Model with the roles of alternatives and investments in strengthening commitment in the relationship. Therefore, the main concepts regarding the Investment Model are rooted in the existing literature (Rusbult, 1980).

Aforementioned, the roots of Rusbult’s Investment Model (1980; 1983) are seen in Interdependence Theory. Similar to Interdependence Theory, the Investment Model claimed that the higher rewards and lower costs with low expectations from the partner, resulting in relatively higher satisfaction (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult et al.,

1986a); and as the dependence increases when satisfaction is higher, and quality of alternatives are lower. Rusbult (1980) stated that commitment cannot be explained only with the factors of satisfaction and quality of alternatives; and added that investment size is the third factor affecting the commitment of the partners (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993).

Rusbult (1980) described interdependence concepts as dependence, comparison level, and comparison level for alternatives. Satisfaction and attraction function between the outcome value of the relationship and the comparison level of the individual. So, the association of commitment with these variables was added to the Investment Model. The commitment was described as a subjective experience of dependence, and it functions in three variables: satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size (Agnew, 2009). Therefore, the investment model has four subdimensions: commitment, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment size (Rusbult et al., 1998). In the model, they explained the commitment process in the relationship in the context of partners' dependence on satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size, and the commitment resulted in persistence. Therefore, commitment mediated the relationship between persistence and three factors of dependence. In this context, the commitment was explained as a causal model affected by promoting factors that resulted in persistence, therefore maintenance of the relationship (Arriaga & Agnew, 2001).

The satisfaction level, which influences commitment, refers to the outcomes obtained from the interaction in the relationship, and the outcome is assessed concerning the individual's comparison level. Understanding if an individual is satisfied with the current relationship, a comparison level is assessed regarding the individual's satisfaction level in previous relationships. If the current outcome is lower than the comparison level, one can say that it is not a satisfactory relationship, and if the outcome is higher than the comparison level, it can be said that one is satisfied with the current relationship.

The alternatives, which is another influential factor for the commitment, is also described as the quality of alternatives. It refers to the compelling possibility of

alternatives to the current relationship. For instance, an individual may want to be in a relationship with another partner or may want to involve in non-romantic alternatives such as friends or being alone that they are not experienced enough when in a relationship with the current partner. When the alternatives are attractive to the individual, the commitment will be low, whereas low-quality of alternatives will lead to more commitment to the current partner (Agnew, 2009).

The investments, which is the last influential factor for the commitment, is associated with the resources given to the relationship such as time and effort. Investment size refers to these resources, which can be both tangible and intangible, that an individual puts into the relationship, and would lose if one leaves the relationship. So, individuals may stay committed because of the costs of leaving the relationship when they actually do not want to. In other words, sometimes people might have a hard time deciding to leave their partners because of the investments in the relationship that they have made. According to Rusbult (1980), individuals might be trapped in an unhappy relationship because of the high investments, in this case, while commitment is high, satisfaction is low in the relationship. Likewise, Rusbult and Martz (1995) found that commitment is positively related to satisfaction whereas satisfaction is not always relevant to the commitment in such abusive relationships. Therefore, maintaining such a relationship is about commitment and still holding positive feelings towards the partner. So, they concluded that non-voluntary dependence exists in such relationships.

Rusbult (1980) states that investments can be in two different forms: intrinsic and extrinsic investments. Extrinsic investments are linked with extraneous causes in the instances of losing an asset in the case of leaving the relationship such as losing one's home if a breakup occurs; and intrinsic investments can be such as time, money, emotional engagement, and self-disclosures in the relationship which are expected to increase the commitment. Rusbult and Buunk (1993) state that these investments increase the commitment to the relationship and therefore trap the individuals into the relationship. As stated by Stanley and Markman (1992), "today's dedication is tomorrow's constraint" (p. 597); when individuals have committed themselves to the relationship, they may find it hard to leave the relationship in the presence of constraints, meaning the investments they have made during their relationship.

### **2.3.2.1. Empirical Studies of the Investment Model**

The literature about the investment model has demonstrated results consistent with the model. Previous studies have shown that commitment is associated with dependence, and positively associated with satisfaction and investment size, whereas negatively associated with the quality of alternatives (Rusbult, 1983).

At first, the model was implemented with dating couples studying at college. Rusbult (1980) conducted two experiments with 282 college students. The purpose of the first experiment was to examine the effects of outcome value, intrinsic and extrinsic investment size, and alternative outcome value on satisfaction and commitment in romantic relationships. A role-play activity was implemented since these variables cannot be manipulated in real-life settings and relationships. The first experiment was conducted with 82 male and 89 female students, and a role-play was made. The participants were given scenarios with characters to imagine themselves as being in those characters' situations, and they were asked to complete questionnaires to assess satisfaction and commitment. The result of the first experiment showed that lower quality of alternatives and higher intrinsic and extrinsic investments resulted in higher commitment. An increase in the costs resulted in a decrease in the commitment. Next, a second experiment was implemented to explore the ability of the investment model in predicting commitment and satisfaction in real-life settings and relationships. The participants were 58 male and 53 female college students who are engaged in an ongoing or past relationship, and they were asked to complete a survey. In this survey, rewards, costs, alternatives, investment size, commitment, and satisfaction were assessed. The results of the second experiment indicated that commitment was predicted by other variables.

Rusbult (1983) also conducted a longitudinal study on heterosexual dating couples ( $N = 34$ ), and the study was used to test the predictions of the Investment Model. It was shown that commitment increased in the presence of an increase in satisfaction and investment size and a decline in the quality of alternatives. Over time, it was seen that there was an increase in rewards, costs, satisfaction, investment size, and commitment, whereas a decrease in the quality of alternatives. The commitment was found to predict the stay/leave behavior more than other variables of the Investment Model. Two



different analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between variables of the investment model and stay/leave behaviors: stayers versus leavers; and stayers versus abandoned versus leavers. The results did not change significantly. For stayers, rewards, costs, satisfaction, investment size, and level of commitment increased whereas the quality of alternatives decreased; for leavers, the quality of alternatives increased when the other factors decreased; and for abandoned individuals, less increase in rewards and satisfaction, decrease in quality of alternatives, and increase in costs and investment size were experienced when compared with stayers. Even if abandoned individuals had shown moderate commitment, they stayed in the relationship; in other words, trapped in the relationship, unless their partners decided to terminate the relationship.

Carter and her colleagues (2013) examined the Investment Model by conducting an experimental study with university students. Two studies were implemented, and the participants were selected through their attachment styles. The first study was conducted with 180 students, and they were given relationship scenarios including costs and rewards. The results indicated that participants who had different attachment styles used costs and rewards differently in understanding satisfaction. The ones who have anxiety and avoidant attachment styles consider rewards less important to determine satisfaction. The second study was conducted with 178 students, and they were given relationship scenarios including current investments and alternative partners. The results indicated that participants who had different attachment styles used investments, alternative partners, and satisfaction in determining relationship commitment. The participants who were lower in anxiety and higher in avoidance considered investments and quality of alternatives more important than relationship satisfaction in determining relationship commitment.

Moreover, there are other factors that contribute to Investment Model variables such as gender and relationship duration. Gender is found to be an influential variable in explaining commitment. Fitzpatrick and Sollie (1999) conducted a study with 254 participants, and they found that women are more committed to their relationships than men. Duffy and Rusbult (1986) found that women make more investments and commit to the relationship than men. Similarly, Rusbult and her colleagues (1998) found that

women report higher satisfaction levels and investments than men, and it results in dependence and commitment to the relationship. However, this is not always the case. Whitton and Kuryluk (2012) conducted a study with 484 participants, and they found that men make more investments than women in their relationships. The other factor contributing to Investment Model variables is relationship duration. Rusbult (1980; 1983) stated that as the relationship duration increases, commitment does increase too, and the relationship duration can be counted as an investment as well. Le and Agnew (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the Investment Model regarding satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment size in predicting relationship commitment and relationship duration. They found that satisfaction can explain the relationship duration better than the quality of alternatives and investment size. These three factors were used to predict relationship commitment, and therefore it can be said that commitment is related to the length of the relationship. However, Rusbult and her colleagues (1998) found no significant relationship between relationship duration with satisfaction and the quality of alternatives. That is, more time spent in the relationship does not increase satisfaction levels or decrease the quality of alternatives. However, the time being spent in the relationship results in an increase in investments, and commitment increases in the relationship as well.

Furthermore, Investment Model has been tested with different samples. It has been conducted with university students (Rusbult, 1980; 1983), heterosexual couples (Rusbult, 1980; 1983), and homosexual couples (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986). The results were consistent across the studies, and the commitment can be predicted by satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment size. As a downside to the Investment Model, it was limited to dating heterosexual individuals (Bui et al., 1996); however, Investment Model was tested with 130 married individuals to be able to generalize the findings to adults (Rusbult et al., 1986b). The results were consistent with the previous findings, and therefore it was said that Investment Model can be generalized among different groups. Similarly, Impett and her colleagues (2001) conducted a longitudinal study with married couples (N = 3627) and resulted that the Investment Model can be used among married couples.

In addition, the Turkish literature regarding Investment Model has been consistent with the results of global studies. In their study, Büyükşahin and her colleagues (2005) implemented the scale with 325 university students who are in an ongoing relationship. They found out that the scale was valid and reliable for their sample of university students. After that, Büyükşahin and Hovardaoğlu (2007) conducted two studies about Investment Model. The purpose of the first study (N = 271) was to investigate the predictor variables regarding attachment and to make a comparison among individuals who have divergent attachment styles with Investment Model variables. They resulted that satisfaction, positive regard, feeling safe, commitment, and future orientation are predicted by Investment Model variables. In the second study, they compared married (N=76), engaged (N=74), and dating (N=100) individuals with Investment Model variables. They found that individuals who are in dating relationships found their alternatives more attractive whereas their satisfaction and investment levels were lower than engaged and married ones. Also, men evaluated their alternatives higher than women, and married women did lower than dating and engaged ones.

In sum, the Investment Model is a valid model for explaining commitment and its correlates across the world and in Turkish literature. Also, it is consistent with the current study that satisfaction has a mediator role in the relationship between commitment and other variables.

#### **2.4. Emotional Manipulation**

Coons and Weber (2014) described manipulation as a pervasive type of influence that people do both in their professional and intimate relationships, and they think that the moral status of manipulation should be looked up to. Flattering someone to make one's way or frowning one's face to get away could be examples of manipulation. Here, moral status comes into play when a behavior is assumed to be manipulative, so behavior can be both manipulative and not manipulative. Therefore, a moral failure is needed for a behavior to be manipulative. However, all behaviors that fail morally cannot be assumed as manipulation such as physical violence. The behavior itself is wrong but it is not considered as manipulative. So, it is important to define what manipulation really is, and it is a kind of influence that differs from coercion. While coercion and manipulation are similar, coercion is more oppressive and leaves no

choice, but manipulation influences the choices without eliminating them. It also consists of recklessness with other people's beings and being determined to be able to achieve one's goals without considering what is true.

In addition, to understand emotional manipulation, the mechanisms behind the manipulative behaviors shall be understood. In this sense, there are three mechanisms of Person-Environment Correspondence selection, evocation, and manipulation. Selection is about people's choices to be or not to be in certain environments. Evocation is about making unintentional predictions about the reactions of others from their environments, and manipulation can be explained by the tactics that are intentional acts to exploit the environment. Six tactics were described in explaining manipulation behavior as Charm, Silent Treatment, Coercion, Reason, Regression, and Debasing. The charm tactic is mostly used for behavioral elicitation, whereas coercion and silent treatment were used to terminate unwanted behaviors. It was shown that there is a strong correlation between charm and coercion tactics of dating partners. Thus, there is a link between the frequent use of these tactics by one partner leads to the frequent use of the other partner as well, called tactical reciprocity. Also, it was found that similar partners use fewer manipulation tactics whereas dissimilar partners use more manipulation tactics in their romantic relationships. The regression tactic was used when the female partner is in more power in the relationship (Buss, 1987). In his later research, Buss (1992) identified six new tactics in addition to the previous six tactics, so a total of twelve tactics were identified as Charm, Reason, Coercion, Silent Treatment, Debasing, Regression, Responsibility Invocation, Reciprocity, Monetary Reward, Pleasure Induction, Social Comparison, and Hardball. Responsibility Invocation involves the acts of invoking responsibility, and otherwise disappointment when a failure is made. Reciprocity involves the behaviors which are favors that are promised to return in the future. Pleasure Induction contains making someone believe that they will enjoy it and that it is for their interest. Social Comparison involves the comparison of the partner to other people. Monetary Reward contains paying off or giving presents for the wanted behaviors. Hardball involves violent behaviors, threats, and deception.

Baron (2003) states that manipulateness is a more correct term than manipulation but understanding the character trait ‘manipulateness’ can be achieved by understanding how people manipulate each other. First, the distinction between coercion and manipulation was made that in fact, they are similar, they are different in the way that manipulation is hidden by the actor, and in this way, it is more effective, but coercion is not hidden at all, and the subjects can tell that they are being forced. Here, Baron (2003) clarifies the intention in manipulation that one can intimidate someone without any intention, but cannot manipulate someone without intention, so there is an intention while manipulating someone, but the actor does not need to be aware of this intention to call it manipulation. Consequently, manipulation can show itself in several forms. According to Baron (2003), manipulation has basically four forms but is not limited to deception, pressuring, limiting options, and using someone’s emotional weaknesses. To be clear, deception consists of lies or promises that will not come true. Pressuring, in other words, oppressing is the other one, and not taking no for an answer. Limiting the options is leaving artificial choices to the victim that other options are not visible anymore when they are still there. Last, using someone’s emotional weaknesses is taking advantage of the current emotions or needs of the victims, and making them do what the actor wants.

When it comes to emotional manipulation, it was described as having an influence on others’ behaviors and feelings for their interests, so to that extent, it refers to an ability of manipulation (Austin et al., 2007), and emotionally manipulating others might result in controlling others’ behaviors and some personal satisfaction for the manipulator. In this sense, emotional manipulation is seen as a skill, and to manipulate others successfully, it requires the person to believe that people can be manipulated, be willing to manipulate and the most important part is being able to manipulate others (Waddell et al., 2020). Hyde and Grieve (2014) also explored the difference between perceived ability and willingness to manipulate, and they investigated people who believe that they are able to manipulate if they are willing to do so. Therefore, they distinguished emotional manipulation as perceived ability and willingness and found that these two are related but different. In this context, perceived ability in emotional manipulation is based on self-reports about participants’ ability to manipulate

someone, whereas willingness is about whether they want to engage in emotionally manipulative behaviors or not.

Deeply understanding emotional manipulation, Ngoc and her colleagues (2020) discussed the two constructs that are prosociality and non-prosociality. Prosocial behaviors are related more to a higher social value, while non-prosocial behaviors are more related to self-interests resulting in the cost to other people. In this sense, emotional manipulation has three dimensions: ability, conscious intention, and prosocial/non-prosocial manipulative behaviors. Prosocial causes of emotional manipulation are explained as strategies that are used by manipulators to reduce negative emotions or turn them into positive ones. However, non-prosocial emotional manipulation is displayed to affect others' emotions for personal favors. In their study, they found a positive correlation between Ability Emotional Intelligence (EI) and non-prosocial emotional manipulation but a negative correlation between Trait EI and non-prosocial emotional manipulation. So, if a person is high in emotional intelligence and can process others' emotions, then it may also allow them to influence. However, it needs the person to be dark in personality, or to have a lack of empathy to manipulate others in a non-prosocial way.

Emotional manipulation has also been presented in Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) conceptualization and linked to psychological violence (Alvarez et al., 2015) as an essential factor in determining whether to stay in or leave the relationship. Marshall (1996) stated that psychological violence decreases satisfaction and increases the probability of leaving the relationship of the victim. Psychological abuse was found to be a strong predictor of ending the relationship than physical abuse (Arias & Pape, 1999; Edwards et al., 2012; Gortner et al., 1997). On the other hand, the reason why psychologically abusive relationships continue is that psychological abuse may decrease victims' self-esteem and therefore they may not be able to think of another life after their abusive relationship (Sackett & Saunders, 1999). Also, victims may minimize the abusive behaviors because of the sake of relationship maintenance, and they may be confused about what is positive and negative regarding their relationship (Dardis et al., 2013), and they may find excuses for the abuse (Edwards et al., 2012). Therefore, it can be inferred that in emotionally manipulated and/or psychologically

abused relations, an individual's decision to stay or leave the relationship appears difficult.

The continuance in abusive relationships may seem odd to individuals. Rusbult and Martz (1995) mentioned an assumption that victimization can be avoided by leaving the abusive partner, this is what a reasonable person would do. However, it is not always easy to decide to leave an abusive relationship for some individuals. It is clear that individuals who have high satisfaction levels in their relationships are also committed to their partner; yet there are also individuals with low to no satisfaction in their relationships, and they also show commitment to their partner (Impett et al., 2001). Therefore, commitment cannot be easily explained by satisfaction itself.

In addition, other variables such as socio-economic, educational, and demographic factors were found to affect stay/leave decisions (Rusbult et al., 1982). The social factor is another influential factor for women in deciding to leave a relationship (Toplu-Demirtaş et al., 2013). However, Rusbult and Martz (1995) stated that stay/leave decisions cannot be only characterized by personal and social factors, but also by the interdependence of the partners. Also, gender has been studied in terms of victimization in dating relationships. Archer (2000) conducted a meta-analysis and found that the results are inconsistent regarding gender being a risk factor in victimization. Hatipoğlu Sümer and Toplu (2011) found that victimization is not significantly predicted by gender, but women perpetrated and victimized by psychological violence more than men. On the contrary, some other studies found that males experienced psychological violence more than females (Kasian & Painter, 1992; Moreno-Manso et al. 2014).

Moreover, another variable that has been studied is power in relationship literature, and the definition of power is similar to what emotional manipulation entails. Power has been defined as the ability to achieve intended results and influence the behavior of other individuals (Gray-Little & Burks, 1983). Komter (1989) categorized power as manifest power, latent power, and invisible power. Manifest power is related to visible results of power such as verbal or nonverbal attempts to be in charge. Latent power is the case in which individuals do not overtly show their control attempts. Invisible power is more like a result of social or psychological systems which are not at the

surface level of behaviors. Dunbar (2004) explains that dominant behaviors to control the other are increased by the perceptions of power, and the influence has resulted in increased control attempts. Furthermore, Dunbar (2004) predicted that relationship satisfaction would be increased in the existence of the perceptions of power. In other words, when individuals feel that they are in control, they would feel satisfied with their relationship since they can guide their partner in the direction they want. In addition, Lennon and his colleagues (2013) explored the relationship between power and commitment and found out that partners who scored higher in power have low satisfaction and commitment, yet they are higher in quality of alternatives; and their definition of power is having control over another and influence them. Moreover, Traeder and Zeigler-Hill (2020) concluded that the desire for power of the partner has a negative effect on variables of the investment model, and they defined power as an ability to influence others' feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. In addition, Hall and Knox (2019) stated that the power in the relationship is affected by the commitment levels of partners in the relationship.

All in all, emotional manipulation can be considered one of the forms of IPV that is perpetrated and victimized in relationships. Although the consequences of physical violence can be seen more easily, psychological violence can be very damaging in nature as well. Therefore, the current study focuses on the psychological part of intimate partner violence, which is emotional manipulation, because psychological violence is considered the most prevalent and hard to diagnose among other types of violence (Follingstad, 2007; Rogers & Follingstad, 2014). Arias and Pape (1999) explain that it may be because the consequences of physical violence are more visible and that psychological violence does not require immediate action, so it may cause a wrong impression about psychological violence that it is not important as a physical one (Follingstad, 2007). However, psychological maltreatment is found to be devastating as physical abuse (Kasian & Painter, 1992; Tolman, 1999). Arias and Pape (1999) even found that women assessed psychological abuse as worse than physical one, the reason behind it is that individuals may internalize what has been done to them. The victims' self-esteem may be affected as well by altering their feelings, thoughts, or behaviors (Marshall, 1996) as in emotional manipulation.



### **2.4.1. Empirical Studies of Emotional Manipulation**

The studies on emotional manipulation are scarce, and to the knowledge of the researcher, no research has been conducted on emotional manipulation with commitment and satisfaction prior to the current study.

The influence of personality types on emotionally manipulative behaviors has been investigated. Dark personalities were shown to be an indicator of these behaviors, and Dark Triad is one of the terms that was studied with emotional manipulation. Hyde and her colleagues (2020) explored individuals' willingness to manipulate others with bad intentions in the workplace. The sample consisted of 765 participants, 581 females and 184 males. They were measured for their willingness to manipulate, emotional intelligence, and the Dark Triad characteristics. The results of the study indicated that males were more willing to manipulate others with malicious intentions, and females who scored higher in emotional intelligence were associated with emotional manipulation. Also, it was found that emotional intelligence was a significant contributor to emotional manipulation behavior. Emotional manipulation behaviors in men were correlated with Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy respectively.

Similarly, Austin and her colleagues (2007) studied to see whether emotional intelligence has a dark side or not as emotional manipulation and conducted their study with 199 university students which consist of 137 females and 62 males. Their mean age was 21.14 years. The results of the study showed that Machiavellianism was negatively correlated with performance-emotional intelligence, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Also, emotional manipulation was positively correlated with Machiavellianism, and not correlated with emotional intelligence. Therefore, it can be said that higher scores in Machiavellianism are related to emotional manipulation; however, the negative relationship between Machiavellianism and emotional intelligence should be discussed further.

Casale and her colleagues (2019) conducted a study with 584 university students, their mean age was 22.61. In the study, grandiose and vulnerable narcissists with non-narcissists were compared by their abilities of trait-emotional intelligence and

emotional manipulation. The results of the study indicated that vulnerable narcissists scored lower than others in their EI scores. It has resulted that grandiose and vulnerable narcissists being more likely to manipulate others to achieve their goals.

Grieve and Panebianco (2013) conducted their study with 243 participants. The results of the study differed by gender: females' emotional manipulation was predicted by being at a younger age, obtaining higher scores in emotional intelligence, indirect aggression, being less socially aware, and having primary psychopathic traits; males' emotional manipulation was predicted by higher scores in emotional intelligence, indirect aggression, social information processing, and cognitive distortions who are self-serving to them.

Manipulated individuals may experience negative outcomes such as depression, so Waddell and her colleagues (2020) studied hegemonic masculinity and the Dark Triad to predict emotional manipulation. 327 participants, 119 men and 208 women, participated in the study which assess their hegemonic masculinity, psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism along with their willingness to manipulate and their perceived ability. The results of the study indicated that hegemonic masculinity was found to predict an individual's willingness and perceived ability to manipulate both men and women, and it was found that hegemonic masculinity is correlated with dark triad traits.

Grieve and her colleagues (2019) stated that men engage in more emotionally manipulative behaviors compared to women. They wanted to explore more than gender differences, and they looked for the effect of gender roles on emotional manipulation. They conducted their study with 574 participants, 435 females and 139 males, and participants reported their gender roles as masculine and feminine along with psychopathy, trait EI and trait emotional manipulation. The results showed that masculine gender roles for both men and women predicted emotional manipulation. Sex differences in emotional manipulation have been investigated in different studies, and it is concluded that men are more likely to manipulate their partners than women (Grieve et al., 2019; Hyde & Grieve, 2014), and Grieve and her colleagues (2019) investigated further on the topic and looked for the influence of gender roles on

emotional manipulation. They found that masculinity in both sexes positively predicted emotional manipulation. However, emotional manipulation is decreased when the feminine gender roles are abided by women. In addition to this, Waddell and her colleagues (2020) explored whether hegemonic masculinity explains emotional manipulation. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as dominating others and controlling them. This definition is similar to emotional manipulation in a way, and the results of the study confirmed that hegemonic masculinity was a significant predictor of emotional manipulation, and they revealed that men score higher in emotional manipulation than women. Also, Grieve and Mahar's (2010) work supports the findings that men score higher in emotional manipulation than women, including psychopathy traits, and men scored lower in ethical idealism meaning that lower ethical idealism is a significant predictor of emotional manipulation. Emotional manipulation has been also linked with personality in different studies. The focus is on the dark sides of personalities such as Machiavellianism. The link between Machiavellianism and emotional manipulation is explained by Austin and her colleagues (2007) and they found a positive correlation between emotional manipulation and higher scores in Machiavellianism.

In summary, emotional manipulation has been linked with emotional intelligence as the dark side of the concept, and personality types are also defined as dark personalities such as Dark Triad: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. The effect of gender differences and gender roles on emotional manipulation has been discussed as well.

## **2.5. Summary of the Literature Review**

Understanding why some romantic relationships persist while others come to an end has been always an interest to social scientists in the field. Commitment was found to be a predictor of why relationships continue, therefore, it has been focused to explain how commitment works. There are various explanations for commitment in the literature (Agnew et al., 1998; Johnson, 1973; Johnson, 1991; Levinger, 1965). However, Investment Model is the most attractive one to the researchers in the field. The model states that commitment occurs when individuals are satisfied with their relationships, their investments continue, the quality of alternatives is negative, then

their commitment will be increased (Rusbult et al., 1998). However, there are some occasions when individuals are not satisfied with their relationships, yet they continue to be in that relationship. Psychological violence was studied with commitment in the literature, and it was found that psychological violence can contribute to individuals' stay/leave decisions positively or negatively (Dardis et al., 2013). So, one might decide to leave the relationship because of the experienced abuse, but another might still stay in the relationship even if the relationship does not feel right. Although there are various studies regarding physical violence, there is not much attention paid to the psychological aspect, especially emotional manipulation. Conducting a study with Investment Model constructs with emotional manipulation among dating couples would help to understand why abusive relationships persevere over time.

Considering the theoretical and empirical findings, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationship between commitment and emotional manipulation via the mediating role of satisfaction in Turkish dating couples who are emerging adults.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

In this chapter, the methodology of the current study is introduced. First, the overall design of the current study is presented. Second, the participants' characteristics are described. Third, the instruments of the current study and their psychometric properties are mentioned. Fourth, data collection procedures are presented. Moreover, the variables of the current study are explained, and data analyses are given. Also, an overview of the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) and Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) is provided along with the basic concepts of the model. Lastly, the limitations of the current study are discussed.

#### 3.1. Design of the Current Study

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment among dating couples in romantic relationships. To test this relationship between the variables of the current study, a model was created. In this model, the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment of dating couples was explored. Turkish version of the Emotional Manipulation Scale, the Turkish version of the Investment Model Scale, and a Demographic and Relational Information Form were conducted to collect data from the participants of the current study.

Based on the purpose of the current study, a quantitative research approach was performed with a correlational research design to investigate the associations among the study variables. In the correlational design, the purpose is to explain the degree of the relations between two or more variables (Fraenkel et al., 2011). Also, the Actor Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was conducted to explore the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and the commitment of dating couples.

### **3.2. Participants**

In the current study, data were collected from heterosexual dating couples living in Turkey, who are emerging adults, their ages ranging from 18 to 29 years old Turkish speaking individuals who have been dating for at least six months. The sample of the current study included 221 dating couples ( $N = 442$ ). The sampling frame of the current study was specified with the exclusion of the individuals who do not have access to the internet and/or social media, and individuals who do not meet the criteria of the current study. Therefore, the sample was selected via the convenience sampling technique.

The ages of the participants ranged between 18 to 29 for both women ( $M = 22.15$ ,  $SD = 2.40$ ) and men ( $M = 23.03$ ,  $SD = 2.59$ ). The length of the relationship ranged from 6 months to 132 months ( $M = 31.50$ ,  $SD = 25.73$ ). A hundred seventy-eight participants were employed (40.3%) and 264 of them were not employed (59.7%). Also, 329 of the participants (74.4%) were students, and 113 of them were not students (25.6%). Almost half of the participants' educational level was bachelor's degree ( $n = 219$ , 49.5%), and high school graduates ( $n = 185$ , 41.9%). The remaining participants had master's degree ( $n=13$ , 2.9%), associate degree ( $n = 23$ , 5.2%). Only two participants were elementary school graduates ( $n = 2$ , .5%). Furthermore, 53 of the participants (12%) were living with their partners, and 389 of the participants (88%) were not living together.

### **3.3. Data Collection Instruments**

An online survey was prepared to gather the data by using the Turkish version of the following two instruments: The perceived ability subscale of the Emotional Manipulation Scale (Hyde & Grieve, 2014; Urfa et al., 2018) and the commitment and satisfaction subscales of Investment Model Scale (Büyükşahin et al., 2005; Rusbult et al., 1998). In addition, a demographic and relational information form (DRIF) was used to collect information about the demographics and relational characteristics of the sample.

### 3.3.1. Emotional Manipulation Scale (EMS)

The scale consists of 20 items that measure individuals' perceived ability to manipulate others and their willingness level to do so. The scale was adapted from the Emotional Manipulation Scale developed by Hyde and Grieve (2014). The original Emotional Manipulation Scale was derived by Austin and her colleagues (2007), and it was based on the emotional intelligence theory that emotional manipulation is a kind of emotional management, and whether it can be used for good purposes. Thus, the authors explored the darker side of emotions by developing the emotional manipulation scale. The scale has two subdimensions including perceived ability and willingness in engaging emotional manipulation. The Turkish adaptation of the scale was done by Urfa and her colleagues (2018). An adaptation study was conducted with 144 participants consisting of 98 females with an average age of 28.56, and 46 males with an average age of 31.78. Validity and reliability analyses of the Turkish version of the Emotional Manipulation Scale (see Appendix A) were done by confirmatory factor analysis that provides a sufficient result for two dimensions, and Cronbach alpha scores were .90 for the perceived ability subscale, and .86 for the willingness subscale. In addition, corrected item-total correlation coefficients were between .31 and .77.

For the first 9 items of the instrument, which is named as perceived ability subscale, a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5) is used. The scores of the perceived ability subscale ranged from at least 9 points to 45 points at most. The sample items of this subscale are "I know how to play two people off against each other." and "I know how to make another person feel uneasy." The last 11 items of the instrument, which is named as willingness subscale, a 5-point scale ranging from *never* (1), *now and then* (2), *monthly* (3), *weekly* (4), to *daily* (5) is used. The scores of the willingness subscale ranged from at least 11 points to 55 points at most. The sample items of this subscale are "How often do you make someone feel ashamed about something that they have done in order to stop them from doing it again?" and "How often do you pay someone compliments to get in their 'good books'?" Therefore, the total instrument score ranged from 20 points to 100 points. The instrument is interpreted according to subdimensions that the higher scores mean higher perceived ability and willingness for emotional manipulation. In the current study, only the perceived ability subscale was used.

### 3.3.1.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of EMS

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in Stata 16 (StataCorp, 2019) for the Emotional Manipulation Scale with the sample of the current study (N=442) to confirm the two-factor structure. The criteria followed for goodness of fit indices are given in Figure 3.1. The results indicated a mediocre fit. Hence, modification indices were followed, and the error terms were related to each other. Then, the items were investigated, and it was seen that the items were measuring similar concepts. As in the current study, Brown (2015) suggests that correlation of error terms can be justified if the items are similarly worded. It can be said that these modifications improved the goodness of fit indices. CFA results showed a moderate fit for the data ( $\chi^2(165)=629.47, p=.00, RMSEA=.08 (.073, .087), CFI=.91, SRMR=.06$ ).

**Table 3.1**

*Criteria for Goodness of Fit Indices*

| Fit Statistics         | Moderate Fit                  | Good Fit                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| $p$ value for $\chi^2$ | $.01 \leq p \leq .05^{c,e}$   | $.05 < p \leq 1.00^e$            |
| $\chi^2/df$            | $2 < \chi^2/df \leq 3^e$      | $0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2^e$      |
| RMSEA                  | $.05 < RMSEA \leq .010^{c,d}$ | $0 \leq RMSEA \leq .05^{c,d,e}$  |
| CFI                    | $.90 \leq CFI < .95^{a,b,c}$  | $.95 \leq CFI \leq 1.00^{b,c,d}$ |
| SRMR                   | $.05 < SRMR \leq .10^{d,e}$   | $0 \leq SRMR \leq .05^e$         |

*Note.*  $\chi^2$  = Chi-Square, *CFI* = Comparative Fit Index, *RMSEA* = Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation, *SRMR* = Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual, <sup>a</sup> = Acock, 2013; <sup>b</sup> = Hu & Bentler, 1999; <sup>c</sup> = Keith, 2019; <sup>d</sup> = Kline, 2016; <sup>e</sup> = Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003

Moreover, standardized estimates ranged from .35 to .81 for the first subscale (willingness) and from .37 to .87 for the second subscale (ability). These results are above the cutoff value, which is .30, indicated as an acceptable value by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007).

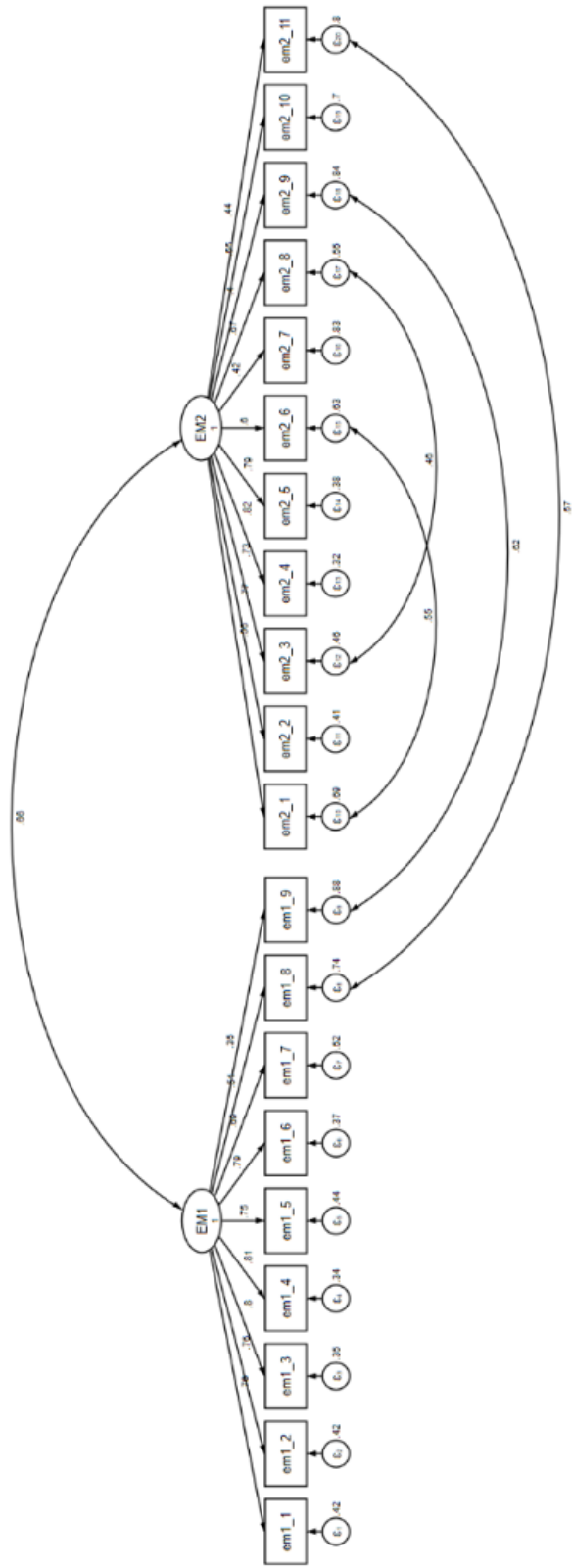


### **3.3.1.2. Reliability Analysis of EMS**

Internal consistency of the Emotional Manipulation Scale was investigated with the Cronbach alpha coefficient in the current study (N = 442). The Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated overall as .92 for the Emotional Manipulation Scale, .89 for the willingness subscale, and .87 for the ability subscale. Therefore, it can be said that the Emotional Manipulation Scale provides reliable scores.

**Figure 3.1**

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Emotional Manipulation Scale (EMS)*



### 3.3.2. Investment Model Scale (IMS)

The scale consists of 37 items to measure partners' commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size in the relationship. The Investment Model Scale developed by Rusbult and her colleagues (1998) was adapted to Turkish by Büyükşahin and her colleagues (2005), and they renamed it as Relationship Stability Scale (RSS). The RSS was tested with 325 university students. The results of the factor analysis for the Turkish version of the Investment Model Scale (see Appendix B) indicated the three factors, and correlation coefficients of the subscales were in the range of  $-.45$  and  $.67$ . The values were found to be statistically significant. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the subscales were between  $.84$  and  $.90$  for relationship satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment in the relationship. Furthermore, Toplu-Demirtaş and her colleagues (2013) conducted their study with dating couples, and the coefficients were calculated as  $.94$  for satisfaction,  $.85$  for quality of alternatives,  $.88$  for investment size, and  $.93$  for commitment.

The instrument has four subscales which are relationship satisfaction, investment size, quality of alternatives, and commitment. The commitment subscale consists of 7 items, while the rest of the subscales have 10 items. The commitment subscale is scored on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from *agree not at all* (1) to *agree completely* (9), whereas other subscales' first five items are scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from *agree not at all* (1) to *agree completely* (4), and the last five items are scored on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from *agree not at all* (1) to *agree completely* (9). The commitment subscale score is ranged from at least 7 points to 63 points at most, whereas other subscales scores are ranged from at least 10 points to 65 points at most. Therefore, the total instrument score is ranged from at least 37 points to 258 points at most. The higher scores obtained from the subscales indicate a higher commitment, higher satisfaction, higher investments, and a higher quality of alternatives. In addition, the first five items in these subscales are used to increase the quality of the last five items, and Rusbult and her colleagues (1998) suggest that all items should be applied but the analyses should be made on the last five items. In the current study, satisfaction and commitment subscales were used. The satisfaction subscale includes items such as "Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy." and "My relationship is much better than others' relationships."

The commitment subscale includes items such as “I want our relationship to last for a very long time.” and “I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.”

### **3.3.2.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of IMS**

The Investment Model Scale factor structure has repeatedly been confirmed in the Turkish population in previous studies. Likewise, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in Stata 16 (StataCorp, 2019) in the current study with a four-factor structure: satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment. The CFA results with a four-factor structure indicated a moderate fit after correlating one error term (see Figure 3.2).

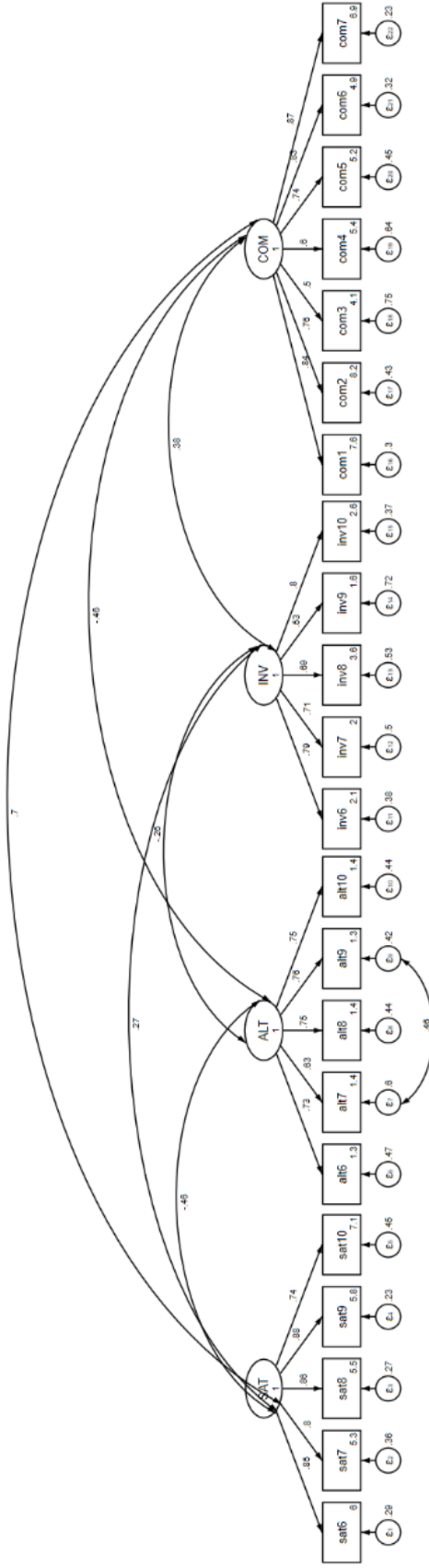
Confirmatory factor analysis showed a moderate fit for the study subscales ( $\chi^2(202)=779.433$ ,  $p=.00$ , RMSEA= .081 (.075, .087), CFI= .90, SRMR= .07). In addition, standardized estimates ranged from .74 to .88 for satisfaction subscale, .63 to .76 for quality of alternatives subscale, .53 to .80 for investment size subscale, and .50 to .87 for commitment subscale.

### **3.3.2.2. Reliability Analysis of IMS**

Internal consistency of the Investment Model Scale was investigated with the Cronbach alpha coefficient in the current sample (N=442). The Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated overall as .74 for the Investment Model Scale, .90 for the satisfaction subscale, .86 for the quality of alternatives subscale, .81 for the investment subscale, and .87 for the commitment subscale. Therefore, it can be said that Investment Model Scale provides reliable scores.

**Figure 3.2**

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Investment Model Scale (IMS)*



### **3.3.3. Demographic and Relational Information Form (DRIF)**

A Demographic and Relational Information Form (DRIF; see Appendix C) was developed by the researcher to gather basic information about the characteristics of the sample of the current study. The demographic information part consists of age, gender, educational level, studentship status, and employment status; and the relational information part includes marital status, romantic relationship status, and relationship duration.

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedure**

The questionnaires were submitted to Middle East Technical University, Human Subjects Ethics Committee to obtain ethical permission to conduct the current study (see Appendix D). After having approval from the Committee, convenience sampling was used to collect data from dating couples who fit the inclusion criteria of the current study. In addition, since it was hard to reach dating couples who fit the criteria and were willing to participate in the study with their partners, referrals of the participants made it easier to reach out to other participants. Data collection was implemented from the beginning of June 2021 till the mid of January 2022. The questionnaires took around 15 minutes to be filled out. Also, to match the data as dyads, partners were asked to choose and write a nickname for themselves as a couple.

In the current study, online data collection was carried out via Google Forms. Therefore, participants were reached and invited via online sources, and social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Specific Facebook and LinkedIn groups were especially used to reach the participants who would fit the inclusion criteria of the current study. The inclusion criteria were being an emerging adult, the age range between 18 to 29 for both women and men, being in a relationship for at least 6 months, and being willing to participate in the study with their partner. After the inclusion criteria were met, the participants were asked to read the consent form and approve it. After their approval for participating in the study was gathered, they were directed to fill out the Demographic and Relational Information Form, and then the questionnaires which are the “Turkish Version of the Emotional Manipulation Scale” and “Turkish Version of the Investment Model Scale”. Furthermore, the

participants were directed to participate in the study in a different environment from their partners, and they should not disclose their answers to each other.

Moreover, any possibilities to harm the participants were considered, in case experienced any overwhelming feelings while filling out the scales. For this reason, it was stated in the consent form that if they have any trouble filling out the scales, they may drop the study whenever they would like to; and they were assured that their personal information will not be stored, and their answers will be anonymous. Also, the nature of the study did not require any deception use; therefore, participants were not deceived, so in any case, they were informed of what the study entails.

### **3.5. Description of Study Variables**

In this part, the study variables are described and operationally defined. The purpose of the final model of the current study is to explore the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment. Therefore, the mediating role of satisfaction in the model was tested for dyads.

Emotional manipulation was the independent variable, satisfaction was the mediator variable, and commitment was the dependent variable in the current model.

*Emotional Manipulation:* In the current study, emotional manipulation was measured by the perceived ability subscale of the Emotional Manipulation Scale (EMS) with the obtained total scores from the scale, which ranged from at least 11 points to 55 points at most. The subscale indicates that the higher emotional manipulation scores mean higher emotional manipulation in the relationship.

*Satisfaction:* In the current study, satisfaction was measured by the subscale of the Investment Model Scale (IMS) with the obtained total scores from the scale, which ranged from at least 5 points to 45 points at most. The subscale indicates that higher satisfaction scores mean higher satisfaction in the relationship.

*Commitment:* In the current study, the commitment was measured by the subscale of the Investment Model Scale (IMS) with the obtained total scores from the scale, which

ranged from at least 7 points to 63 points at most. The subscale indicates that higher commitment scores mean higher commitment in the relationship.

### **3.6. Data Analyses**

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment. Therefore, the current model was tested to understand the effects of the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment.

The steps to analyze the dyadic data were as follows: data screening and cleaning, testing the assumptions of the model (missingness, sample size, outliers, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity), conducting descriptive statistics, performing Confirmatory Factor Analyses of Emotional Manipulation Scale (EMS) and Turkish version of Investment Model Scale (IMS), and then testing the current model which assesses the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment via path analysis utilizing APIMeM. Preliminary analyses were conducted with SPSS Version 28 (IBM Corp., 2021), Confirmatory Factor Analyses with Stata 16 (StataCorp, 2019), and Dyadic Path Analysis were conducted with AMOS 23 (Arbuckle, 2014).

#### **3.6.1. Understanding APIM**

The studies conducted with individuals in interpersonal relationships is a great deal in the literature. However, sometimes it might be misleading not to consider partner interaction in relationship studies. Since relationships consist of at least two parties, it is worth studying the effect the members of the relationships have on each other.

Kenny (1996) states that APIM is the most used model to analyze dyadic data, and it focuses on the interdependence between the members of the dyads. Consequently, data gathered from dating couples are suitable for conducting APIM since they affect one another interdependently. Also, APIM helps to understand actor and partner effects. The actor effect can be defined as the effect of individuals' own causal variable on their own outcome variable, whereas the partner effect can be defined as the effect of



individuals' own causal variable on their partners' outcome variable (Ledermann et al., 2011).

The Actor Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM), on the other hand, is used to investigate the effects of individuals' causal variables and mediator variables on their own and their partners' outcome variables. Therefore, APIMeM was utilized in the current study, and the effects of participants' emotional manipulation on their own commitment (actor effect), and their partners' commitment (partner effect) via the mediating role of satisfaction was investigated.

### **3.7. Limitations of the Current Study**

The current study has its limitations. First, self-report measurement tools were used to collect the data, and it is prone to biased reporting of the participants. The participants were asked all these questions about their relationship, and the questions were about their commitment, satisfaction, and emotional manipulation in the relationship. Therefore, it may not be always easy to report for the ones who are not committed to, and who are not satisfied with their relationships since they would think that their partners would hear about their answers. Also, reporting emotionally manipulative behaviors might be disturbing for some individuals that they might feel not good about it so they would not report it in the study. Therefore, this is a limitation of the study that participants might want to give answers as their partners would see them, or it may be because of feeling good about themselves by giving socially acceptable answers.

Second, the correlational design is not appropriate to draw any causality between the variables as a possible limitation of the current study, so it is not known which one affects the other, yet the relationship is explained.

Third, convenience sampling technique was used in the current study, and the external validity of the current study was threatened. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to all relationship types and the entire emerging adults because of the sampling technique.

Last but not least, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the current study was conducted through an online survey. Although there are so many advantages of conducting the study online, there are some disadvantages as well such as not having the presence of a researcher and having no access to the internet means. There was no researcher by the participants' side when they filled out the questionnaires so there might be some questions in their mind to be asked due to the nature of the study being dyadic, and some participants might be confused. In addition, the researcher cannot be ever sure who filled out the questionnaires or if a participant also filled out their partners' questionnaire at the same time. These situations could not be controlled in the current study. The possible participants who had no internet access were not able to see or complete the study as well. Furthermore, the pandemic might have influenced the dynamics of romantic relations by increasing the use of emotional manipulation and decreasing the relationship satisfaction and commitment.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the statistical analyses are presented. First, preliminary results are explained. Preliminary analyses were conducted prior to the main analysis and included the screening of data in terms of missing data, outliers, sample size adequacy, and assumptions (normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, distinguishability, and nonindependence) which are required for the main analysis. Then, descriptive statistics and testing of the main hypotheses and their results were presented. Finally, a summary of the findings was given briefly.

#### **4.1. Preliminary Analyses**

The data was screened for its accuracy and appropriateness to conduct dyadic path analysis in the framework of the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model. SPSS version 28 (IBM Corp., 2021) was used to analyze all the items with frequency tables and minimum and maximum values in the data. Then, reversed items were coded so that the data was ready for checking the assumptions of APIMeM.

##### **4.1.1. Data Screening**

All variables were examined to detect missing data, outliers, sample size adequacy, and assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. In the current study, there was no missing data in the dataset. Therefore, the dataset was preserved without having to delete any data.

##### **4.1.1.1. Outliers**

Dataset was analyzed and outliers were detected as univariate and multivariate outliers. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), univariate outliers are the unusual score on a variable, whereas multivariate outliers are the unusual scores on more than two variables.

In the current study, standardized Z scores are examined to detect outliers. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) state that scores lower than -3.29 and higher than +3.29 are considered outliers. In the Emotional Manipulation, Satisfaction, and Commitment scales, it was found that there are cases lower than -3.29 and higher than +3.29. When detecting multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis distances were examined as well (Kline, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The results showed that there are 10 cases as outliers. All analyses were conducted twice with outliers and without outliers to make sure to see whether outliers have a significant effect on the results of the current study. The results showed that there are no significant differences between the datasets which are with outliers and without outliers. Therefore, outliers were kept in the dataset not to lose variation in the sample.

#### **4.4.1.2. Sample Size Adequacy**

The decision on the appropriate sample size varies according to different resources for conducting dyadic path analysis in AMOS. As Kline (1998) suggests that the sample size should be 10 times the parameters used when conducting a path analysis, and Kline (2011) recommends conducting path analysis with at least 200 participants, the sample size was found to be adequate. The current study was conducted with 221 dating couples ( $N= 442$ ). So, the sample size of the current study is appropriate.

#### **4.4.1.3. Normality**

Univariate normality assumption was tested, and skewness and kurtosis values were inspected. Kline (2011) states that skewness values should be lower than 3, and kurtosis values should be lower than 20 to be normally distributed data. Skewness and kurtosis values of the current study were in the expected range. Also, the histograms and Q-Q plots were checked and although they did not show a perfect normal distribution, the data was not manipulated since the dataset was preserved with outliers after checking the results of the main analyses.

#### **4.4.1.4. Linearity and Homoscedasticity**

Linearity is an assumption to test whether the relationships are linear between the scores, and homoscedasticity is the assumption for checking whether dependent

variables have equal variances among independent variables (Hair et al., 2009). Residual plots were inspected, and the results showed that dependent variables have equal variances throughout the independent variables. Therefore, it can be said that the linearity assumption was met. In addition, scatterplots were examined, and it was seen that the variances of the variables are homogenous.

#### **4.4.1.5. Multicollinearity**

A multicollinearity assumption is needed to check for the main analyses since there are more than two independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Tolerance value, VIF, and bivariate correlation coefficients were examined. The expected range for the tolerance values should be higher than .20, and VIF values should be lower than 10 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Also, bivariate correlation coefficients should be lower than .85 (Kline, 2011). The highest correlation among the predictors of the current study was found to be .73 for the association between satisfaction and commitment of women. The results also showed tolerance and VIF values were all in the expected range; therefore, the multicollinearity assumption was met in the current study.

#### **4.4.1.6. Distinguishability of the Dyad Members**

Since APIM is dyadic research, knowing the characteristics of the members of the dyad whether they are distinguishable or indistinguishable is important. Distinguishable dyads are assigned to different groups such as husbands and wives, whereas homosexual couples are considered indistinguishable dyads (Kenny et al., 2006). In the current study, the sample consisted of heterosexual dating couples, and the data were collected from both women and men so that the dyad members are distinguishable.

#### **4.4.1.7. Nonindependence**

The assumption of independence is needed to make sure the sample is randomly selected from a population. However, this assumption is violated due to the dyadic design of the current study. The reason behind this is that the actor and partner effects are studied in dyads. As it is suggested by Kenny and his colleagues (2006), Pearson

product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to test nonindependence between the variables of the current study, and the results are presented in Table 4.2. The results showed that partners' emotional manipulation behaviors ( $r=.27, p<.01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.61, p<.01$ ), and commitment ( $r=.51, p<.01$ ) were correlated between dyads so that there is nonindependence between the variables of the study.

## 4.2. Descriptive Statistics

In this part, descriptive statistics of the current study, and the correlations between the variables of the study are given in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, respectively.

### 4.2.1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Gender Differences

The means, standard deviations, and ranges for the study variables are presented in Table 4.1. Also, paired sample t-test was conducted to determine gender differences in the study variables.

**Table 4.1**  
*Gender Differences on the Main Study Variables*

|              | Women   |      | Men     |      | Range | M    | t    | df  |
|--------------|---------|------|---------|------|-------|------|------|-----|
|              | (N=221) |      | (N=221) |      |       |      |      |     |
|              | M       | SD   | M       | SD   |       |      |      |     |
| EM           | 21.38   | 7.28 | 21.73   | 8.42 | 11-52 | -.35 | -.55 | 220 |
| Satisfaction | 40.58   | 5.73 | 40.56   | 6.21 | 15-45 | .02  | .06  | 220 |
| Commitment   | 58.23   | 7.57 | 57.70   | 7.82 | 25-63 | .53  | 1.03 | 220 |

*Note.* EM= Emotional Manipulation.

As shown in Table 4.1, the mean scores for emotional manipulation are 21.38 ( $SD = 7.28$ ) for women and 21.73 ( $SD = 8.42$ ) for men; the mean scores for satisfaction are 40.58 ( $SD = 5.73$ ) for women and 40.56 ( $SD = 6.21$ ) for men; the mean scores for commitment are 58.23 ( $SD = 7.57$ ) for women and 57.70 ( $SD = 7.82$ ) for men. Paired sample t-test results revealed no significant gender differences in the scores for Emotional Manipulation ( $M = -.35, SD = 9.51$ ), Satisfaction ( $M = .02, SD = 5.27$ ), and Commitment ( $M = .53, SD = 7.63$ );  $t(220), p>.05$ ).

#### 4.2.2. Bivariate Correlations

Pearson product-moment coefficients were calculated to test the relationships between the variables of the current study. Bivariate correlations between the independent variable (emotional manipulation), the mediator variable (satisfaction), and the dependent variable (commitment) are presented in Table 4.2. The correlation coefficients' strength is determined by Field (2005) as  $\pm.50$  is large;  $\pm.30$  is medium;  $\pm.10$  is a small correlation.

The correlations among study variables were inspected. The bivariate correlations of the current study variables were in the expected range for both women and men in the sample and all variables have significant relationships with each other as shown in Table 4.2. Women's emotional manipulation was correlated with men's emotional manipulation ( $r = .27, p < .01$ ) positively, with men's satisfaction ( $r = -.30, p < .01$ ) and men's commitment ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ) negatively. Also, women's emotional manipulation was correlated with their own satisfaction ( $r = -.25, p < .01$ ) and their own commitment ( $r = -.28, p < .01$ ) negatively. In addition, men's emotional manipulation was correlated with women's satisfaction ( $r = -.31, p < .01$ ) and women's commitment ( $r = -.22, p < .01$ ) negatively. Also, men's emotional manipulation was correlated with their own satisfaction ( $r = -.25, p < .01$ ) and their own commitment ( $r = -.21, p < .01$ ) negatively.

In addition, women's satisfaction was correlated with women's commitment ( $r = .73, p < .01$ ), with men's satisfaction ( $r = .61, p < .01$ ), and with men's commitment ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ) positively. In addition, women's commitment was correlated with men's satisfaction ( $r = .52, p < .01$ ), and men's commitment ( $r = .51, p < .01$ ) positively. Also, men's satisfaction with their own commitment ( $r = .59, p < .01$ ) was positively correlated.

**Table 4.2***Bivariate Correlations between Study Variables*

|          | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5     | 6 |
|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---|
| 1. EM_W  | 1      |        |        |        |       |   |
| 2. SAT_W | -.25** | 1      |        |        |       |   |
| 3. COM_W | -.28** | .73**  | 1      |        |       |   |
| 4. EM_M  | .27**  | -.31** | -.22** | 1      |       |   |
| 5. SAT_M | -.30** | .61**  | .52**  | -.25** | 1     |   |
| 6. COM_M | -.29** | .39**  | .51**  | -.21*  | .59** | 1 |

*Note.* EM\_W= Women's Emotional Manipulation; SAT\_W= Women's Satisfaction; COM\_W= Women's Commitment; EM\_M= Men's Emotional Manipulation; SAT\_M= Men's Satisfaction; COM\_M= Men's Commitment.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ .

In addition, the correlations of demographic variables (age and relationship duration) with the mediator and dependent variable were examined separately. So, the correlation of women's age with their satisfaction ( $r = -.03, p > .05$ ) and with their commitment ( $r = .08, p > .05$ ) was not significant. Also, the correlation of men's age with their satisfaction ( $r = -.02, p > .05$ ) and with their commitment ( $r = .02, p > .05$ ) was not significant. Therefore, age was not included in the main study as a variable. Moreover, the correlation of relationship duration with women's commitment ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ), men's commitment ( $r = .18, p < .01$ ), women's satisfaction ( $r = .09, p > .05$ ), and men's satisfaction ( $r = .06, p > .05$ ) were found either not significant or small in effect size; therefore, the relationship duration was not included in the main study as well.

### 4.3. Testing the Main Hypotheses

The purpose of the main study was to explore the mediating role of satisfaction between emotional manipulation and commitment in Turkish heterosexual dating couples. To investigate the roles of the study variables, APIMeM for distinguishable dyads (women and men) was conducted. In the analysis, emotional manipulation of women and men was the independent variable, the satisfaction of women and men was the mediator variable, and the commitment of women and men was the dependent variable. Also, the correlation among independent variables (women and men's



emotional manipulation), correlated errors between mediator variables (women and men's satisfaction), and dependent variables (women and men's commitment) were added to the current model. Following the suggestions of Kenny and his colleagues (2006), saturated models were investigated at first. Then, nonsignificant paths were dropped from the model until the remaining paths were all significant in the final model.

#### **4.4. Mediating Roles of Satisfaction between Emotional Manipulation and Commitment of Dating Couples**

In the current study, the proposed model suggests that satisfaction will mediate the relationship between emotional manipulation and the commitment of dating couples. First, the saturated model, including all paths from emotional manipulation to commitment, as well as the paths from satisfaction to emotional manipulation and commitment, was tested and non-significant paths were deleted from the current model. The deleted paths were shown in red dotted lines. Standardized regression weights of the final model are given in Figure 4.1. The fit indices indicated that the final model shows a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2(4, N= 221)= 5.39, p= .25, \chi^2/df= 1.35, GFI= .99, AGFI= .96, TLI= .99, CFI= 1.00, RMSEA= .04, SRMR= .02$ ).

In addition, squared multiple correlations ( $R^2$ ) of the mediator (satisfaction of women and men) and dependent (commitment of women and men) variables were examined to explain the amount of variance explained by the current model. It was found that emotional manipulation of women and men accounts for 12% of the variance in men's satisfaction and 13% of the variance in women's satisfaction in the relationship. The overall model explained 35% of the variance in men's commitment and 54% of the variance in women's commitment.

Moreover, the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables (women's emotional manipulation and men's emotional manipulation), mediator variables (women's satisfaction and men's satisfaction), and dependent variables (women's commitment and men's commitment) were computed. Cohen's guideline (1988) was used to evaluate the coefficients, and it was stated that correlations between .10 to .29 are small, .30 and .49 are medium, and .50 to 1.00 are large.

The direct and indirect effects of the current model were calculated, and the significant paths were kept in the model. Full mediation occurs in the presence of a significant indirect effect between the variables through the mediator variable when a direct effect is not found, whereas partial mediation is when direct and indirect effects exist with the same sign, and inconsistent mediation occurs with both direct and indirect effects by having different signs (Maassen & Bakker, 2001; MacKinnon et al., 2000). Considering the direct effect of the mediator variable on commitment was found to be the largest effect ( $\beta=.70, p<.001$  for women, and  $\beta=.53, p<.001$  for men). It means that individuals who are satisfied with their relationships are also committed to the relationship or committed relationships are linked to higher satisfaction. The direct effect of emotional manipulation of women on women's commitment ( $\beta=-.11, p<.05$ ) and men's commitment ( $\beta=-.13, p<.05$ ) was found to be the smallest effect. Furthermore, the direct effects of emotional manipulation of women on the mediator variable were found to be  $\beta=-.17, p<.05$  for women and  $\beta=-.25, p<.001$  for men, and the direct effect of emotional manipulation of men on the mediator variable was  $\beta=-.18, p<.01$  for men, and  $\beta=-.27, p<.001$  for women. The indirect effects of emotional manipulation of men on men's commitment ( $\beta=-.09, p<.05, [CI -.19, -.02]$ ) and women's commitment ( $\beta=-.19, p<.05, [CI -.29, -.08]$ ), and emotional manipulation of women on women's commitment ( $\beta=-.12, p<.05, [CI -.23, -.02]$ ), and men's commitment ( $\beta=-.13, p<.05, [CI -.22, -.06]$ ) were found (see Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3**

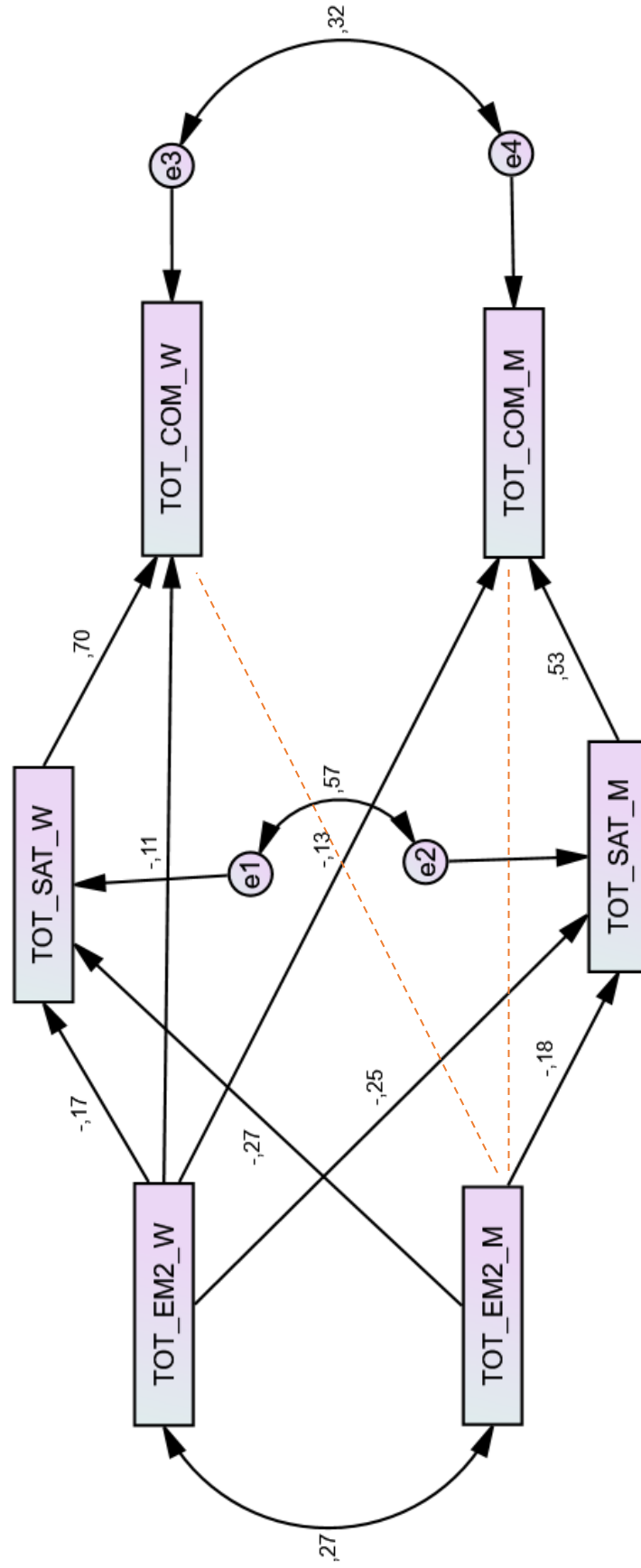
*Indirect Effects of Emotional Manipulation in Predicting Commitment*

| Indirect Effects | B    | SE  | <i>t</i> | $\beta$ | LLCI | ULCI |
|------------------|------|-----|----------|---------|------|------|
| EM M → COM M     | -.09 | .04 | -2.24*   | -.09    | -.19 | -.02 |
| EM W → COM M     | -.14 | .05 | -3.35*   | -.13    | -.22 | -.06 |
| EM M → COM W     | -.17 | .05 | -3.32*   | -.19    | -.29 | -.08 |
| EM W → COM W     | -.12 | .06 | -2.31*   | -.12    | -.23 | -.02 |

*Note.* \* $p<.05$

**Figure 4.1**

*Structural Model of the Current Study*



**Table 4.4***Actor and Partner Effects of Emotional Manipulation and Satisfaction in Predicting Commitment*

| Effects                | B    | SE  | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | $\beta$ | LLCI | ULCI |
|------------------------|------|-----|----------|----------|---------|------|------|
| <u>Actor Effects</u>   |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| EM → SAT               |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | -.14 | .05 | -2.63    | .01**    | -.17    | -.32 | -.03 |
| Men                    | -.13 | .05 | -2.68    | .01**    | -.18    | -.32 | -.04 |
| EM → COM               |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | -.11 | .05 | -2.31    | .02*     | -.11    | -.21 | -.03 |
| Men                    | -    | -   | -        | -        | -       | -    | -    |
| SAT → COM              |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | .91  | .06 | 15.24    | .001***  | .70     | .60  | .77  |
| Men                    | .66  | .07 | 9.63     | .001***  | .53     | .39  | .65  |
| <u>Partner Effects</u> |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| EM → SAT               |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | -.22 | .06 | -3.83    | .001***  | -.25    | -.38 | -.10 |
| Men                    | -.18 | .05 | -4.07    | .001***  | -.27    | -.43 | -.10 |
| EM → COM               |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | -.14 | .06 | -2.34    | .02*     | -.13    | -.26 | -.02 |
| Men                    | -    | -   | -        | -        | -       | -    | -    |
| SAT → COM              |      |     |          |          |         |      |      |
| Women                  | -    | -   | -        | -        | -       | -    | -    |
| Men                    | -    | -   | -        | -        | -       | -    | -    |

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

#### 4.4.1. Actor Effects

As it is shown in Table 4.4, there are direct actor effects between emotional manipulation, satisfaction, and commitment. H1 was confirmed for women ( $\beta = -.11$ ); however, it was not confirmed for men since the emotional manipulation of men did not have a significant actor effect on their own commitment. H2 was confirmed both for women ( $\beta = -.17$ ), and men ( $\beta = -.18$ ), so that women's and men's satisfaction was

explained by their own emotional manipulation. H3 was confirmed both for women ( $\beta=.70$ ) and men ( $\beta=.53$ ), therefore it can be said that there was a positive actor effect of satisfaction on their own commitment.

#### **4.4.2. Partner Effects**

There are several partner effects found in the current study. H4 was confirmed for women ( $\beta=-.13$ ); however, it was not confirmed for men since the emotional manipulation of men did not have a significant partner effect on their partner's commitment. H5 was confirmed both for women ( $\beta=-.25$ ) and men ( $\beta=-.27$ ), so that emotional manipulation had a negative partner effect on the satisfaction of their partner. H6 was not confirmed since the satisfaction of women and men did not have a significant partner effect on their partners' commitment.

#### **4.4.3. Mediation Effects**

H7 was confirmed for women's satisfaction as the mediator in the relationship between women's emotional manipulation and commitment ( $\beta=-.12$ ). Moreover, it was confirmed that the satisfaction of men has a mediator role in the relationship between women's emotional manipulation and men's commitment ( $\beta=-.13$ ). However, it was not confirmed for men's satisfaction since it did not have a significant mediator role in the relationship between men's emotional manipulation and commitment. That is, women's satisfaction partially mediated the effect of women's emotional manipulation on their commitment. The results showed that when women emotionally manipulate their partner, it does not lead to an increase in their own satisfaction, and it may result in a decrease in their own commitment to the relationship.

#### **4.5. Summary of the Findings**

Overall, the findings of the current study indicated the indirect effect of women's emotional manipulation on their own commitment via their satisfaction. This means that women's satisfaction partially mediated the effect of women's emotional manipulation on their commitment to the relationship. In addition, the indirect effect of women's emotional manipulation on men's commitment via men's satisfaction has a partner mediation effect; and it reveals that women's emotional manipulation is

associated with the decrease in the satisfaction of men and connected to the decrease in men's commitment to the relationship. Therefore, it can be said that emotional manipulation does not serve well the partners who are manipulated by their partners or the manipulator themselves in terms of their satisfaction and commitment.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The final chapter includes three sections regarding the results obtained from the current study. In the first section, a discussion of the current study is presented. In the second section, implications drawn from the findings of the current study are presented in two parts: theory and practice-based implications. Lastly, the third section provides recommendations for future research.

#### **5.1. Discussion of the Findings**

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment via the mediating effect of satisfaction in dating emerging adulthood couples. For this purpose, the Actor Partner Interdependence Mediation Model (APIMeM) was conducted to understand dyadic effects, and the results of the current study are discussed in the following sections. As far as the researcher knows, there is no existing literature regarding the relationship between emotional manipulation, commitment, and satisfaction concomitantly. However, there are studies about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) with commitment and satisfaction. Intimate Partner Violence is defined by World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) as “behavior by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviors”. In this definition, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors are similar to what emotional manipulation entails. Therefore, the results stemming from IPV studies with commitment and satisfaction can be used to make inferences for the current study.

##### **5.1.1. Discussion of Actor Effects**

*H1* suggests that the individuals’ own emotional manipulation will affect both women’s and men’s own commitment, and it can be related to a decrease in their own

commitment. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed for women that women's own emotional manipulation affected their own commitment. It means that when women emotionally manipulate their partners, their own commitment decreases. Yet, the hypothesis was not confirmed for men. So, when men emotionally manipulated their partners, their own commitment was not affected. The reason why women's emotional manipulation may affect their own commitment levels is that being the perpetrator of intimate partner violence may violate their own beliefs and cultural values (Oxtoby, 2012). Since women may be expected to show more obedience in the relationship in some cultures, the manipulative and disturbed behaviors of women make them uncomfortable due to their inappropriateness to what they have learned in their culture. Consequently, violating their own beliefs and cultural values may contradict women's perception about how ideal relationship would be, and this may affect their commitment levels.

Furthermore, *H2* suggests that individuals' own emotional manipulation will affect their own satisfaction, and it can be related to a decrease in their own satisfaction. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed both for women and men. It means that the use of emotional manipulation is associated with a decrease in the relationship satisfaction levels of both partners. Struckman-Johnson and her colleagues (2003) found that perpetrators' views on their behaviors and perpetrators' intentions were to improve their relationships and claimed that their behaviors were playful or beneficial. This result may help to explain the current study finding that when women's or men's satisfaction levels are low, they may engage in emotional manipulation to somehow improve their relationships by manipulating their partners, but it may result in a decrease in satisfaction levels despite the intentions.

Moreover, *H3* suggests that individuals' satisfaction with the relationship will affect their own commitment, and so if they are satisfied with their relationships, it may be related to an increase in their commitment levels. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed both for women and men. It means that satisfaction is positively related to commitment for both parties. The result of the current study is found to be consistent with Investment Model (Rusbult, 1980) that satisfaction is the best predictor of commitment (Cox et al., 1997; Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1986a; Simpson, 1987).



Also, Macher (2013) conducted a study on dating, cohabiting, and married couples, and found actor effects of relationship satisfaction on commitment which is consistent with the current study. Therefore, it can be said that satisfaction levels play an important role in determining individuals' own commitment to their relationship, or a highly committed relationship results in an increase in the satisfaction levels of individuals.

### **5.1.2. Discussion of Partner Effects**

*H4* suggests that partners' emotional manipulation will affect individuals' commitment to their relationships, and this will link to a decrease in commitment. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed for women, so that when women emotionally manipulate their partners, their partners' commitment was decreased. However, the hypothesis was not confirmed for men that when men emotionally manipulate their partners, it does not significantly affect their partners' commitment. This surprising finding is inconsistent with the findings of several studies that psychological abuse lowers women's commitment (Arias & Pape, 1999; Edwards et al., 2012; Gortner et al., 1997; Henning & Klesges, 2003; Marshall, 1996). This finding can be explained by considering the contributions of other Investment model variables to women's commitment. Though it was not explored in the current study, investment size and the quality of alternatives might affect emerging adult women's commitment to the relationship. In an earlier study, researchers found that women make more investments in their relationships than men (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986); therefore, their commitment level may not be affected due to the high investments they made. Another explanation might be related to the cultural effects on the perception of emotional manipulation. The socialization process in a culture that normalizes male power in intimate relationships might also influence the normalization of manipulative behaviors of male partners (Alvarez et al., 2015). Likewise, the use of strategic and manipulative behaviors on the part of women might be perceived as a threat to masculinity. Hence, examining the effect of gender socialization on emotional manipulation in further studies may clarify the complexity of this issue on relationship commitment.

*H5* suggests that individuals' emotional manipulation will affect their partners' satisfaction, and this will relate to a decrease in satisfaction. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed both for women and men, so that when individuals emotionally manipulated their partners, partners' satisfaction levels decreased. Several studies (Impett et al., 2001; Marshall, 1996; Rhatigan et al., 2006; Rhatigan & Axsom, 2006; Rhatigan & Street, 2005) stated that psychological abuse is considered to be a cost, and cost decreases satisfaction in the relationship.

*H6* suggests that individuals' satisfaction will affect their partners' commitment, and this will associate with an increase in commitment levels. In the current study, this hypothesis was not confirmed both for women and men, so that the satisfaction of women and men did not increase the commitment levels of their partners. Therefore, one's own satisfaction is not related to the partner's commitment to the relationship. This result suggests that individuals' expectations of idealized relationships and their subjective, affective, and cognitive assessment of the quality of the relationship appear more important to their own commitment to the relationship.

### **5.1.3. Discussion of Mediation Effects**

*H7* suggests that the relationship between emotional manipulation and commitment of dating couples was mediated by satisfaction in the relationship. In the current study, this hypothesis was confirmed for women's satisfaction mediated the relationship between women's emotional manipulation and commitment, and men's satisfaction mediated the relationship between women's emotional manipulation and commitment, whereas men's satisfaction did not mediate the relationship between men's emotional manipulation and commitment. These results suggested that when women emotionally manipulate their partners, their partners and themselves would feel less satisfied with their relationships, and it may turn out in a decrease in the commitment levels both for women and men in the relationship. However, it is not the same case for men's satisfaction. Therefore, satisfaction did not mediate the relationship between the emotional manipulation of men and their own commitment levels. Hence, there may be some other factors in explaining the commitment levels of men regarding the use of emotional manipulation such as masculine gender roles and Dark Triad personality types (Grieve et al., 2019; Grieve & Mahar, 2010; Hyde & Grieve, 2014).

## **5.2. Implications for Theory and Practice**

In this section, implications for theory were given along with the implications for practice. The current study puts forward Investment Model as the theoretical framework and the information obtained from the current study indicates how emotional manipulation affects couples' commitment via the mediating role of satisfaction. In addition, the results gathered from the current study offer practical implications for mental health professionals. The implications for theory and practice are discussed separately as follows.

### **5.2.1. Implications for Theory**

Rusbult's (1980) Investment Model, which was grounded in Interdependence Theory, explored how relationships persist over time. The model states that the commitment will occur when the satisfaction level and investment size are higher, whereas the quality of alternatives is lower (Rusbult, 1980; 1983). However, not all committed relationships have high satisfaction levels. Therefore, Potthoff and Babcock (2015) explained why individuals continue to stay in unsatisfactory relationships. Psychological abuse is one of the predictors of stay-leave decisions, and so is commitment or termination. Moreover, Rhatigan and Axsom (2006) found that commitment decreases with the increase in psychological abuse. However, it was stated that women may stay in abusive relationships even if the commitment levels are low (Potthoff & Babcock, 2015). Likewise, Arias and Pape (1999) reported that psychological abuse might be a better predictor of commitment when compared to physical abuse, and Follingstad and his colleagues (1990) found that psychological abuse had more influence on 72% of women than physical abuse. Consequently, Potthoff and Babcock (2015) stated that there is consistent evidence of psychological abuse affecting commitment, and this relationship can be mediated by satisfaction, and discussed that the influence of types of abuse on commitment has not been well understood. Therefore, the current study seems to be important in terms of extending the psychological abuse literature with emotional manipulation, along with the robust role of relationship satisfaction in predicting the commitment of emerging adults.

Furthermore, Investment Model has been investigated utilizing correlational designs so far (Büyükşahin et al., 2005; Rusbult et al., 1998; Whitton & Kuryluk, 2012) in the sample of university students who have dating relationships. Nevertheless, the relationships consist of the experiences of at least two individuals, therefore the interaction between the partners and their effects on each other should be studied to see the dyadic effects. In the current study, the Actor Partner Interdependence Mediation Model was utilized to explore the effects of partners on each other, and in this way, the romantic relationship literature was supported by extending and testing Investment Model's commitment and satisfaction factors, considering the effects of emotional manipulation as a part of dating violence with a dyadic study.

### **5.2.2. Implications for Practice**

The current study provides insightful results for counselors along with other mental health practitioners. Firstly, women's emotional manipulation was found to be associated negatively with their own commitment via the mediating role of their own satisfaction, and with men's commitment via the mediating role of men's satisfaction. It means that the emotional manipulation of women does not serve themselves or their partners' satisfaction and commitment in a positive way. Therefore, emotional manipulation can create a risk factor for the decrease in partners' commitment levels for both sides.

Regarding prevention strategies, increasing the knowledge of partners about emotional manipulation and its effects on the relationship may prevent relationships from falling apart. Considering the results of the current study, women's emotional manipulation negatively affected their own commitment and partners' commitment whereas men's emotional manipulation did not affect their partners' commitment, yet emotional manipulation behavior did affect both partners' relationship satisfaction negatively. Therefore, the effect of emotional manipulation in romantic relationships can be discussed and evaluated in counseling sessions. In this regard, interventions for dating couples can be planned for the individuals and couples to increase their relationship satisfaction and commitment by decreasing emotionally manipulative behaviors in the relationship. Also, as it can be understood from the results, women and men evaluated their own emotional manipulation differently; therefore, the interventions would be

unique accounting for the individual differences, as well as for couples considering each relationship's uniqueness.

### **5.3. Recommendations for Further Research**

First, the data was collected via online questionnaires. Couples were asked and informed that they should fill out the questionnaires separately and without their partners' knowledge of their answers. However, it cannot be ensured if they filled out the questionnaires alone or in the presence of their partners. Therefore, the genuineness of the answers might be distorted. So, online data collection can be considered a limitation of the current study. Another limitation of the online data collection would be the absence of the researcher. Participants could not ask their questions in mind which may need to be clarified. Hence, further studies can collect the data in a controlled face-to-face environment and arranging for couples to fill out the questionnaires at the same time in different rooms would contribute to answers given without hesitation.

Second, in the present study, convenience sampling was used. Therefore, the participants were highly educated individuals, and the generalizability of the results is limited. It would be better to advance the generalizability of the current study by collecting data from various backgrounds, and a random sampling technique can be utilized. Additionally, the sample consisted of only emerging adults in romantic relationships, so the other age groups and relationship types can be studied in further studies.

Third, the current study was conducted by utilizing a correlational design that cannot draw cause and effect relationships. Therefore, further research may utilize experimental design with relationship scenarios would be given to the participants to better understand and imagine what it is like to be manipulated by their partners. Moreover, the relationships which are high both in emotional manipulation and commitment can be investigated in longitudinal studies to explore how manipulative relationships persist over time.

Fourth, satisfaction and commitment subscales of the Investment Model were used in the current study. Further research with a wider model, consisting of other variables of the Investment Model: quality of alternatives, and investment size, would help in understanding how manipulative relationships persist when the quality of alternatives and investments are considered.

Fifth, qualitative studies can be conducted in further research to better investigate the factors influencing individuals' experiences in emotionally manipulative relationships. In addition, in the literature, attachment orientations were found to be associated with emotional abuse perpetration (Gormley & Lopez, 2010). So, attachment styles along with emotional manipulation can be investigated to extend the knowledge of why emotional manipulation occurs in romantic relationships. Furthermore, in a recent study, it was found that masculine gender roles significantly and positively predicted emotional manipulation (Grieve et al., 2019). Therefore, masculinity can be a factor to be looked upon in men's emotional manipulation behaviors. In addition, self-esteem can be examined with emotional manipulation in relation to commitment and satisfaction, since it was found that psychological violence affects victims' self-esteem (Sackett & Saunders, 1999). Also, personality types which are called as Dark Triad; psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism, are found to be predictors of emotional manipulation (Grieve & Mahar, 2010; Hyde & Grieve, 2014). Therefore, personality types and emotional manipulation can be further investigated in romantic relationships.

In conclusion, emotional manipulation is a promising factor in relationships to understand why individuals may be trapped in relationships in which they are not happy. The current study is the first study to test emotional manipulation with Investment Model variables. Hence, it must be noted that the current study needs to be nourished and developed with different samples and different variables to better grasp what causes some relationships to persist over time and some not.

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## APPENDICES

### A. TURKISH VERSION OF THE EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION SCALE (SAMPLE ITEMS)

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aşağıda ifadeleri okuduktan sonra sizi en iyi yansıttığını düşündüğünüz seçeneği işaretleyiniz.<br><b>1 = Asla, 2 = Ara sıra, 3 = Ayda bir, 4 = Haftada bir, 5 = Her gün</b> anlamına gelmektedir. |   |   |   |   |   |
| Gelecekte farklı davranmasını sağlayabilmek için birine yönelik öfkenizi hangi sıklıkla abartılı biçimde sergilersiniz?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Diğer insanları suçlu hissettirmek için duygusal becerilerinizi hangi sıklıkta kullanırsınız?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Hangi sıklıkla bir insanı davranışından vazgeçirmek için utandırırınız?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Bir insanı huzursuz hissettirmek için duygusal becerilerinizi hangi sıklıkla kullanırsınız?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Hangi sıklıkla bir insanı kaygılandırarak ona istediğinizi yaptırırsınız?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**B. TURKISH VERSION OF THE INVESTMENT MODEL SCALE  
(SAMPLE ITEMS)**

**İlişki Doyumu**

Şu anki yakın ilişkinizi göz önüne alarak, aşağıdaki ifadelerden her birine ne derece katıldığınızı belirtiniz.

1)

|  | Tamamen yanlış | Oldukça yanlış | Oldukça doğru | Tamamıyla doğru |
|--|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| a) Birlikte olduğum kişi, kişisel düşünceleri, sırları paylaşma gibi yakınlık gereksinimlerimi karşılıyor. |                |                |               |                 |

2) İlişkim başkalarının ilişkilerinden çok daha iyi.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Tamamen yanlış

Tamamıyla doğru

**Bağlılık**

1. İlişkimizin çok uzun bir süre devam etmesini istiyorum.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Tamamen yanlış

Tamamıyla doğru

2. Birlikte olduğum kişiyle olan ilişkiye bağlıyım.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Tamamen yanlış

Tamamıyla doğru



## C. DEMOGRAPHIC AND RELATIONAL INFORMATION FORM

### Demografik ve İlişkisel Bilgi Formu

#### Demografik Bilgiler

Yaş:

Cinsiyet: Kadın Erkek Diğer (Belirtiniz:...)

En son tamamlamış olduğunuz eğitim düzeyi: İlkokul Ortaokul Lise Lisans Yüksek Lisans Doktora

Öğrenci misiniz?: Evet Hayır

Ücret karşılığı bir işte çalışıyor musunuz?: Evet Hayır

#### İlişkisel Bilgiler

Medeni durum: Evli Bekâr

Romantik ilişki durumu: Var Yok

Partnerinizle kaç aydır birliktesiniz? (Örn., 2 senelik bir ilişkiniz varsa 24 ay olarak belirtiniz.):

## D. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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20 Mayıs 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

### Sayın Doç. Dr. Zeynep Hatipoğlu Sümer

Danışmanlığımı yaptığımız Gökçen KURU'nun "Romantik İlişkilerdeki Çiftlerin İlişkiye Bağlılığı ve Doyumunun Duygusal Manipülasyona Etkisinde Bağlanmanın Aracı Rolü: Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Modeli" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **180-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ  
İAEK Başkan Vekili

## E. CURRICULUM VITAE

### GÖKÇEN KURU



#### **EDUCATION:**

MSc in Psychological Counseling and Guidance | Middle East Technical University | 2019 - 2022

BA in Psychological Counseling and Guidance | TED University | 2014 – 2019

Minor Degree in Psychology | TED University | 2016-2019

Secondary Field in Business Administration | TED University | 2016 – 2019

Erasmus+ Exchange Program in Romania | Babes Bolyai University | 2017 – 2018

#### **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

Talent Specialist | Chace People – London, UK | January 2022 – Present

PT Research Assistant | TED University | March 2021 – September 2022

Executive Assistant | Robot4Work – Berlin, Germany | June 2019 – August 2019

Faculty Assistant | Faculty of Education – TED University | September 2018 – June 2019

Writing Center Assistant | English Language School-TED University | September 2017 – June 2018

Mathematics Tutor | TED University | September 2016 – June 2017

#### **PROJECTS:**

- A book chapter titled “Relationship Maintenance” in “Close Relationships” Book
- The Relationship between Workload and Unethical Behaviors of TED University Students (2019)
- Capstone Project: Coping Skills for the Families of Children with Leukemia (2019)

#### **LANGUAGES:**

- Turkish: Native | English: Fluent | German: Advanced

## F. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

### ROMANTİK İLİŞKİDEKİ ÇİFTLERİN DUYGUSAL MANİPÜLASYONUNUN İLİŞKİYE BAĞLILIKLARINA ETKİSİNDE İLİŞKİ DOYUMLARININ ARACI ROLÜ: AKTÖR-PARTNER KARŞILIKLI BAĞIMLILIK ARACI MODELİ

#### 1 GİRİŞ

“İlişkilerin içine doğarız, hayatımızı başkalarıyla ilişkiler içinde yaşarız ve öldüğümüzde, ilişkilerimizin etkileri yaşayanların yaşamlarında hayatta kalır, ilişkilerinin dokusunda yankılanır” (Reis ve Rusbult, 2004, s. 33). Bu nedenle, insan davranışlarını ilişkiler bağlamında anlamak çok önemlidir, ancak bunu yapabilmek bir o kadar da zordur. İnsanı anlamak için sadece bireyler değil, aralarındaki ilişkiler de incelenmelidir. Bu anlamda kişilerin romantik ilişkileri birey hakkında çok şey anlatabilir. Mevcut çalışmanın örneklemini beliren yetişkinler oluşturmaktadır. Beliren yetişkinlik eğitim, iş, inançlar, kendini geliştirme, ilişkiler gibi çözülmesi gereken farklı dinamikleri içeren bir yaşam dönemidir. Beliren yetişkinlik başkalarıyla kalıcı ilişkiler geliştirmeden önce, kendine odaklı olunan bir dönemdir (Arnett, 2015). Beliren yetişkinlikten yetişkinliğe geçiş döneminde ilişki deneyimindeki yanlışların düzeltilmesi önemlidir. Fincham ve Cui (2011), beliren yetişkinlik döneminde tatmin edici bir ilişkiye sahip olmanın gelişimsel bir görev olduğunu belirtmekte ve Arnett'in (2000) öne sürdüğü gibi, ilişkilerin daha ciddi hale geldiği, daha samimi ve kalıcı ilişkilere sahip olunduğu bir dönem olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Bu nedenle, beliren yetişkinlerin ilişki becerilerinin gelişmesi gelecekteki flört ve evlilik deneyimlerini de olumlu etkileyebilir.

Yıllar boyunca araştırmacılar ilişkilerin neden bittiğini veya partnerlerin birlikte kalmalarının nedenlerini anlamaya çalışmışlardır. Partnerlerin birbirlerine olan sevgisi ve ilişkiden elde ettikleri mutluluk, partnerleri bir arada tutan sebeplerdendir. Öte yandan, bazı ilişkiler partnerlere mutluluk vermez veya içinde o kadar da sevgi barındırmaz. Bu bağlamda, Rusbult ve diğerleri (1998), ilişkilerin sadece ilişkideki mutluluktan dolayı sürmediğini öne sürmüşlerdir. Temel varsayım, bağlılığın, düşük

doyumuna rağmen ilişkilerin neden devam ettiğini anlamının anahtarı olduğudur ve bu mekanizmada bağlılığın nasıl çalıştığını açıklayan teoriler vardır. Bu teorilerden biri olan Yatırım modeli, bağlılık ve ilişki sürekliliğini yordamada güçlü bulunmuştur.

Yatırım Modeli, Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Teorisinden geliştirilmiştir ve ilişkilerdeki bağlılığı araştırmak için karşılıklı bağımlılık kavramını kullanmıştır (Kelley, 1979; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Bağlılık, Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Kuramının temelini oluşturur ve bağlılık düzeyi, bireyin ilişkiye olan güven derecesidir. Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Kuramına göre bağlılık iki ana süreçte gelişir. İlişki doyumunu üst düzeyde yaşadığında bireyler ilişkiye bağlı hale gelmektedir. Ancak, doyum bağlılığın tek belirleyicisi değildir ve alternatiflerin kalitesinden de etkilenir. Alternatiflerin kalitesi, mevcut ilişkiye mümkün olan en iyi alternatif olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Rusbult vd., 1998). İlişkideki doyum düzeyi yüksek olduğunda bireyin bağlılığının arttığı ve bireyin mevcut partnerinden başka olası bir alternatifi olmadığı anlamına gelir. Bununla birlikte, bazı ilişkiler olası alternatiflerin varlığı ile daha düşük doyum düzeyine sahiptir. Burada bağlılığın bir diğer belirleyicisi olan yatırım miktarı devreye girmektedir. Yatırım miktarı, ilişkiye bağlı olan ve ilişki sona erdiğinde kaybedilecek olan kaynaklar olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Rusbult vd., 1998). Yatırım Modeli ile ilgili söylenenler dikkate alındığında, daha yüksek doyum seviyeleri, daha düşük alternatiflerin kalitesi ve daha yüksek yatırımların varlığında ilişkiye bağlılık artmaktadır.

Ayrıca, yapılan deneysel çalışmalar da bağlılığın doyum ve yatırım miktarı ile pozitif, alternatiflerin kalitesi ile negatif ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir (Agnew vd., 1998; Rusbult vd., 1998; Rusbult, 1983; Whitton ve Kuryluk, 2012). Türk alanyazınında yapılan çalışmaların sonuçları da bağlılığın daha yüksek doyum düzeyi ve yatırım büyüklüğü ile daha düşük kaliteli alternatiflerle yordandığı yönündeki sonuçlarla uyumludur (Büyükşahin ve Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Büyükşahin vd., 2005). Yatırım Modeli flört eden, birlikte yaşayan ve evli heteroseksüel çiftlerle yapılan kesitsel araştırmalarda (Buunk, 1987; Büyükşahin ve Hovardaoğlu, 2007; Kurdek, 1993; Lin ve Rusbult, 1995), eşcinsel çiftler (Beals vd., 2002; Duffy & Rusbult, 1986a; Kurdek, 1991) ve beliren yetişkinler (Hadden vd., 2018; Lin ve Rusbult, 1995; Rusbult, 1980,

1983; Vannier ve O'Sullivan, 2017a) gibi farklı örneklemlerde de tutarlı sonuçlar göstermiştir. Mevcut çalışmada ise, örnekleme beliren yetişkinler oluşturmaktadır.

Romantik bir ilişkiye sahip olmak bireylere bazı zorluklar getirebilir. Bazı durumlarda, partnerlerin küsme, yok sayma, zorlama, alçaltma gibi manipülatif davranışları olabilir. Bu nedenle, duygusal olarak manipülatif bir partnere sahip olmak hem zorlayıcı bir deneyim olabilir hem de bunun farkına varmak kolay olmayabilir. Partnerler manipülatif davranışları fark etseler bile, ilişkiye çok yatırım yaptıkları ve ilişkilerine bağlı oldukları için partnerlerinden ayrılmaları kolay olmayabilir. Bu nedenle duygusal manipülasyonu incelemek, manipülatif ilişki dinamiklerini anlamak açısından önemlidir.

Duygular, içsel ve dışsal olayların değerlendirilmesine verilen tepkilerdir (Scherer, 1987, 2001, 2005). Bireylerin başkalarıyla karmaşık ilişkilere uyum sağlaması ve iletişimi kolaylaştırması gerekir; bu nedenle insanlar sosyal olarak uyumlu varlıklar olarak kabul edilir (Engelberg & Sjöberg, 2005). Karmaşık durumlara uyum sağlamak için duygusal beceriler gereklidir ve bu beceriler duygusal zeka olarak kabul edilir. Duygusal zekanın faydaları ile ilgili birçok çalışma yapılmıştır (Austin vd., 2005; Day vd., 2005; Furnham ve Petrides, 2003; Salovey vd., 2002); ancak duygusal manipülasyon olarak adlandırılan duygusal zekanın karanlık tarafını araştıran çalışmalar da vardır (Austin vd., 2007). Duygusal manipülasyon, bireyin kendi çıkarları için başkalarının davranışları ve duyguları üzerindeki etkisi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Austin vd., 2007). Dolayısıyla madalyonun iki yüzü olduğu ve duygusal zekanın iyi ve kötü yönde kullanılabileceği söylenebilir. Başka bir deyişle, başkaları üzerindeki bu etki, başkalarına yardım etmek veya onlara kötü davranmak için şekillendirilebilir ve duygusal manipülasyon, kişinin kendi kazanımları ölçüsünde başkalarının davranışlarını veya duygularını kontrol etmek için kullanılabilir.

Marshall'ın (1996) belirttiği gibi psikolojik şiddet olan ilişkilerde mağdurların doyum düzeylerinin düştüğü ve ilişkiyi sürdürmeme kararı aldığı görülmektedir. Ancak bu her ilişki için geçerli değildir. Bazen, ilişki tatmin edici olmasa bile, bireyler yine de ilişkide kalmaya karar verirler. Yapılan bir çalışmada ise flört şiddeti ile bağlılık arasındaki ilişkiye ilişkideki doyum aracılık etmektedir (Toplu-Demirtaş vd., 2013).

Dolayısıyla, ilişkilerinden memnun olan bireylerin partnerlerine bağlılık göstermeleri beklenir, ancak partnerlerin hala ilişkiye bağlı olduğu düşük tatminli ilişkiler de vardır (Impett vd., 2001) ve düşük doyum düzeyine sahip olan ilişkiler hem mağduru hem de faili etkileyebilmektedir. Bu nedenle, ilişki doyumunu düşük olduğu halde psikolojik yönden istismarcı ilişkilerin neden hala devam ettiğini anlamak için bağlılık ile duygusal manipülasyon arasındaki ilişkide doyumun aracı rolünün incelenmesi önemlidir.

### **1.1 Çalışmanın Amacı**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, beliren yetişkinlik döneminde romantik ilişki yaşayan çiftlerin duygusal manipülasyonu ve ilişkiye bağlılıkları arasındaki ilişkide, ilişki doyumunun aracı rolünün incelenmesidir.

Araştırma sorusu: Romantik ilişki yaşayan çiftlerde duygusal manipülasyon ve bağlılık arasındaki ilişkiye doyum ne ölçüde aracılık eder?

### **1.2 Çalışmanın Önemi**

Bu çalışma, ilişki bağlılığında partnerlerin duygusal manipülasyonunun önemini vurgulayarak, flört eden çiftlerde yatırım modelini ikili düzeyde inceleyen ilk çalışmadır. Bireyler ilişkilerine iyi niyetlerle başlasalar da zamanla ilişkiler sağlıklı hale dönüşebilir. Bazı durumlarda bireyler, ilişkilerinden memnun olmasalar bile ilişkide kalmaya karar verirler. Bu bağlamda mevcut çalışma, bireylerin mutlu olmadıklarında veya ilişkilerinden doyum elde etmediklerinde neden ilişkilerine devam ettiğine ve duygusal manipülasyon ve doyumlarının ilişkiye bağlılıklarını nasıl etkileyebileceğine ilişkin olası yanıtları bulmaya çalışmaktadır. Romantik ilişkilerde bağlılık ve doyumun nasıl işlediğini anlamaya çalışan çalışmalar, fiziksel ve psikolojik şiddet gibi flört şiddeti türleri ile bağlantılıdır. Psikolojik şiddette sonuçlar doğrudan görülmeyebilir, ancak bu durum bireylerin benlik saygısını etkiler (Sackett ve Saunders, 1999) ve psikolojik şiddete maruz kalmak depresyonla ilişkilidir (Katz ve Arias, 1999). Bu bağlamda mevcut çalışma, bireylerin ilişkilerinde bağlılıkları ve doyumları ile ilgili manipülatif ilişkilerin dinamiklerini anlamak açısından özgündür.

Ayrıca bu çalışmada her iki partnerden veri elde edilmiş, çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkileri analiz etmek için Aktör-Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) kullanılmıştır. Birbirleriyle etkileşimlerini göz önünde bulundurarak, çiftlerin bağımlılık düzeylerini ikili düzeyde araştırmak için bu yöntem elverişlidir. Ayrıca, her iki partnerin de birbirlerine etkileri düşünüldüğünde duygusal manipülasyonun etkisi daha iyi anlaşılacaktır.

## **2 YÖNTEM**

### **2.1 Örneklem**

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'de yaşayan, 18 ila 29 yaşları arasında beliren yetişkinlik döneminde olan ve en az altı aydır flört eden heteroseksüel çiftlerden veri toplanmıştır. Mevcut çalışma 221 çiftten oluşmaktadır (N = 442). Uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

Katılımcıların yaşları hem kadınlar (Ort.= 22.15, SS= 2.40) hem de erkekler (Ort.= 23.03, SS= 2.59) için 18 ile 29 arasında değişmektedir. İlişki süresi 6 ay ile 132 ay arasında değişmektedir (Ort=31.50, SD=25.73). Katılımcıların yarıya yakını lisans (n=219, %49,5) ve lise (n=185, % 41,9) mezunudur. Geri kalan katılımcılar yüksek lisans (n=13, % 2.9), ön lisans (n=23, % 5.2) mezunudur. Sadece iki katılımcı ilkökul mezunudur (n=2, % .5). Ayrıca, katılımcıların 329'u (%74.4) öğrenci iken, 113'ü (%25.6) öğrenci değildir. 178 katılımcı (%40.3) çalışmakta ve 264'ü (%59.7) çalışmamaktadır. Ayrıca, katılımcıların 53'ü (%12) partneriyle birlikte yaşamakta ve 389'u (%88) birlikte yaşamamaktadır.

### **2.2 Veri Toplama Araçları**

Verileri toplamak için iki ölçeğin Türkçe versiyonu çevrimiçi olarak hazırlanmıştır: Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeği (Hyde ve Grieve, 2014; Urfa vd., 2018) ve Yatırım Modeli Ölçeği (Büyükşahin vd., 2005; Rusbult vd., 1998). Ayrıca örneklemin demografik özellikleri ve ilişkisel özellikleri hakkında bilgi toplamak için demografik ve ilişkisel bilgi formu (DRIF) kullanılmıştır.



Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeği, bireylerin başkalarını manipüle etme konusundaki algılanan yeteneklerini ve bunu yapmaya isteklilik düzeylerini ölçen 20 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Ölçek Hyde ve Grieve (2014) tarafından geliştirilen Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeğinden uyarlanmıştır. Orijinal Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeği Austin ve diğerleri (2007) tarafından geliştirilmiş ve duygusal manipülasyonun bir tür duygu yönetimi olduğu ve iyi amaçlar için kullanılıp kullanılmayacağı Duygusal Zeka teorisine dayanmaktadır. Böylece araştırmalar, duygusal manipülasyon ölçeğini geliştirerek duygusal zekanın karanlık tarafını keşfetmek istemişlerdir. Ölçeğin algılanan yetenek ve duygusal manipülasyona katılma istekliliği olmak üzere iki alt boyutu vardır. Ölçeğin Türkçe uyarlaması Urfa ve diğerleri (2018) tarafından yapılmıştır. Yaş ortalaması 28,56 olan 98 kadın, yaş ortalaması 31,78 olan 46 erkek olmak üzere 144 katılımcı ile uyarlama çalışması yapılmıştır. Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeğinin Türkçe versiyonunun (bkz. Ek A) iki boyut için yeterli sonuç veren doğrulayıcı faktör analizi ile geçerlik ve güvenilirlik analizleri yapılmış ve algılanan yetenek alt boyutu için Cronbach alfa korelasyon katsayısı .90 ve isteklilik alt boyutu için .86 olarak bulunmuştur. Ayrıca düzeltilmiş madde-toplam korelasyon katsayıları .31 ile .77 arasında bulunmuştur. Aynı zamanda, güvenilirlik analizi sonuçları algılanan yetenek alt boyutu için  $\alpha=.87$ , isteklilik alt boyutu için  $\alpha=.89$  ve tüm ölçek için  $\alpha=.92$  ile mevcut örnekleme de güvenilir sonuçlar bulunmuştur.

Yatırım Modeli Ölçeği, partnerlerin/eşlerin bağlılık düzeyini, doyum düzeyini, alternatiflerin kalitesini ve ilişkideki yatırım miktarını ölçmek için 37 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Rusbult ve diğerleri (1998) tarafından geliştirilen Yatırım Modeli Ölçeği, Büyüksahin ve diğerleri (2005) tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanmış ve İlişki İstikrarı Ölçeği (İİÖ) olarak değiştirilmiştir. İİÖ, 325 üniversite öğrencisi ile test edilmiştir. Yatırım Modeli Ölçeğinin Türkçe versiyonu (bkz. Ek B) için faktör analizi sonuçları üç faktöre işaret etmekte olup, alt boyutların korelasyon katsayıları -.45 ile .67 aralığındadır. Değerler istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bulunmuştur. İlişki doyumu, alternatiflerin kalitesi ve ilişkiye yatırım için alt ölçeklerin Cronbach alfa katsayıları .84 ile .90 arasında bulunmuştur. Ayrıca Toplu-Demirtaş ve diğerleri (2013), flört eden çiftlerle yaptıkları bir çalışmada Cronbach alfa korelasyon katsayılarını ilişki doyumu için .94, alternatiflerin kalitesi için .85, yatırım büyüklüğü için .88 ve bağlılık için .93 olarak hesaplamıştır. Aynı zamanda, Cronbach alfa

korelasyon katsayıları doyum alt boyutu için .90, alternatiflerin kalitesi için .86, yatırım miktarı için .81, bağlılık için .87 ve tüm ölçek için .74 ile mevcut örnekleme de güvenilir sonuçlar vermiştir.

Mevcut çalışmanın örnekleminin özellikleri hakkında temel bilgileri toplamak için araştırmacı tarafından Demografik ve İlişkisel Bilgi Formu (DRIF; bkz. Ek C) geliştirilmiştir. Demografik bilgiler kısmında yaş, cinsiyet, eğitim durumu, öğrencilik ve çalışma durumu; ilişkisel bilgi bölümünde ise, medeni durum, romantik ilişki durumu ve ilişki süresi yer almaktadır.

### **2.3 İşlem**

Mevcut çalışmayı yürütmek için etik izin almak üzere Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'na başvurulmuştur (bkz. Ek D). Komiteden onay alındıktan sonra, mevcut çalışmaya dahil edilme kriterlerine uyan flört eden çiftlerden veri toplamak için uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Kriterlere uyan ve çalışmaya partnerleriyle birlikte katılmaya istekli flört eden çiftlere ulaşmak zor olduğundan çalışmanın katılımcılarının yönlendirmeleriyle yeni katılımcılara da ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca verileri ikili olarak eşleştirmek için partnerlerden çift olarak kendilerine bir rumuz seçmeleri ve girmeleri istenmiştir. Ölçeklerin doldurulması yaklaşık 15 dakika sürmüştür.

### **2.4 Verilerin Analizi**

İkili verileri analiz etme adımları şu şekildedir: veri tarama ve temizleme, modelin varsayımlarının test edilmesi, betimleyici analizlerin yapılması, Duygusal Manipülasyon Ölçeğinin ve Yatırım Modeli Ölçeğinin Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizlerinin yapılması ve ardından duygusal manipülasyon ve bağlılık arasındaki ilişkide doyumun aracılık rolünü değerlendiren mevcut modelin APIMeM kullanılarak test edilmesi. Ön analizler SPSS 28 (IBM Corp., 2021) ile yapılmıştır. Stata 16 (StataCorp, 2019) ile Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizleri ve AMOS 23 (Arbuckle, 2014) ile APIMeM analizi yapılmıştır.

## 2.5 Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları

Mevcut çalışmanın bazı sınırlılıkları bulunmaktadır. İlk olarak, verileri toplamak için öz-bildirim ölçüm araçları kullanılmıştır. İlişkiye bağlı olmayan ve ilişkilerinden memnun olmayan katılımcılar yanıtlarının partnerleri tarafından görülebileceğini düşünerek gerçekçi yanıt vermekte zorlanmış olabilir. Ayrıca, duygusal olarak manipülatif davranışların bildirilmesi, bazı bireyler için rahatsız edici olabilir ve bu konuda kendilerini iyi hissetmeyebilirler ve bu nedenle çalışmada bildirmemiş olabilirler. Dolayısıyla, bu durum katılımcıların yanlış raporlamasına veya sosyal olarak kabul edilebilir yanıtlar vermesine sebep olmuş olabilir.

İkinci olarak, korelasyonel desen, mevcut çalışmanın olası bir sınırlılığı olarak değişkenler arasında herhangi bir nedensellik kurmaya uygun değildir. Bu nedenle hangisinin diğerini etkilediği bilinmemekle birlikte, ilişkiler açıklanmıştır.

Üçüncüsü, mevcut çalışmada uygun örnekleme tekniği kullanılmış ve mevcut çalışmanın dış geçerliliği tehdit edilmiştir. Bu nedenle çalışma bulguları tüm ilişki türlerine ve bütün beliren yetişkinlere genellenemez.

Son olarak, Covid-19 pandemisi nedeniyle mevcut çalışma çevrimiçi bir anket yoluyla yürütülmüştür. Çalışmanın çevrimiçi olarak yürütülmesinin pek çok avantajı olmasına rağmen, ortamda araştırmacının bulunmaması ve bazı potansiyel katılımcıların internet erişiminin olmaması gibi dezavantajları da bulunmaktadır. Katılımcılar ölçekleri doldururken yanlarında araştırmacı olmadığı için açık olmayan ve sormak istedikleri soruları soramamış olabilirler. Ek olarak, anketleri kimin doldurduğundan veya bir katılımcının partnerinin anketini de doldurup doldurmadığından emin olmak mümkün değildir. Bu ve benzeri durumlar mevcut çalışmada kontrol edilememiştir. Ayrıca, pandemi dönemi ilişki dinamiklerini farklı şekillerde etkilemiş olabilir.

## 3 BULGULAR

Mevcut çalışmanın amacı, flört eden çiftlerde duygusal manipülasyon ve bağlılık arasındaki ilişkide doyumun aracı rolünü araştırmaktır. Çalışma değişkenlerinin

rollerini arařtırmak için, ayırt edilebilir ikililer (kadınlar ve erkekler) için APIMeM yapılmıřtır. Kenny ve diđerlerinin (2006) önerilerinin ardından ilk olarak doymuř modeller arařtırılmıřtır. Ardından, son modelde kalan yolların tümü anlamlı olana kadar anlamlı olmayan yollar modelden çıkarılmıřtır.

Mevcut çalıřmada önerilen model, iliřki doyumunun, flört eden çiftlerin duygusal manipölasyonu ve bađlılıđı arasındaki iliřkiye aracılık edeceđini ileri sürmektedir. İlk olarak, duygusal manipölasyondan bađlılıđa kadar tüm yolları ve ayrıca iliřki doyumundan duygusal manipölasyona ve bađlılıđa giden yolları içeren doymuř model test edilmiř ve mevcut modelden anlamlı olmayan yollar çıkarılmıřtır. Uyum indeksleri, nihai modelin verilere iyi bir uyum gösterdiđini göstermiřtir ( $\chi^2(4, N=221)= 5.39, p= .25, \chi^2/df= 1.35, GFI= .99, AGFI= .96, TLI= .99, CFI= 1.00, RMSEA= .04, SRMR= .02$ ).

Duygusal manipölasyon, iliřki doymu ve bađlılık arasında dođrudan aktör etkileri vardır. Özetlemek gerekirse, kadınların duygusal manipölasyonu, doymu ( $\beta=-.17$ ) ve bađlılıđı ( $\beta=-.11$ ) negatif ve anlamlı bir řekilde yordamıřtır. Her ikisi de küçük etkilere iřaret etmektedir (H2; H1). Erkeklerin duygusal manipölasyonları, küçük bir etki göstererek (H2) doyumlarını ( $\beta=-.18$ ) negatif ve anlamlı bir řekilde yordamaktadır. Ayrıca, kadınların ve erkeklerin doyumları, bađlılıklarını pozitif ve anlamlı bir řekilde yordamıřtır (sırasıyla,  $\beta=.70; \beta=.53$ ; büyük etki) (H3).

Dolaylı etkiler düşünöldüđünde aracılıklar ortaya çıkmıřtır. Kadınların duygusal manipölasyonunun kadınların doymu üzerinden bađlılıklarına dolaylı etkisi anlamlı ve negatif ( $\beta=-.12$ ), küçük bir etkiye sahiptir (H7). Yani, kadınların duygusal manipölasyonunun bađlılıklarına etkisine kadınların iliřki doymu kısmen aracılık etmiřtir. Sonuçlar, kadınların partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipöle etmelerinin, kendi doyumlarını artırmadıđını ve iliřkiye olan bađlılıklarında azalmaya yol açabileceđini göstermiřtir.

Mevcut çalıřmada bulunan birkaç partner etkisi vardır. Kadınların duygusal manipölasyonu, erkeklerin bađlılıđını ( $\beta=-.13$ ) ve erkeklerin doyumunu ( $\beta=-.25$ ) küçük bir etki göstererek (H4; H5) anlamlı ve olumsuz yönde yordamıřtır. Ayrıca,

erkeklerin duygusal manipülasyonu, kadınların doyumunu ( $\beta=-.27$ ) küçük bir etkiye (H5) sahip olarak anlamlı ve negatif olarak yordamıştır. Ayrıca, kadın ve erkeklerin doyumunun, partnerlerinin bağlılığı üzerinde önemli bir partner etkisi olmamıştır (H6).

Ayrıca, kadınların duygusal manipülasyonunun erkeklerin doyumunu üzerinden erkeklerin bağlılığına dolaylı etkisi anlamlı ve negatif ( $\beta=-.13$ ), küçük bir etkiye sahiptir (H7). Yani, kadınların duygusal manipülasyonunun erkeklerin bağlılığına etkisine erkeklerin doyumunu kısmen aracılık etmiştir. Kadınlar partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipüle etmesi, erkeklerin memnuniyetinin azalmasına ve bu da erkeklerin ilişkiye olan bağlılığının azalmasına neden olabilir.

#### 4 TARTIŞMA

Mevcut çalışma, beliren yetişkinlik dönemindeki flört eden çiftlerde ilişki doyumunun aracılığında duygusal manipülasyon ve bağlılık arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, ikili etkileri anlamak için Aktör Partner Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Aracılık Modeli (APIMeM) yürütülmüştür. Araştırmacının bilgisi dahilinde, duygusal manipülasyon, bağlılık ve doyum arasındaki ilişkileri eş zamanlı olarak araştıran herhangi bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Ancak, Yakın Partner Şiddeti (IPV) ile bağlılık ve ilişki doyumuyla ilgili çalışmalar vardır. Yakın Partner Şiddeti, Dünya Sağlık Örgütü (WHO, 2021) tarafından “bir yakın partner veya eski bir partner tarafından fiziksel saldırı, cinsel zorlama, psikolojik istismar ve kontrol edici davranışlar dahil olmak üzere fiziksel, cinsel veya psikolojik zarara neden olan davranışlar” olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu tanımda, psikolojik istismar ve kontrol edici davranışlar, duygusal manipülasyona benzerlik göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, bağlılık ve doyum içeren IPV çalışmalarından elde edilen sonuçlar, mevcut çalışma için çıkarımlarda bulunurken yararlanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın bulgularına göre, kadınların kendi duygusal manipülasyonlarının kendi bağlılıklarını etkilediğine dair hipotez kadınlar için doğrulanmıştır. Bu durum, kadınlar partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipüle ettiğinde, kendi bağlılıklarının azaldığını göstermektedir. Ancak, bu hipotez erkekler için reddedilmiştir. Erkekler

eşlerini duygusal olarak manipüle ettiğinde, kendi bağılıkları etkilenmemiştir. Kadınların duygusal manipülasyonunun kendi bağılık düzeylerini etkilemesinin nedeni, partner şiddetinin faili olmanın kendi inançlarını ve kültürel değerlerini ihlal edebilmesidir (Oxtoby, 2012). Dolayısıyla kendi inançlarını ve kültürel değerlerini ihlal etmek, kadınların ideal bir ilişkinin nasıl olacağı algısıyla çelişebilir ve bu onların bağılık düzeylerini etkileyebilir.

Ayrıca bir diğer hipotez, bireylerin duygusal manipülasyonlarının kendi ilişki doyumlarını etkileyeceğini ve doyumlarının azalacağını öne sürmektedir. Mevcut çalışmada, bu hipotez hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için doğrulanmıştır. Duygusal manipülasyon kullanımının artması her iki partnerin ilişki doyum düzeylerinde azalma ile ilişkili bulunmuştur. Struckman-Johnson ve diğerleri (2003), faillerin davranışlarına ilişkin görüşlerini almıştır ve bu kapsamda, faillerin niyetlerinin ilişkilerini geliştirmek olduğunu ve davranışlarının eğlenceli veya faydalı olduğunu düşündüklerini ortaya çıkarmışlardır. Bu sonuç, kadınların veya erkeklerin doyum düzeyleri düşük olduğunda, bir şekilde ilişkilerini geliştirmek için partnerlerini manipüle edebileceklerini, ancak niyetlerinin aksine doyum düzeylerinin düşmesine neden olabileceğini düşündürmektedir.

Çalışmanın bir diğer hipotezinde bireylerin ilişki doyumlarının kendi bağılıklarını etkileyeceği ve doyum arttıkça bağılık düzeylerinin de artacağı öne sürülmektedir. Bu hipotez hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için doğrulanmıştır. Mevcut çalışmada elde edilen, doyumun bağılığın en iyi yordayıcısı olduğu bulgusu, Yatırım Modeli (Rusbult, 1980) varsayımlarıyla tutarlı bulunmuştur (Cox vd., 1997; Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult vd., 1986a; Simpson, 1987). Ayrıca, bulgular, Macher'in (2013) flört eden, birlikte yaşayan ve evli çiftlerle yürüttüğü çalışmasında elde ettiği ilişki doyumunun bağılık üzerindeki aktör etkileri bulgusuyla da tutarlıdır. Dolayısıyla doyum düzeylerinin bireylerin ilişkilerine olan bağılıklarını belirlemede önemli bir rol oynadığı söylenebilir.

Partner etkilerine bakıldığında ise, çalışmadaki bir hipoteze göre partnerlerin duygusal manipülasyonunun bireylerin ilişkilerine olan bağılığını etkileyeceği ve bunun bağılığın azalmasıyla ilişkili olacağı öne sürülmektedir. Bu hipotez kadınlar için

doğrulanmış, erkekler için reddedilmiştir. Kadınlar partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipüle ettiklerinde partnerlerinin ilişki bağlılığı azalmıştır. Bununla birlikte, erkekler partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipüle ettiğinde, partnerlerinin ilişki bağlılığı etkilenmemektedir. Kadınların bağlılıklarının etkilenmemesinin bir nedeni, erkeklere oranla ilişkilerine daha fazla yatırım yapmaları (Duffy ve Rusbult, 1986) olabilir. Başka bir açıklama olarak, duygusal manipülasyon algısı kültürel etkilerle ilgili olabilir. Yakın ilişkilerde erkek gücünü normalleştiren bir kültürdeki sosyalleşme süreci, erkek partnerlerin manipülatif davranışlarının normalleştirilmesini de etkileyebilir (Alvarez vd., 2015). Aynı şekilde, kadınların stratejik ve manipülatif davranışları kullanması erkekliğe yönelik bir tehdit olarak algılanabilir. Dolayısıyla, daha sonraki çalışmalarda duygusal manipülasyon ve ilişki bağlılığı arasındaki ilişkinin netleştirilmesinde cinsiyet sosyalleşmesinin etkisinin incelenmesi önemli görülmektedir.

Ayrıca bir diğer hipoteze göre, bireylerin duygusal manipülasyonunun partnerlerinin doyumunu olumsuz yönde etkileyeceği ileri sürülmektedir. Mevcut çalışmada, bu hipotez hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için doğrulanmış, bireyler partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipüle ettiğinde partnerlerin ilişki doyumunu azalmıştır. Bu bulgu, psikolojik istismarın bir maliyet olarak görüldüğü ve maliyetlerin doyum ve bağlılığı azalttığını belirten çeşitli araştırmaların (Impett vd., 2001; Marshall, 1996; Rhatigan vd., 2006; Rhatigan ve Axsom, 2006; Rhatigan ve Street, 2005) bulgularıyla tutarlıdır.

Çalışmanın bir diğer hipotezinde, bireylerin doyumlarının partnerlerinin bağlılığını olumlu yönde etkileyeceği öne sürülmüştür. Bu hipotez hem kadınlar hem de erkekler için reddedilmiş, kadın ve erkeklerin doyumları partnerlerinin ilişkiye bağlılık düzeyleriyle ilişkili bulunmamıştır. Bu sonuç, bireylerin idealleştirilmiş ilişki beklentileri ve ilişkinin kalitesine ilişkin öznel, duygusal ve bilişsel değerlendirmelerinin sadece kendi ilişkiye bağlılıkları üzerinde etkili olduğunu göstermektedir.

Aracılık etkilerine bakıldığında ise, kadınların duygusal manipülasyonu ve bağlılığı arasındaki ilişkiye kadın doyumunun aracılık ettiği; kadınların duygusal manipülasyonu ve bağlılığı arasındaki ilişkiye erkeklerin doyumunun aracılık ettiği;

erkeklerin duygusal manipölasyonu ve bağıllığı arasındaki ilişkiye ise erkeklerin doyumunun aracılık etmediğı görölmüştür. Bu sonuçlar, kadınların partnerlerini duygusal olarak manipöle ettiklerinde, partnerlerinin ve kendilerinin ilişkilerinden daha az doyum almalarına ve dolayısıyla hem kendileri hem de partnerlerinin ilişki bağıllık düzeylerinin azalmasına neden olmaktadır. Ancak bu durum erkekler için geçerli değildir. Erkekler duygusal manipölasyon kullandıklarında, ilişki doyumları bağıllık düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık etmemiştir. Dolayısıyla erkeklerin duygusal manipölasyon kullanımına ilişkin bağıllık düzeylerini açıklamada alanyazında belirtildiğı gibi eril cinsiyet rolleri ve Karanlık Üçlü kişilik tipleri gibi başka faktörler etkili olabilir (Grieve vd., 2019; Grieve & Mahar, 2010; Hyde & Grieve, 2014).

#### **4.1 Kurama Yönelik Çıkarımlar**

Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Teorisine dayanan Rusbult'un (1980) Yatırım Modeli, ilişkilerin zaman içinde nasıl devam ettiğini araştırmıştır. Model, doyum düzeyi ve yatırım boyutu daha yüksek, alternatiflerin kalitesi daha düşük olduğunda ilişki bağıllığın gerçekleşeceğini belirtmektedir (Rusbult, 1980; 1983). Bununla birlikte, tüm bağıllı ilişkiler yüksek doyum seviyelerine sahip değildir. Bu nedenle, Potthoff ve Babcock (2015) bireylerin neden tatmin edici olmayan ilişkilerde kalmaya devam ettiğini açıklamıştır. Psikolojik istismar, ayrılma kararının yordayıcılarından biridir. Rhatigan ve Axsom (2006) psikolojik istismarın artmasıyla bağıllığın azaldığını bulmuşlardır. Ancak kadınların bağıllık düzeyleri düşük olsa bile istismar içeren ilişkilerde kalabilecekleri belirtilmiştir (Potthoff ve Babcock, 2015). Arias ve Pape (1999) psikolojik istismarın fiziksel istismara kıyasla bağıllığın daha iyi bir yordayıcısı olabileceğini bildirmiş, Follingstad ve diğerleri (1990), psikolojik istismarın kadınların %72'si üzerinde fiziksel istismardan daha fazla etkiye sahip olduğunu bulmuşlardır. Potthoff ve Babcock (2015) psikolojik istismarın bağıllığı etkilediğine dair tutarlı kanıtların olduğunu ve bu ilişkiye doyumun aracılık edilebileceğini belirtmiş, istismar türlerinin bağıllık üzerindeki etkisinin tam olarak anlaşılmadığının altını çizmişlerdir. Bu nedenle, mevcut çalışma bulguları, flört ilişkisinde bağıllığı yordamada doyumun yanı sıra duygusal manipölasyonun rolünü vurgulamakta hem psikolojik istismar hem de yatırım modeli ile ilgili alanyazına katkı sağlamaktadır.



## 4.2 Uygulamaya Yönelik Çıkarımlar

Mevcut çalışma, diğer ruh sağlığı profesyonelleriyle birlikte psikolojik danışmanlar için anlamlı sonuçlar sunmaktadır. İlk olarak, kadınların duygusal manipülasyonunun, kendi doyumlarının aracılığıyla kendi bağlılıklarıyla ve erkeklerin doyumunun aracılığıyla erkeklerin bağlılığıyla olumsuz yönde ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu, kadınların duygusal manipülasyonunun kendilerine veya partnerlerinin ilişkisel doyumlarına ve bağlılığına olumlu bir şekilde hizmet etmediği anlamına gelmektedir. Bu nedenle, duygusal manipülasyon, her iki taraf için de partnerlerin bağlılık düzeylerinin azalmasına yol açan bir risk faktörü olarak değerlendirilebilir. Partnerlerin duygusal manipülasyon kullanımı ve bunun ilişki üzerindeki etkileri hakkındaki bilgilerini artırmak, ilişkilerin bozulmasını engelleyebilir. Bu nedenle duygusal manipülasyonun ne olduğu, romantik ilişkilerdeki etkisi psikolojik danışma oturumlarında tartışılabilir ve değerlendirilebilir. Bu bağlamda, manipülatif davranışları azaltarak, bireylerin ve çiftlerin ilişki doyumlarını ve bağlılıklarını artıracak, flört eden çiftlere yönelik müdahaleler planlanabilir.

## 4.3 Gelecek Çalışmalar için Öneriler

Öncelikle, gelecekteki araştırmalarda veriler daha kontrollü bir ortamda (ör. çiftlerin anketleri aynı anda farklı odalarda doldurmaları) yüz yüze toplanabilir. Bu yolla partnerin varlığına yönelik tereddüt etmeden katılımcıların ölçeklere yanıt vermeleri sağlanabilir.

İkinci olarak, mevcut çalışmada uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın katılımcıları eğitim düzeyi yüksek bireylerdir. Dolayısıyla, sonuçların genellenebilirliği sınırlıdır. Bu nedenle, rastgele örnekleme tekniği kullanılarak farklı demografik örneklemelerden veri toplayarak gelecek çalışmalarda bulguların genellenebilirliği artırılabilir. Ek olarak, bu çalışmada örneklem romantik ilişki yaşayan beliren yetişkinlerle sınırlanmıştır. Bu nedenle farklı yaş ve ilişki türlerindeki katılımcılarla gelecekte çalışmalar yürütülebilir.

Ayrıca gelecek arařtırmalarda, partnerleri tarafından manipüle edilmenin nasıl bir Őey olduđunu daha iyi anlamaları ve imgelemeleri iin katılımcılara verilecek iliŐki senaryoları yoluyla deneysel arařtırmalar yurütülebilir. Hem duygusal manipölasyon hem de iliŐkisel bađlılık aısından yüksek olan katılımcı çiftlerle, manipölatif iliŐkilerin zaman iinde nasıl devam ettiđini keŐfetmek iin boylamsal alıŐmalar gerekleŐtirilebilir. Mevcut alıŐmada Yatırım Modeli'nin doyum ve bađlılık alt boyutları kullanılmıŐtır. Yatırım Modelinin diđer deđiŐkenlerinden oluŐan daha geniŐ bir modelle yapılacak alıŐmalar, manipölatif iliŐkilerin nasıl devam ettiđini anlamada daha fazla yardımcı olabilir. Ayrıca, bireylerin duygusal olarak manipölatif iliŐkilerdeki deneyimlerini etkileyen faktörleri daha derinlemesine araŐtırmak iin nitel alıŐmalar yapılabilir.

Alanyazında bađlanma eŐitlerinin duygusal istismarı gerekleŐtirme ile iliŐkili olduđu bulunmuŐtur (Gormley ve Lopez, 2010). Dolayısıyla, romantik iliŐkilerde duygusal manipölasyonun nedenlerini anlamak iin bađlanma stilleriyle birlikte araŐtırmalar yurütülebilir. Yakın zamanda yapılan bir alıŐmada, maskülen cinsiyet rollerinin duygusal manipölasyonu anlamlı ve olumlu bir Őekilde yordadıđı bulunmuŐtur (Grieve vd., 2019). Bu nedenle erkeklik, erkeklerin duygusal manipölasyon davranıŐlarında bakılması gereken bir faktör olabilir. Ayrıca Karanlık Ülü olarak adlandırılan kiŐilik tipleri; psikopati, narsisizm ve Makyavelizm, duygusal manipölasyonun yordayıcıları olarak bulunmuŐtur (Grieve & Mahar, 2010; Hyde & Grieve, 2014). KiŐilik tipleriyle birlikte romantik iliŐkilerde duygusal manipölasyon araŐtırılabilir.

Sonuç olarak, bireylerin neden tatmin olmadıkları iliŐkilerde sıkıŐıp kalabileceklerini anlamak iin duygusal manipölasyonun rolü önemlidir. Mevcut alıŐma, Yatırım Modeli deđiŐkenleriyle duygusal manipölasyonu sınavan ilk alıŐmadır. Bu nedenle, bazı iliŐkilerin zaman iinde devam etmesine ve bazılarının devam etmemesine neyin neden olduđunu daha iyi anlamak iin mevcut alıŐmanın farklı örneklemler ve farklı deđiŐkenlerle beslenmesi ve geliŐtirilmesi önerilmektedir.

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An Actor-Partner Interdependence Mediation Model of Emotional Manipulation on Commitment via Satisfaction of Couples in Romantic Relationships

**TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE:** **Yüksek Lisans / Master**  **Doktora / PhD**

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