ROMANTIC BREAK-UPS IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD: THE CONNOTATIONS, PREDICTORS, AND COMMON REASONS

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ABSTRACT

ROMANTIC BREAK-UPS IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD:
THE CONNOTATIONS, PREDICTORS, AND COMMON REASONS

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This doctoral thesis aims to understand romantic break-ups in young adulthood by seeking answers to three research questions: What is romantic break-up? (RQ1), what are the factors affecting responses to dissatisfying situations? (RQ2), and what are the reasons for break-ups? (RQ3). Two studies, one quantitative study and one qualitative study (18 focus group sessions), were conducted to find answers to these three research questions. Qualitative data were collected from 131 participants. Participants were asked to define what comes to mind when they hear the word "break-up". Participants expressed mostly negative connotations, with a few exceptions. The connotations were categorized under five dimensions: beliefs about break-ups, emotions, (re)adjustment of self and time, grief, and expectations for the future. A total of 329 university students participated in the quantitative study. The results revealed that attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, dissatisfied basic psychological needs, and relationship-contingent self-esteem were positively related to *exit* behaviors, and thwarted basic psychological needs was negatively associated with *exit* behaviors. In 18-focus group sessions, participants were asked to list common reasons for break-ups and they would end their romantic relationships based on the reasons they wrote down. The break-

up reasons revealed 21 categories. Among these, breach of trust, incompatibility, emotional distance, and lack of validation were the most common reasons. The findings showed that when it comes to ending their romantic relationship, some reasons were not sufficient enough to end their romantic relationships. The findings of qualitative and quantitative studies were discussed with the current literature.

Keywords: romantic break-ups, attachment orientation, basic psychological needs, relationship contingent self-esteem, young adulthood

ÖZ

GENÇ YETİŞKİNLİKTE ROMANTİK AYRILIK:
ÇAĞRIŞIMLAR, YORDAYICILAR VE ORTAK NEDENLER

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Bu doktora tezinin amacı, üç araştırma sorusuna cevap arayarak genç yetişkinlikteki romantik ayrılığı anlamaktır: Romantik ayrılık nedir? (AS1), tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkileri etkileyen yordayıcılar nelerdir? (AS2) ve romantik ayrılık nedenleri nelerdir? (AS3). Bu üç araştırma sorusuna cevap bulmak için bir nicel ve bir nitel çalışma (18 odak grup oturumu) olmak üzere iki çalışma yapılmıştır. Nitel veriler 131 katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Katılımcılara "ayrılık" kelimesini duyduklarında akıllarına ne geldiği sorulmuştur. Katılımcılar, birkaç istisna dışında, büyük ölçüde olumsuz çağrışımlardan bahsettiler. Çağrışımlar, ayrılıklara ilişkin inançlar, ayrılıkların duygusal yönleri, kişiliğin ve zamanın (yeniden) inşa edilmesi, yas süreci ve geleceğe yönelik beklentiler olmak üzere beş boyut altında kategorize edilmiştir. Nicel araştırma 329 üniversite öğrencisinden toplanmıştır. Sonuçlar, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, karşılanmamış temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlar ve ilişki temelli öz-saygının *çıkış* davranışları ile pozitif, engellenmiş temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların ise *çıkış* davranışları ile negatif yönde ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. 18 odak grup oturumunda, katılımcılara yaygın ayrılık nedenlerini listelemeleri istenmiş ve sonrasında yazdıkları ayrılık nedenlerine

göre romantik ilişkilerini sonlandırıp sonlandırmayacakları sorulmuştur. Katılımcıların belirttiği ayrılık nedenleri, 21 ayrı kategoriyi ortaya çıkardı. Bunlar arasında güvenin sarsılması, yaşam tarzı farklılıkları, duygusal uzaklık ve partnerin duyarsız olması odak grup oturumlarında en sık ifade edilen ayrılık nedenleridir. Bulgular iş kendi romantik ilişkilerini sonlandırmaya geldiğinde, bazı ayrılık sebeplerinin romantik ilişkilerini bitirmek için yeterli olmadığını göstermiştir. Nitel ve nicel çalışmalara ait bulgular güncel literatürle ilişkilendirilerek tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: romantik ayrılık, bağlanma yönelimi, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlar, ilişki temelli öz-saygı, genç yetişkinlik

To my journey to myself

and to all who have accompanied me on this path…

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Close relationships are more deeply and conclusively affected by destructive actions than by constructive ones, by negative communications than positive ones, and by conflict than harmony."

Baumeister et al., 2001

1.1. Romantic Relationships in Young Adulthood

Young adulthood is a developmental stage in the life course characterized by exploration, instability, and change. Important milestones, such as moving out of the parental home, getting employed, or getting married, typically occur during this period (Arnett, 2000; Fincham & Cui, 2011). Developing and maintaining relationships are one of the fundamental developmental tasks of young adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Barry et al., 2009; Barzeva et al., 2021; Collins & Madsen, 2006). The relationship quality and the support derived from these relationships are crucial for better physical, psychological, and emotional well-being (Cohen, 2004; Kansky & Allen, 2018; Kiecolt-Glaser, 2018; Oishi et al., 2007; Özdemir & Demir, 2019).

As young adults explore their identities in different contexts, they also form their romantic identities, who they are, what they look for, and who they want to be with in a romantic relationship (Arnett, 2000; Kroger et al., 2010; Montgomery, 2005). They also

explore different forms of romantic relationships (Arnett, 2000; Fincham & Cui, 2011). Romantic relationships are often the primary source of high well-being, intimacy, companionship, and happiness for young adults (Demir, 2010; Kamp Dush & Amato, 2005; Johnson et al., 2012; Kansky, 2018). In addition to improving the overall lifespan (Merrill & Afifi, 2017; Umberson & Montez, 2010; Yang et al., 2016), romantic experiences at this phase also influence young adults' behaviors and later romantic relationships (Fincham & Cui, 2011; Shulman & Connolly, 2013; Xia et al., 2018).

As a result of their intense romantic explorations, young adults experience more romantic break-ups (Eickmeyer, 2019; Halpern-Meekin et al., 2013; Shulman & Connolly, 2013). Research has shown that almost four-tenths of individuals in young adulthood reported at least one break-up in less than two years (Rhoades et al., 2011). It has been found that conflict resolution and conflict recovery in adolescence were not significantly associated with the break-up decision (Gottman & Levenson, 2000, 2002; Salvatore et al., 2011). However, romantic relationship goals begin to include long-term commitment in young adulthood, so conflict resolution and conflict recovery become relevant to relationship satisfaction and romantic break-ups (Ha et al., 2013). Young adulthood is a period in which romantic break-ups and the harmful effects of conflict management skills on committed relationships can be better observed as people become more tolerant and perceive conflict behaviors less negatively with age.

1.2. Conflicts and Break-ups in Romantic Relationships

Romantic relationships are dynamic constructs in which couples seek ways to coexist individually. Their characteristics and the interaction between them create the complex relationship dynamics. Being different entities leads couples to behave differently

than their partners do or what their partners expect them to do. Even in the best romantic relationships, transgressions are likely to occur when the experience does not match the expectations. Communication is essential for forming, maintaining, and repairing romantic relationships, and it particularly plays a critical role after serious relationship transgressions (Dindia & Timmerman, 2003; Emmers-Sommer, 2003). Negative feelings such as hurt and anger arise during the transgression, which undermines intimacy and relationship satisfaction increasing the likelihood of relational dissolution (e.g., Buss, 1989; Feeney, 2004; Leary & Springer, 2001; Mills et al., 2002). In contrast, forgiveness and relationship-specific hope support the belief that problems can be overcome and relationships can be sustained (Arya & Kaushik, 2015; Braithwaite et al., 2011; Fincham et al., 2004; Fingerman & Charles, 2010; Paleari & Fincham, 2015).

How couples handle conflicts affects the future of their relationships (Gottman, 2011; Sillars & Canary, 2012). All romantic relationships face stressful events that will determine their future, although not all romantic relationships are destined to end. While the timing varies, break-ups usually occur when at least one of the partners is no longer motivated to be in that relationship. The probability of getting divorced decreases when individuals resolve conflicts constructively (Gottman & Levenson, 2000, 2002) and increases when they cannot fix them (Carrère et al., 2000; Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Though they are very common, romantic break-ups are perceived as one of the worst types of traumatic experiences (Frazier & Hurliman, 2001; Perilloux & Buss, 2008). They are associated with decreased physical well-being and life satisfaction (Chung et al., 2002; Eisenberger, 2012; Rhoades et al., 2011), and increased psychological distress (Boelen & Reijntjes, 2009; Eisma et al., 2021; Rhoades et al., 2011; Sbarra & Emery, 2005).

Studies have shown that the decision to leave was not made instantaneously; instead, individuals spend a lot of time making a stay/leave decision (Mastekaasa, 1995; VanderDrift et al., 2009). Mundane interactions between partners create endless action-reaction cycles. These cycles are not necessarily unwanted. Yet when it comes to dissatisfying situations, individuals show different reactions. Some may prefer to end their relationships, as cited above, others like to express their complaints, and others want to maintain their relationships. Though there are numerous alternative responses to dissatisfying situations, those can be categorized under the Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect Model (EVLN model; Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1982).

1.3. Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect (EVLN) Model

In his book *Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*, Hirschman (1974) formulated three alternative responses through which employees respond to dissatisfying situations within their organizations. This model has been applied to various fields such as migration studies and the workplace. In the field of romantic relationships, Hirschman's original framework was extended by adding neglect to the EVL model as the 4th category of responses to dissatisfaction (Rusbult et al., 1996; Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1982). *Exit* is defined as separating, moving out, getting divorced, and ending the relationship (Rusbult et al., 1988). In this category, one prefers to move away without trying to fix things and save the relationship. *Voice* refers to actively and constructively trying to find ways to improve the conditions through taking actions to solve problems, discussing them, seeking solutions, and compromising (Hirschman, 1974; Rusbult et al., 1988). *Loyalty* is categorized as accepting the situation and waiting for positive things, such as a positive change in the partner's behavior, without

raising issues (Rusbult et al., 1988). *Neglect* represents behaviors that avoid contacting the partner, reject discussions, engage in behaviors that are not aimed to remedy the defects, such as creating problems apart from the actual one, and emotionally and physically mistreating the partner. Seeking out alternative mates could be perceived in this condition, which may be a sign that one gives up on that relationship.

The original EVLN typology will be used in this study, although alternative typologies have been presented and used in different domains (Cheung, 2005; Hagedoorn et al., 1999; Leck & Saunders, 1992; Luchak, 2003; Naus et al., 2007; Parhankangas & Landström, 2004; Tucker & Turner, 2011; Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Van Yperen et al., 2000). These EVLN responses have two orthogonal dimensions, the active/passive dimension and constructive/destructive dimension (see Table 1). The active/passive dimension focuses on how one behaves under dissatisfying situations, places *exit* and *voice* under active behaviors, and *loyalty* and *neglect* behaviors under passive ones. The constructive/destructive dimension focuses on how relationships will be affected. Accommodation/constructive behaviors inhibit destructive behaviors and include all the pro-relational behaviors (*voice* and *loyalty*), while controlling/destructive behaviors include *exit* and *neglect* behaviors aimed at damaging relationships (Rusbult, 1987; Rusbult et al., 1982; Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983; Rusbult et al., 1991).

Table 1
Illustration of Four Types of Responses on Constructive/Destructive and Active/Passive Dimensions

	Constructive/Accommodation	Destructive/Controlling
Active	Voice	Exit
Passive	Loyalty	Neglect

1.4. Empirical Findings about Accommodative Behaviors in Romantic Relationships

The EVLN typology is used to understand the conflict in close relationships (e.g., Fletcher et al., 1999; Rusbult et al., 1982; Rusbult et al., 1991; Overall et al., 2010; Okutan et al., 2017). Some studies reported that *exit* and *voice* behaviors are negatively correlated (James & John, 2021; Hirschman, 1974). When individuals feel there is no option for *voice*, they may choose *exit* behaviors. However, individuals will achieve the more positive relational outcomes such as high marital satisfaction and stability (Davis & Rusbult, 2001; Etcheverry & Le, 2005; Finkel & Campbell, 2001; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly et al., 2003; Sanderson & Karetsky, 2002), and better wellbeing and mental health (Teo et al., 2013) when they engage in more accommodative behaviors. Therefore, it can be argued that individuals exhibit more constructive behaviors during conflict because adaptive behaviors increase relationship satisfaction.

In their study, Rusbult and colleagues (1986a) reported no consistent relationship between *loyalty* responses and prior relationship satisfaction. For this reason, it can be argued that *loyalty* behaviors are based on more complex factors. Moreover, individuals tend to exhibit passive behaviors (Rusbult, Johnson et al., 1986) and accommodative behaviors (Birditt et al., 2010; Carstensen et al., 1995) as they age and the duration of relationship increases. Consistent use of accommodation and decreased use of destructive behaviors (Birditt et al., 2010) could be why couples have greater relational satisfaction over time. Studies have examined the association between EVLN strategies and many terms. Among these, findings related to relational satisfaction, attachment security, basic psychological needs, and gender are presented in detail below.

1.4.1. Attachment Security

Many research about attachment orientations and responses to conflictual situations reported a positive link between attachment security and accommodative responses (Domingue & Mollen, 2009; Goodcase et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2019; Pietromonaco et al., 2004; Tran & Simpson, 2009). Consistent with previous studies (Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000; Pistole, 1989; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995; Shi, 2003), Pietromonaco and colleagues (2004) reported that securely attached individuals (compared to insecurely attached ones) are more likely to accommodate, trying actively to solve problems in an integrative and compromising manner. As they felt content in their relationships, securely attached individuals tend to show more *voice* behaviors (Gaines et al., 1997; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995), and less *exit* (Gaines et al., 1997; Gaines et al., 2000; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995) and *neglect* behaviors (Gaines et al., 1997). Conversely, insecurely attached individuals tend to behave less accommodatively during relationship-threatening interactions (Tran & Simpson, 2009). Insecure attachment was positively correlated with *exit* and *neglect* responses, and negatively correlated with *voice* behaviors (Gaines et al., 1997). The demand-withdraw pattern and negative reciprocity are common among high-anxiety and high-avoidance pairs, predicting the break-up and low relational satisfaction (Birditt et al., 2010; Heavey et al., 1995).

Couples consisting of two securely attached individuals engage in more accommodative behaviors than couples with at least one insecure individual (Domingue & Mollen, 2009; Pietromonaco et al., 2004; Pistole & Arricale, 2003). Pietromonaco and colleagues (2004) found that having men as the only insecure in relationships is more detrimental to the well-being of relationships than having women. Because men display more constructive communication patterns, if they are the only securely attached ones in a

relationship (Pietromonaco et al., 2004). Gender-related attachment orientations may explain this result. Avoidant individuals are known to show less constructive behaviors (Etcheverry et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2019; Nisenbaum & Lopez, 2015; Simpson et al., 1996). Studies have also found that women tend to be more anxiously attached and men tend to be more avoidant (Scharfe, 2017; Schmitt et al., 2003; Simpson et al., 2002). Therefore, if the only insecurely attached person in a relationship is a man, it will mean he is more likely to be an avoidant one. Although the likelihood of *exit* responses is high among insecurely attached individuals, it reaches its highest level when individuals are avoidantly attached (Gaines et al., 2000). Forgiveness is another response to relational conflict and is considered among pro-relational behaviors. However, avoidant attachment was positively related to less relational forgiveness (Dewitte et al., 2021). Only for men, it also was positively related to more vengeful behaviors (Martin et al., 2019). Therefore, it can be argued that avoidantly attached individuals are less likely to forgive their partners. Although romantic forgiveness was positively associated with attachment anxiety (Dewitte et al., 2021), predominant concerns about abandonment and losing one's partner are more likely to arise (McNulty, 2010), which in turn may trigger the demand-withdraw pattern.

1.4.2. Basic Psychological Need Fulfilment

There are few studies on basic psychological need satisfaction and accommodation behaviors. In their study, Kluwer and colleagues (2020) found a positive association between relatedness need and *voice* behavior, and this interaction was more evident especially when autonomy need satisfaction was high. Similarly, the negative correlation between relatedness need and destructive behaviors (*exit* and *neglect*) was more enhanced when autonomy need satisfaction was high. Yet, in line with other studies (e.g., Drigotas et

al., 1995; Rusbult, Johnson et al., 1986; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995) *loyalty* behaviors seem to be uncorrelated. Moreover, when autonomy need fulfillment was high, relatedness need was significantly correlated with other pro-relational responses such as forgiveness, taking responsibility, and partner acceptance (Kluwer et al., 2020). These findings show that when basic psychological needs are fulfilled, individuals are more inclined to show pro-relational behaviors, resulting in a positive effect on commitment and relational satisfaction.

1.4.3. Gender

Some studies investigating the use of EVLN responses by gender have found relatively weak or inconsistent results. Rusbult and colleagues (Rusbult, Johnson et al., 1986; Rusbult, Zembrodt et al., 1986) reported that gender does not generate any predictable patterns in EVLN responses, though they found some weak evidence that propensity for *loyalty* behaviors was higher among women (Rusbult, Johnson et al., 1986). However, Gaines and colleagues (1997; Okutan et al., 2017; Taluy, 2013) reported that it was men who showed more *loyalty* behaviors than women. Women were more likely to use *exit* responses under conflictual situations (Okutan et al., 2017), although in another study men were more likely to engage in *exit* and *neglect* than females (Rusbult, Zembrodt et al., 1986). Conversely, in their studies, Carstensen and colleagues (1995; Birditt et al., 2010; Levenson et al., 1994) reported that wives generally use more destructive responses, while husbands use more withdrawal and constructive behaviors.

1.5. Objective and the Plan of this Thesis

This doctoral thesis aims to understand the break-up phase of romantic relationships by searching for answers to three research questions: What is romantic break-up? (RQ1),

what are the predictors affecting responses to dissatisfying situations? (RQ2), and what are the reasons for break-ups? (RQ3). One quantitative study and one qualitative study were conducted to find answers to these three research questions. Although the qualitative study was carried out after the quantitative study, the data of these two studies were presented in different orders (and chapters) in this thesis for ease of follow-up. The research question, hypotheses (if any), and findings were presented in each study chapter.

Data from 18 focus group studies conducted in November and December 2016 were reported in the next chapter, Chapter 2, to answer the question (RQ1) of what break-up is. The quantitative study conducted to identify the predictors affecting responses to dissatisfying situations (RQ2) was reported in Chapter 3. The reasons for break-ups gathered from the focus group sessions were presented in Chapter 4. The method part was briefly explained in this chapter to avoid repetition while detailed methodology was presented in Chapter 2 (page 12). Chapter 5 was the general discussion, followed by limitations and suggestions for further studies, and contribution and implication of this thesis, respectively.

CHAPTER 2

THE CONNOTATION OF ROMANTIC BREAK-UP

Hearts will never be practical until they are made unbreakable.
The Wizard of Oz (Fleming & LeRoy, 1939)

Romantic break-up is defined as the termination of a relationship (Felmlee et al., 1990). Sometimes, though not always, romantic break-ups have also been used to give an ultimatum to the other party and show that if they do not change, the break-up will be certain. Thus, when romantic break-ups are used for this purpose, apart from the general definition, they can also be considered as a part of a relationship. However, in this study, romantic break-up was used as the end of the relationship.

Although people do not enter a romantic relationship expecting to break-up, most do. They are challenging and can be emotionally draining no matter which party initiates them. Romantic break-up, which most individuals experience at least once (Morris & Reiber, 2011), is recognized as a significant lifetime event (Kendler et al., 2003). Rhoades et al. (2011) showed that nearly four-tenths of young adults experienced at least one break-up in less than two years.

A romantic break-up is not something momentary that lasts for a short time. It is a process, and this study focuses on the post break-up phase. Following the break-up, people face cognitive, behavioral, and emotional imbalances. A series of focus group sessions were

held in November and December 2016 to find answers to the first and the third research questions of this thesis, (RQ1) “what is romantic break-up?” and (RQ3) “what are the reasons for break-ups?”. Since this section is devoted to the findings of the first research question, the answers to the question "What do you think when you hear the word "break-up"?” are presented in the findings section, which gives us information about how individuals perceive and experience romantic break-ups. The findings of focus group sessions were also presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. The methodology was briefly mentioned in subsequent chapters to avoid repetition, while it was provided in detail in this chapter, where the findings of focus group sessions were presented for the first time.

2.1. Method

2.1.1. Participants

By convenience sampling, participants were recruited from the subject pool (by signing up SONA system) of the Department of Psychology at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Turkey for course credit. The data was collected through one pilot and 17 focus-group sessions in November and December 2016. Eligibility requirements included being heterosexual, at least 18 years old, and either being in a romantic relationship for more than three months or had a romantic relationship that lasted more than three months, and not being engaged, married, or widowed. Although 139 heterosexual participants attended the preliminary interview, 8 participants either informed the researcher about their withdrawals or did not show up on the day of the focus group and did not respond their e-mails. The remaining 131 undergraduate and graduate students (74 women, 56.49% of the total) participated in this study (see Table 2). They ranged in age from 18 to 28 years, with a mean age of 23. Seventy-four participants (56.49%) were in a romantic relationship

at the time of data collection (see Table 2). Each session had five to nine participants (see Table 3).

Table 2
Dispersion of Participants by Sex and Relationship Status

	Women	Men	Total
Single	32	25	57
Couple	42	32	74
Total	74	57	131

Ninety-seven of the 131 participants attended single-sex sessions. Initially, focus group studies were planned to be performed only in single-sex sessions. However, after the completion of the single-sex sessions, additional five (mixed-group) focus group sessions were held. The main reasons for doing additional mixed-group sessions were to reveal whether there was any difference between single-sex and mixed-group sessions, and when there was a representative of the opposite sex in the room, how they expressed their opinions. Findings indicated no significant difference between single-sex and mixed-group sessions. During the focus group studies, women participants were represented more in both singles' and couples' sessions than men (see Table 4).

Eighteen focus group sessions were held in November and December 2016 (see Table 5). A pilot study was carried out on women participants who were in a romantic relationship for more than three months. At least three focus group sessions were planned for each sub-category. However, due to low submissions, I could not run the third mixed-group session for single participants.

Table 3
Number of Participants in Each Focus Group Session

	[Women, Men]		**[Women, Men]**
Session #1, 3, 5, 10	[8,0]	Session #9	[0,9]
Session #2, 11	[0,7]	Session #14	[3,3]
Session #4	[0,5]	Session #15, 16	[4,4]
Session #6, 12	[0,6]	Session #17	[3,2]
Session #7	[7,0]	Session #18	[3,4]
Session #8, 13	[9,0]		

Table 4
Dispersion of Participants by Sex, Relationship Status, and Session Type

	# Sessions		Women	Men	Total
Single-sex Sessions	13	Single	25	19	44
		Couple	32	21	53
		Total	57	40	97
Mixed-group Sessions	5	Single	7	6	13
		Couple	10	11	21
		Total	17	17	34
Total	18		74	57	131

Table 5
Number of Focus Group Sessions by Sex and Relationship Status

	Women Only	Men Only	Mixed Group	Total
# Sessions - Single	3	3	2	8
# Sessions - Couple	3 (+1 pilot study)	3	3	10
Total	7	6	5	18

2.1.2. Measurement

All focus group sessions were semi-structured with open-ended questions (see Appendix B). Questions were related to three phases of romantic relationships: initiation of the relationships, during the relationships, and termination of the relationships. Followed by, participants were asked to write five reasons for break-ups on a blank paper (see Appendix K). Then, they were given another blank evaluation form to evaluate their reasons for break-ups they wrote on the blank paper (see Appendix L). The reasons for break-ups and their evaluations were covered in detail in Chapter 4.

Participants also read five vignettes at the end of the focus group sessions to evaluate and discuss the texts (see Appendix G). Each vignette had different stories about partner behaviors that were supposed to trigger a conflict big enough to cause a romantic break-up. Since there were five different stories, each vignette was planned to be short enough to give the idea but not lose the reader. Those stories were about a partner making plans for the future where the participant is not included (#1), being intimate with someone at a nightclub (#2), whose lie was caught (#3), acting in a way knowing that participants won't like (#4) and, using an online dating application despite being in a romantic relationship with the participant (#5). The vignette findings were presented in detail in Chapter 3.

2.1.3. Procedure

The questionnaires and open-ended questions used in the current study were first submitted for the the Middle East Technical University Human Participants Ethic Committee (IRB) approval. After receiving the IRB approval (see Appendix A1), a call for participation in a scientific study including focus-group sessions, was made through the

SONA systems (a subject pool software for universities) for students who were heterosexual, at least 18 years old, unmarried, and in a romantic relationship for more than three months or had a romantic relationship that lasted more than three months but not involved in a romantic relationship. Study advertisement was uploaded to SONA systems separately for single men, couple men, single women, and couple women participants. Interested individuals chose a suitable for them on the system and made a pre-interview appointment.

Participants attended a pre-interview meeting and a focus group session. Participants were informed about the study and the confidentiality of the sessions in the pre-interview meeting. They were also told they could withdraw from the study anytime they wanted. Also, when they come for the focus group session, if they do not want to talk about their private lives in the presence of someone they know, attending another focus group session is also possible. They filled out some questionnaires, answered demographic questions, and picked a date for the focus group session. Focus group sessions were conducted in the METU Department of Business Administration focus group study room. All focus group studies lasted approximately two hours, and sessions were audio-visually recorded. Some complimentary food and drink were offered before and throughout the sessions. Sessions were held after the classes on weekdays.

Before the sessions started, the importance of confidentiality was stressed and demanded from session members. Since sharing experiences was based on willingness, participants answered questions anytime they wanted to share with the group. The structure of questions varied depending on participants' relationship status. If the participants were in a romantic relationship, participants were asked to talk specifically about that relationship. There were also participants who were not in a romantic relationship at the

time of focus group sessions. They have had at least one romantic relationship that has lasted more than three months. Those single participants with more than one romantic relationship were free to talk about one of their romantic relationships as long as their relationships met the study conditions. Yet, they were asked to choose the most vivid one in their memory or the most recent one so that they could remember events relatively easy.

All sessions begin with questions about how they met with their partners. The opening questions were aimed to facilitate as icebreaker and provide the participants with a friendly environment in which they could feel more comfortable talking about their private lives. Although the sessions proceeded semi-structured, the participants answered questions about the three phases of relationships: initiation of relationships, duration of relationships, and termination of relationships. In the final part of the sessions, they first provided some reasons for break-ups, then evaluated them and the vignettes generated for this study.

Participants were given five vignettes containing different stories on separate pages for the vignette evaluations. For a story to be good, it should engage the reader in the story. The participants were asked how much they could identify with the protagonist and feel the dilemma in the vignettes. They were asked to choose what their reaction would be. If they could not find an option suitable for their behavior in such a situation, they were given the opportunity to write their own decision as an alternative. They were told that they could make any (oral or written) comments about each vignette.

2.2. Findings and Discussion

2.2.1. Relationship Structure

Relationship structure did not differ among the 18 focus group sessions. The romantic relationships were committed and exclusive to each other. The duration of

relationships ranged between medium to long term ($M_{duration}$ = 805 days ~ 2 years and 2.5 months). Even though participants were young on average, there were participants in a romantic relationship for more than three years. It has been observed that most romantic relationships were established between people living in the same city. Some participants shared the same house with their partners. In contrast, at most one participant in each session reported living in a different city from their partner, even for a particular time. Those in long-distance relationships kept in touch with their partners through technology-assisted communication tools and often traveled to the other city to be together (i.e., twice a month).

2.2.2. What is a Romantic Break-up?

Participants were asked to define what comes to mind when they hear the word "break-up". Participants expressed mostly negative connotations, with a few exceptions (see Figure 1). The bigger the words were in Figure 1, the more often the words were repeated. Loneliness, depression, sadness, emptiness, longing, devastation, relaxation, freedom, getting to know your new self, and change of habits were frequently recalled words for romantic break-ups.

Participants' answers also were examined to investigate whether there was a gender difference (see Figure 2). Loneliness, depression, sadness, devastation, emptiness, disappointment, not talking anymore, freedom, relaxation, and good memories were mentioned by women. Sadness, emptiness, loneliness, disruption of routine, longing, bad, pain, does not exist anymore, relaxation, freedom, free time for yourself, and change of habits were repeated by men. Considering the findings, it can be said that similar features were more prominent, and women and men repeated the same associations.

Figure 1
Connotations of the Word "Break-up"



The connotations that came to the participants' minds were categorized under a number of aggregate dimensions that emerged from the data. These were the beliefs about break-ups, emotional experience, grieving phase, (re)adjustment of self and time, and expectations for the future (see Figure 3). Although mainly one-sentence answers were presented in Figure 3, these dimensions were presented in more detail below to show the dynamics of break-up processes further.

Figure 2
Connotations of the Word "Break-up" by Gender

(a). Connotations of the Word "Break-up" in Women



(b). Connotations of the Word "Break-up" in Men



2.2.2.1. Beliefs about Break-ups

One of the dimensions emerged from the focus group sessions was the beliefs about break-ups. It was seen individuals have different beliefs about romantic break-ups. For some, this is something to endure, while break-up is perceived as an experience for others.

> XXX: Bana değişim geliyor açıkçası, yani sürekli birlikte beraber olduğun bir insanın, arkadaş da kalamayacaksın, tamamen hayatından gitmiş oluyor. Değişime alışman gerekiyor yani, sadece bu. Bir süreç, süreç. (2. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)
>
> XXX: For me, it is a change, like the one with whom you were together all the time is gone, you cannot stay friends. You have to get used to the change, that's all. It is a phase, a phase. (A male participant from 2nd Focus Group Session)

> TTT: Ayrılırsam tamam hayatımın bir parçası eksiliyor ama ben sonuçta hala kendimim. O olmasa da ben benim. Ve uzun vadede beni daha fazla mutlu edecek şeyler var. Eksiklik hissederim ama çok da üzülmem yani. (16. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)
>
> TTT: If I leave, okay, a part of my life is missing, but I am still myself after all. I am me though he is no longer around. And there are things that will make me happier in the long run. I feel incomplete, but I don't feel too sad. (A female participant from 16th Focus Group Session)

2.2.2.2. Emotions

One of the dimensions that individuals mentioned repeatedly was emotions. The participants talked about both positive and negative emotions. Sadness, emptiness, loneliness, longing, devastation, pain, and anger were mentioned more frequently. Those unhappy with their romantic relationships stated more positively valenced emotions (e.g., relief, happiness) upon hearing the word break-up.

> MMM: Yani hayal kırıklığı ile birlikte biraz özgürlük de içeriyor gibi geliyor bana. Ikisi bir arada yani. Hayal kırıklığı çünkü bir şeyler yaşıyorsun hani her ne kadar uzun ya da kısa bir süre biçmesem de devam eden bir şey var, onun bitmiş olmasının getirdiği bir hayal kırıklığı. Ama bir yandan da özgürlük, artık yeni tecrübelere

açıksın yine. Farklı insanlar tanıyabilirsin. (8. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)

MMM: So it seems to me that it contains some freedom along with frustration. So the two are together. Disappointment, because you are experiencing something regardless of the duration of the relationship (long or short), and feelings of disappointment because it was ended. But on the other hand, freedom, you are now open to new experiences. You can get to know different people. (A female participant from 8th Focus Group Session)

JJJ: Bence bir rahatlama ya. Ben ilişkimin son aşamalarında çok boğuluyormuşum gibi hissediyorum ve bittiğinde oh rahatladım ya artık bunlarla uğraşmıcam gibi. (5. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)

JJJ: I think it's a relief. I felt so suffocated in the final stages of my relationship. When it was ended, I was relieved that I did not have to deal with it anymore. (A female participant from 5th Focus Group Session)

ZZZ: Böyle sancılı hani düşünürsün. ... Hani gidince hayatından bir şey çıkınca hani sürekli çay içtiğin kupan bile kırılsa bir özlersin yani keşke olaydı da onunla çay içeydim dersin. (6. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)

ZZZ: It's painful, I mean, you think. … You know, when something goes out of your life, even if your teacup was broken, you miss it and wish to drink tea with it. (A male participant from 6th Focus Group Session)

EEE: Mutluluk. (15. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)

EEE: Happiness. (A male participant from 15th Focus Group Session)

2.2.2.3. (Re)Adjustment of Self and Time

The romantic break-ups bring the need for individuals to adapt to the new conditions and change their habits. The need to rediscover oneself, learn how to be alone, and readjust their time was another dimension that came up frequently in the sessions.

BBB: Bittikten sonra tamam bu artık bitti. Yenisine dönelim, yani yenisine derken yeni ilişki değil de bi kendime dönelim bakalım. Üç ilişkim de 1 yıldan çok uzundu. Yani fazla uzundu. Bakalım gerçekten ben değiştim mi, ne kaldı, ne gitti, hayattan ne istiyoruma, bir kendime bakıyorum. Ve bunları istemiyormuşum aslında o bana empoze ettiği içinmiş diyip hemen onları silip yeni bir plan yapıp direkt o yeni plana dönmek. Mesela bu ayrıldığımızda yaz dönemine denk gelmişti. O yüzden okul dönüşünde arkadaşlarla tanışınca BBB ne yaptın yazın? Bunu yaptım, şunu yaptım, bunu yaptım... Oha bütün hayatını değiştirmişsin BBB. Ha ayrıldım da ben o

yüzden öyle oldu. Her şeyi değiştirdim de bir anda, çat diye. (5. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)

BBB: After it's done, it's over now. Let's go back to a new one, I mean to myself, not a new relationship. My three relationships lasted for more than one year. So it was too long. Let's see if I have really changed, what's left, what's lost, what I want from life, and I look at myself. And if I have them because he imposed them on me, I immediately delete them, make a new plan, and follow it. For example, this break-up occurred during the summer break. So when I met my friends at school, they asked what did you do? I did this, and I did that. I also did this ... Oh, you have changed your whole life. That's because I broke-up. I changed everything in a stroke. (A female participant from 5th Focus Group Session)

LLL: Yeni bir başlangıç. İnsanın biraz kendisini yeniden keşfetmesiyle ilgili bir başlangıç olabilir. Çünkü bir ilişkiye başladığınızda hayatınızın merkezinde o insan olmasa dahi hayatınız biraz o insanın çevresine göre ve paylaştığınız şeylere göre şekilleniyor. İnsan arkadaşlarına biraz daha az zaman ayırabiliyor çünkü o insanla da vakit geçirmeniz lazım. İşte hobileriniz degisiyor, ortak hobiler bulmaya çalışıyorsunuz. Ayrıldıktan sonra biraz daha yalnızlığı öğrenmeniz gerekiyor. İnsan yalnız başına bir şeyler yapması lazım. Yani öbür türlü bu atlatılamaz yoksa. O yüzden insanın kendisinde yeni hoşlanabileceği şeyleri bulması açısından biraz daha farklı şeylerle ilgilenmesi ve kendine zaman ayırabilmesi açısından daha farklı bir süreç daha rahat ve yeni bir başlangıç süreci olabilir. (4. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)

LLL: A new start. It may be related to a new beginning, which is a little reinventing oneself. Because when you start a relationship, even if you do not put that person at the center of your life, your life is shaped a bit according to that person's environment and what you share. People may spare less time for their friends because you have to spend time with that person. Your hobbies could change, and you may try to find some common hobbies. After a break-up, you need to learn a little more about being lonely. One has to do something alone. If not, it cannot be overcome. Therefore, finding (different) things one can enjoy in oneself. A more comfortable process in terms of taking time for oneself thus, it can be called a new beginning. (A male participant from 4th Focus Group Session)

KKK: Sigarayı bırakmak gibi aslında. Alıştığın bir şeyi bırakmak istemesen bile, hani artık o insanı istemesen bile hep böyle bir şey oluyor, kafa gidiyor oraya yani iyi ayrılık da olsa, kötü ayrılık da olsa. Yani alışkanlıkların bitmesi, bir afallıyorsun yani. (18. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)

KKK: It's like quitting smoking. Even if you don't want to leave something you're used to, even if you don't want that person anymore, it always happens you found yourself thinking about him, whether it's a good break-up or a bad break-up. I mean, when changing your habits, you do not know what to do. (A female participant from 18th Focus Group Session)

Figure 3
Data Structure

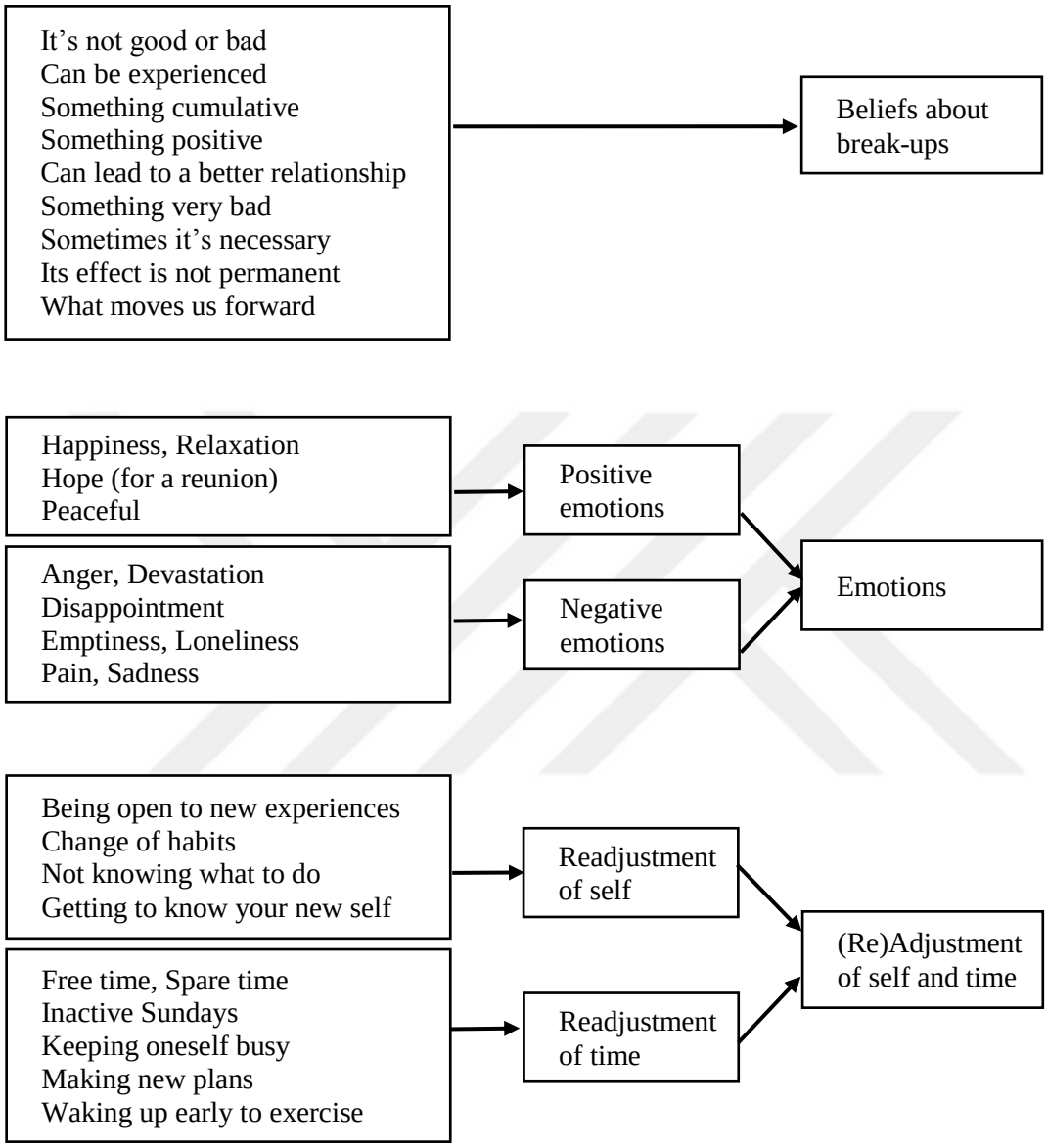
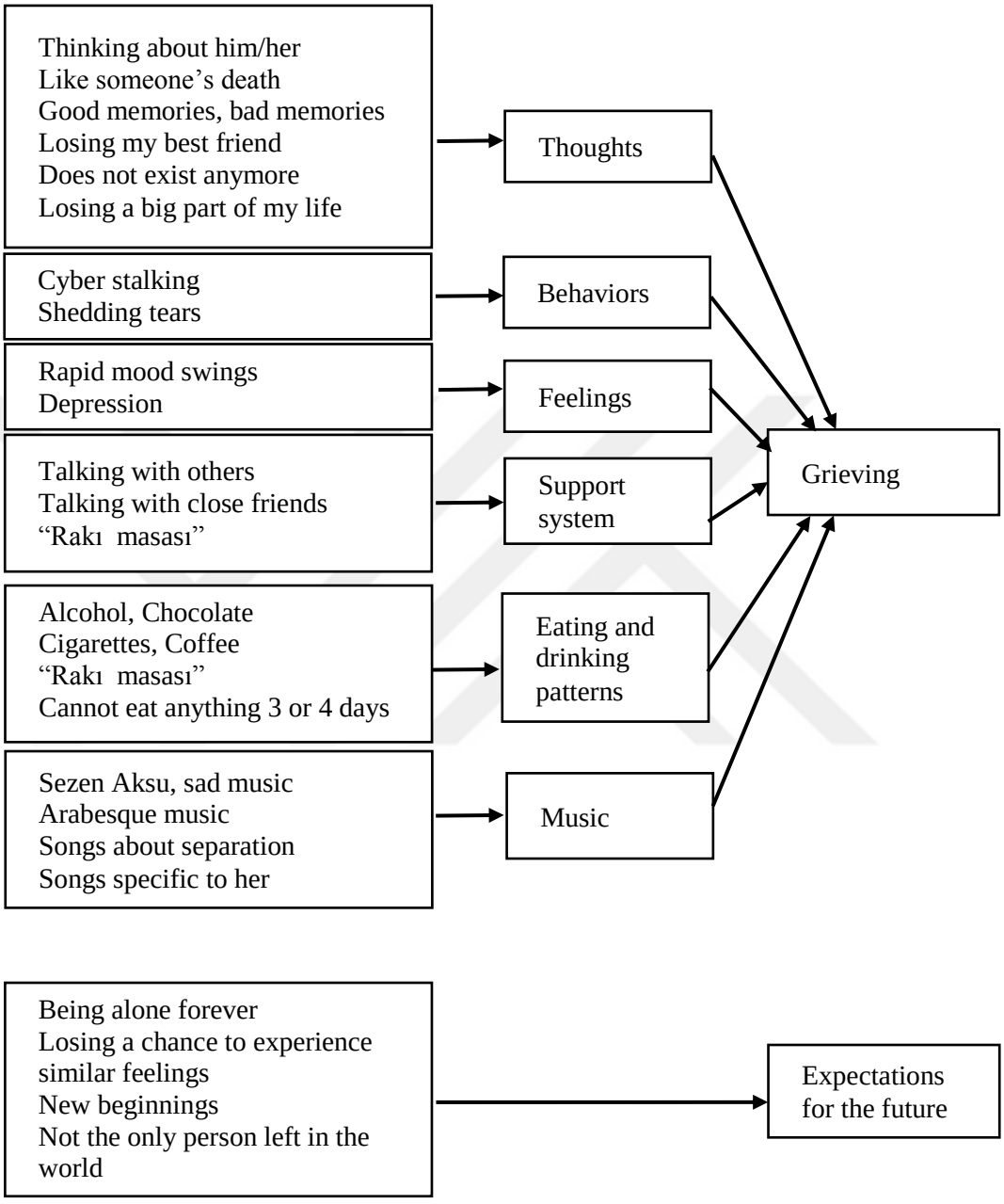


Figure 3
Data Structure (Continued)



2.2.2.4. Grieving

The word break-up evoked the grieving phase in all sessions. The grieving process can occur in different ways. The participants mentioned finding themselves thinking about their ex-partners even though they did not want to. Some of them stated the need to know what they do, how their ex-partners live, and how they struggle with the break-up. They talked about experiencing depression, a change in their eating and drinking patterns, getting help from their support systems (e.g., friends), listening to music, experiencing rapid changes in their mood, and crying.

> RRR: Birisinin ölmesi geliyor aklıma benim. Çünkü tamamen benim hayatımda genelde o hayatımda çıkıyorsa çıkıyordur yani. Bedensel olarak yok yani varlığı yok. (10. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)
>
> RRR: It comes to my mind as if someone is dead. Because if someone is entirely out of my life, that's it. He is physically absent. I mean, he does not exist. (A female participant from 10th Focus Group Session)

> SSS: Ayrılık sonrasında üç dört gün bir şey yiyememiştim. (9. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)
>
> SSS: I couldn't eat anything for three or four days after the break-up. (A male participant from 9th Focus Group Session)

> FFF: Kendimi odaya kapatıp ağlamak. (3. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)
>
> FFF: To shut myself in the room and cry. (A female participant from 9th Focus Group Session)

2.2.2.5. Expectations for the Future

The last dimension that came up from the connotations was future expectations. Although some participants had negative expectations for the future, perhaps related to grieving, there were also some participants in the focus group sessions who believed that the future would bring better things.

GGG: Yeni kızlar (6. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)

GGG: New girl(friend)s (A male participant from 6th Focus Group Session)

NNN: İlk baş iğrenç. Yani çok kötü. … Böyle şey gibi, bir an her şey yıkıldı. Hani eğer ben bitirmediysem yani. Şimdi ben yapayalnızım. Bir daha hiçbir şey düzelmeyecek. (17. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 kadın katılımcı)

NNN: In the beginning it's terrible. I mean, it's too bad. … It's like, everything was over in a moment. I mean, especially if I did not initiate it. Nothing will ever get better again. (A female participant from 17th Focus Group Session)

OOO: Sonsuza kadar yalnız olurmuşum gibi. (16. Odak Grup Oturumu'ndan 1 erkek katılımcı)

OOO: Like I would be alone forever. (A male participant from 16th Focus Group Session)

2.3. Conclusion

When the focus group sessions are considered, the participants from the METU found the romantic break-up, in general, a sad, devastating event. This also applies to the ones who initiated the break-up, as both parties once invested in their relationships. The only ones who felt relieved after a break-up stated that they had felt suffocating in their relationships. Therefore, those who were happy in their romantic relationships experience negative emotions after a break-up. Terminating a romantic relationship is emotionally exhausting, and the person endeavors to find oneself (or a new self) after it. The need to change their habits and learn what they like and dislike were in the process of reestablishing their new selves.

They also went through grieving while reestablishing their new selves. The participants reported drinking more alcohol, eating chocolate, experiencing rapid mood swings, and listening to sad songs during the grieving phase. They also experienced ruminative thoughts while perceiving their ex as if they no longer exist. They sought support to overcome this process. From adolescence and early adulthood, when individuals feel bad,

they most often turn to friends and romantic partners, who are central figures of their well-being (Collins & Madsen, 2006; Rayle & Chung, 2007; Surjadi et al., 2011). In the case of a romantic break-up, the social support providers for young adults will be their friends. Consistent with the literature, close friends were often mentioned in the focus group sessions.

Although the connotations mainly were related to the moment of break-up or the short period that follows it, a romantic break-up is a phase. As stated by some participants, emotional experiences such as sadness, longing, and depression do not last long. After the grieving period, individuals tend to feel more positive about themselves and the future. Still, at first (perhaps due to the grieving period), they may feel more pessimistic about the future. Some perceived it as unlikely to have anything good in the future. But this also seems to be related to their beliefs about break-ups. Because it has been observed that people who perceived the break-up process as a usual event made more positive statements about their future expectations.

CHAPTER 3

PREDICTORS AFFECTING RESPONSES TO DISSATISFYING SITUATIONS

Individuals show different reactions to dissatisfying situations. This chapter discusses in detail some of the predictors that cause them to react differently and answers the second research question of this thesis: What are the predictors affecting responses to dissatisfying situations? (RQ2). Attachment security, basic psychological needs, and relationship contingent self-esteem were presented in detail in the following sections.

3.1. Attachment Theory

3.1.1. Attachment Security

In stressful times, people in a romantic relationship turn to their romantic partner, who provides support and comfort, and calms them down. A romantic partner also gives a sense of security in relationships, providing the appropriate environment for people to strive toward their goals. The bond with partners is based on the bonds formed with parents at a much earlier age (Fraley et al., 2005; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Yet, unlike the bonds formed between an infant and attachment figures during early developmental stages, adult attachment is established between equals, and the role of caregiving varies between partners depending on who is experiencing distress. For this reason, both partners are expected to be available, attentive, and responsive to the other in romantic relationships. Early on, this

dynamic is established between an infant - the weak - and attachment figures - the strong. In this power imbalance, the caregiver role is attributed to the adult figure who is expected to be available, attentive, and responsive when needed (Bowlby, 1969/1982; Cassidy, 2008; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). Partners defined as attachment figures are expected to provide a sense of security as a secure base for individuals to achieve their goals, and to serve as a physical and emotional safe haven to offer support and comfort in stressful times (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016).

Human beings came into the world with an instinct to form bonds, to experience acceptance, warmth, and connectedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1969/1982, Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Gere & MacDonald, 2010; Knee et al., 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2017). This instinct ensures the continuation of future generations by instantly forming new bonds between adults and newborns (who cannot survive on their own), while the absence of it has fatal consequences for the newborns. The need to establish this connection continues as we age. So much so that this bond between newborns and caregivers in infancy is established with peers and romantic partners as individuals grow up. Studies have documented meeting this need, especially in close relationships, has a positive effect on individuals' well-being, health, and mood (Dubé & Le Bel, 2003; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Moeller et al., 2020; Myers, 2000), while non-fulfillment has detrimental effects (Gere & MacDonald, 2010; Moeller et al., 2020; Platt et al., 2013).

3.1.2. Theoretical Framework

Only fifty years ago, it was realized that human babies are born with an instinctive tendency called the attachment behavior system (Bowlby, 1973, 1969/1982, 1989).

According to Bowlby, this tendency is based on the quality of the interaction between the infant and the caregiver (1973, 1969/1982, 1989). This tendency has an emotional component and cognitive component. Emotional component is about seeking a sense of security and relatedness in their close relationships, which is closely related to their emotion regulation, enables them to experience (negative) emotions and their expressivity, while cognitive component is about developing working models of 'self' and 'others', similar to "if/then" clauses, to give meaning to events and environments to guide their relationship patterns including their feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and personality development throughout their lives including situational, individual, and interactional effects into the consideration (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1973, 1969/1982, 1987; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Cassidy, 1994; Eng et al., 2001; Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Schore, 2001; Simpson & Belsky, 2008; Waters et al., 1991).

According to Bowlby (1969/1982; Cassidy, 2008), attachment figures have two crucial missions: a secure base when the exploration system is activated, and a physical and emotional safe haven when the fear system is activated. The exploration system becomes active when there is no perceived threat, and infants focus on recognizing and learning from their environment and developing their own personalities. However, when the infants detect threats (e.g., darkness, loud noise, strangers, hunger, illness, or a new toy), the exploration system gets deactivated, and the fear system kicks in. This system works until the situation that the infants perceive as a threat is eliminated. At this stage, the infants apply one of the primary or secondary attachment strategies to seek protection from their attachment figures. When the perception of threat disappears, attachment figures revert to their secure base role providing a room for infants to explore. This situation can be interpreted as the attachment

system being coactivated with the fear system and working antagonistically with the exploration system (Cassidy, 2008).

3.1.3. The Primary and Secondary Attachment Strategies

Since the relationship between infants and attachment figures is imbalanced, infants need the presence of attachment figures to exist. This allows the attachment behavioral system to operate in a continuous loop to check whether the desired distance from the attachment figure is met (Bretherton, 1992). If this distance is more than desired, (i.e., if the infant perceives a threat), the Attachment Behavioral System gets activated to reduce the distance to the desired level. Infants apply different methods of the primary attachment strategy, such as smiling, vocalizing, and/or crying to attract the attachment figures' attention. When their attachment figures are responsive, available, and sensitive to their calls by reducing the proximity to the desired level, infants attain attachment security (Bretherton, 1992; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003; Shaver et al., 2010), and the attachment strategy gets deactivated to allow infants to interact with their surroundings.

The secondary attachment strategies take effect if the proximity between attachment figures is not reduced to the desired level after the activation of the primary attachment strategy. This could result from having attachment figures show inconsistent behaviors or an absence of responsive, available, and sensitive attachment figures (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988; Dinero et al., 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2012; Shaver et al., 2010). Infants with activated secondary attachment strategies, hyperactivation and deactivation strategies, have insecure attachment (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988; Main, 1990; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2012; Shaver et al., 2010). Hyperactivation strategies are used when attachment figures show inconsistent behaviors about being attentive, available, and responsive once

needed. Because their elevated stress levels need to be reduced, and this is only achieved when attachment figures are nearby, babies with hyperactivation strategies demand to keep attachment figures relatively close to eliminate any potential threats (Cassidy, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2012; Shaver et al., 2010). They magnify their stress level to increase the odds of getting attention.

Infants use deactivation strategies when they have consistently inattentive, unavailable, and unresponsive attachment figures (Cassidy, 1994, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2012; Shaver et al., 2010). They need to find a way to reduce their elevated stress level on their own as there is no one else but them to reduce. They achieve this by reducing the severity of the situation, desensitizing themselves because they cannot control their environment and cope with the threat level. Although infants show different behaviors depending on primary and secondary strategies, regardless of which attachment strategy is activated to handle stressful events, they are functional to increase human survival and reproductive fitness (Arriaga et al., 2018; Cassidy, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2012; Shaver et al., 2010).

3.1.4. Attachment Patterns in Infancy

Although John Bowlby set the basic tenets of the Attachment Theory by observing the behavior pattern of monkeys' and human hunter and gatherers, Mary D. Ainsworth and her colleagues (1978) provide empirical evidence through a laboratory procedure called Strange Situation for one-year-old babies. This procedure creates a mild stressful environment for the infants, including two separations and reunions of the infant and the attachment figure, and the presence of a stranger. During this procedure, attachment figures serve as a secure base and safe heaven. In this procedure, infants and the attachment figures

come into a room filled with toys. In such a novel environment, when they are not distressed, infants can explore their environment in the presence of a secure base, their attachment figures. Infants experience distress as a part of this procedure. Being separated from their attachment figures and their reaction towards reunion with them provide information about which attachment system mechanisms they employ (Main et al., 1985; Sroufe & Waters, 1977).

The Strange Situation procedure enables to identify three attachment patterns called secure, insecure/ambivalent (also referred as anxious, resistant, or preoccupied in the literature), and insecure/avoidance (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bretherton, 1992). Securely attached infants show visible stress during separation from the attachment figure, which quickly diminishes immediately after reunion (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Those categorized under ambivalent attachment style show extreme stress upon separation and ambivalent responses such as not ceasing the stress reaction and protesting the separation even though they are reunited with their attachment figures. Infants with avoidant attachment style show no stressful reaction upon the separation and also no reaction to the return of their attachment figures. Six years after the work of Ainsworth and colleagues (1978), Main and colleagues (1985) were able to identify the 4th group and named it as insecure/disorganized-disoriented, while Ainsworth and colleagues named it as uncategorized when they could not categorize them in their Strange Situation procedure as infants in this category displayed unorganized behavior in response to separations and reunions.

3.1.5. Working Models and Triggering Events

Infants begin to interact with their environments from the moment they are born. They try to make sense of their surroundings and themselves through endless interactions

with their attachment figures. When almost everything is novel, even mundane events often trigger infants' insecurity feelings. Before babies can effectively use their bodies to distance themselves from threats, all they can do is call for help to rebuild their sense of security. Infants develop internal working models/mental scripts and expectations about how to overcome feelings of insecurity as a product of these endless interactions that begin with the loss of felt security (e.g., Ainsworth, 1989; Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1973, 1969/1982, 1987; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Cassidy, 1994; Johnson et al., 2007; Main et al., 1985; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Schore, 2001; Waters et al., 1991). Internal working models (IWMs) give children a guideline about the nature of relationships, help them regulate, interpret and predict their behavior, thoughts, and feelings in relationships. They learn how to react and also how their attachment figures react under similar circumstances.

Having close others sufficiently attentive, available, and responsive to their needs during repeated interactions allows babies to develop secure bonds. Similarly, inconsistently attentive, available, and responsive caregivers and/or the absence of caregivers lead to the development of insecure bonds. Based on their interactions with the caregiver during the insecurity feelings triggered times, they define themselves as either lovable, worthy, and important, or not; while they define others as responsive, available, and attentive, or not (Collins et al., 2004; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Definitions of 'self' and 'others' derived from individuals' repeated interactions with their caregivers have widespread effects on their mundane decisions and behaviors (Guidano, 1988). Repeated or prolonged exposure to such moments because of the developmental or relationship history can generate a chronic sense of security and lead to secure attachment in the presence of sufficiently attentive, available, and responsive caregivers, while the presence of

inconsistently attentive, available, and responsive caregivers or absence of caregivers can create chronic feelings of insecurity and lead to insecure attachment orientations (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Reis et al., 2004).

Throughout the life span, these working mental models are either sustained or changed based on the attachment-related experiences with close others (e.g., Arriaga et al., 2014; Bowlby, 1973; Bretherton & Munholland, 2008; Dinero et al., 2008; Fraley et al., 2013; Collins & Read, 1990; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Simpson & Belsky, 2008). Studies have shown the resilience of attachment patterns over time and across social contexts (e.g., Crugnola et al., 2011; Davila & Cobb, 2004; Dinero et al., 2008; Fraley & Davis, 1997; Gorrese & Ruggieri, 2013; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Main et al., 1985; Meeus et al., 2005; Scharfe, 2003; Waters, 1978; Waters et al., 2000) as these IWMs serve as frameworks for their adulthood, friendship and romantic relationships (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Dinero et al., 2008; Fraley, 2002; Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2016; Popovic, 2005). Specifically, insecure individuals exhibit chronic insecurity in their relationships when their partners do not adequately respond to their needs in a way that is consistent with their developmental and relational history (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Reis et al., 2004).

Yet these IWMs and attachment orientations are not immutable (Bowlby, 1973, 1969/1982; Collins & Allard, 2001). Encountering sufficiently powerful attachment-related experiences cause new reactions that may trigger a change in internal working models (e.g., Arriaga et al., 2014; Arriaga et al., 2018; Chopik et al., 2019; Davila & Cobb, 2004; Dinero et al., 2008; Feeney et al., 2003; Fraley et al., 2013; La Guardia et al., 2000; Simpson et al., 2003). Thus, individuals' attachment orientation may move from insecure to secure and vice versa. Some studies have shown that individuals with chronic secure attachment orientation

may experience insecurity feelings with a specific partner as their relationship develops (Fraley et al., 2011; Girme et al., 2018; Hudson et al., 2014; La Guardia et al., 2000; Murray & Holmes, 2009; Simpson, 2007).

3.1.6. Attachment Patterns in Adulthood

As in their infancy, individuals seek a secure base and safe haven in adult romantic relationships (Ainsworth, 1989; Feeney, 1999). They look for safe and supportive relationships that support their personal growth (Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2010; Molden et al., 2009; Rusbult et al., 2004). They do not like separation from their romantic partners, strive for closeness, protest their partners' unavailability, seek comfort and security, and support in times of distress (Feeney, 1999; Shaver et al., 2019). Hazan and Shaver (1987) were the first to investigate attachment in the context of adult romantic relationships and reveal three attachment categories similar to the work of Ainsworth and her colleagues (1978). They suggested that individuals would feel different in each romantic relationship as the communication patterns and their attachment orientations in each romantic relationship may differ. Securely attached individuals were found to be happier with their romantic relationships than those with insecure attachment styles (e.g., Berscheid & Reis, 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Feeney & Collins, 2003; Feeney et al., 2000; Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Stackert & Bursik, 2003). Unlike Hazan and Shaver's categorical assessment of adult attachment patterns, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed dimensional measures of adult attachment, called model of self and model of others. Following Bartholomew's and Horowitz's dimensional approach, Brennan and colleagues (1998) proposed two orthogonal dimensions, called attachment anxiety representing model of 'self' and attachment avoidance representing model of 'others'

(Brumbaugh & Fraley, 2006; Fraley & Shaver, 2000). These two orthogonal dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) with greater reliability and sensitivity of multiple-item measures have been preferred in several studies (Campbell & Marshall, 2011; Fraley et al., 2015; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002; Sümer, 2006). In this study, adult attachment patterns will be evaluated in terms of attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions.

Individuals can get positive or negative scores on both orthogonal attachment dimensions. Each dimension is evaluated separately to define individuals' attachment orientation. Low values in both dimensions show a secure attachment orientation. Securely attached individuals perceive their selves and others positively (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). Low scores on attachment anxiety and high scores on attachment avoidance show dismissive-avoidant attachment orientation, while high scores on attachment anxiety and low scores on attachment avoidance show preoccupied attachment orientation (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). Dismissive-avoidant attachment oriented individuals carry a positive self-image and a negative image of others. Like members of secure group, they describe themselves as lovable, valuable, and important. However, they fear intimacy and dependency due to their negative image of others (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). Those with high attachment anxiety and low attachment avoidance perceive themselves as unlovable, worthless, and insignificant while having a positive image of others, believing they are less worthy in a romantic relationship than their partners (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). High scores on both dimensions indicate the fearful attachment orientation where individuals hold negative self and other images (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016).

3.1.7. Empirical Findings about Adult Attachment Security in Romantic Relationships

Individuals generally form close relationships to have healthy and functioning relationships. Many studies have shown that happy romantic relationships are associated with better physical health and psychological well-being (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Campbell et al., 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2014; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2008; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010; Kamp Dush & Amato, 2005; Vanassche et al., 2013). Feeling secure in romantic relationships is essential for maintaining secure attachments to close others. Research on adult attachment orientation in marriage and committed extra-marital relationships has documented commitment, intimacy, interdependence, relationship satisfaction, and trust as the characteristic features of secure romantic relationships (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Feeney & Collins, 2003; Feeney et al., 2000; Hadden et al., 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Simpson, 1990; Sümer & Cozarelli, 2004). Also, studies conducted on single adults revealed that they tend to be higher in attachment insecurity than partnered adults (Adamczyk & Bookwala, 2013; Chopik et al., 2013; Schachner et al., 2008), which indicates that securely attached individuals are more likely to be in a romantic relationship. Yet, felt security in close relationships is not always sustainable. From time to time, individuals may experience feelings of insecurity in their relationships. However, their response to these experiences is closely related to their attachment orientations. For this reason, in this section, findings will be presented both on how attachment orientations affect relationships in general, and how individuals act depending on their attachment orientation when insecurity feelings are triggered.

In addition, there seem to be some gender differences in attachment orientation. Attachment anxiety and females' reports of relationship quality had a negative correlation,

while attachment avoidance was related to decreases in relationship satisfaction for both males and females (Kane et al., 2007; Mondor et al., 2011). Previous studies have shown how attachment dimensions affect cognition and perception (i.e., working models) were assimilated into relationship memories (Bretherton & Munholland, 2008; Dykas et al., 2011; Feeney & Cassidy, 2003; Simpson et al., 2010) and shape the formation of autobiographical memory (Dykas et al., 2014; Kohn et al., 2012; Simpson et al., 2010; Sutin & Gillath, 2009; Wang et al., 2017). Consistent with their working models of self and others, securely attached individuals recall more positive memories with higher emotional intensity (Pereg & Mikulincer, 2004; Wang et al., 2017) and more positive over time (Feeney & Cassidy, 2003), while those insecurely attached individuals recall more negative memories with higher emotional intensity (Dykas et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017) and more negative over time (Feeney & Cassidy, 2003). What they remember affects individuals' perceptions and memory about their couple interaction, including conflict (Beck et al., 2013; Cusimano & Riggs, 2013), support (Campbell et al., 2005; Collins & Feeney, 2004), and separation (Gillath et al., 2005). Wang and colleagues (2017) showed a significant interaction between attachment and gender in predicting autobiographical memories for relationship-maintaining events. Men (but not women) with higher attachment avoidance reported fewer relationship-maintenance events. They argued that regardless of their attachment orientation, women (compared to men) are more likely to remember events related to the relationship.

3.1.7.1. Attachment Security

Securely attached individuals (low in attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions) are more likely to seek closeness and support when upset (Shaver et al., 2019;

Simpson et al., 1992), and to experience better and more consistent relationship well-being (Feeney, 2016; Kaya-Balkan, 2009; Li & Chan, 2012; Tutarel Kışlak & Çavusoğlu, 2006), because they have positive working models of others that leads them to believe their partner will be attentive, available, and responsive to their needs (Baldwin et al., 1993; Collins & Read, 1990; Rowe & Carnelley, 2003). They display higher levels of relationship satisfaction, commitment, and trust along with lower levels of conflict and jealousy (Feeney & Collins, 2003; Feeney et al., 2000), and more constructive communication patterns and behaviors (Domingue & Mollen, 2009; Marshall, 2008). Partners of securely attached individuals are perceived as more supportive regardless of their partner support level, also they are more likely to report fewer distress levels and better coping mechanisms (e.g., Collins & Feeney, 2004; Girme et al., 2015; Rholes et al., 2011; Simpson et al., 2007). Having positive attributions to the partner leads them to evaluate partners' negative behaviors positively, which does not make conflictual situations a threat to the continuation of the romantic relationship. They show less physiological stress reactivity when insecurity feelings arise (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Powers et al., 2006). Because they perceive conflictual situations as an opportunity for intimacy, they show more accommodative behaviors, including self-disclosure and perspective taking (Simpson et al., 1996), and recover more quickly without dwelling on negative emotions and rumination (Salvatore et al., 2011). The likelihood of successfully resolving problems increases with such behaviors (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Mikulincer et al., 2009; Waters & Waters, 2006), and they may start to maintain positive interactions with their partners earlier (Feeney & Collins, 2015).

3.1.7.2. Attachment Insecurity

Research has shown that attachment insecurity was negatively associated with psychological well-being (e.g., Carr et al., 2010; Lavy & Littman-Ovadia, 2011; Wei et al., 2011). The negative relationships between insecure attachment orientations (either feeling uncomfortable or anxious about being intimate) and relational functioning such as commitment, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction has been documented many times (e.g., Campbell et al., 2005; Collins & Feeney, 2004; Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Pistole & Arricale, 2003; Sümer & Cozzarelli, 2004; Popovic, 2005; Tan et al., 2012). For example, Fraley and Shaver (2000) showed that insecurely attached individuals are less satisfied with their relationships and relatively closer to experiencing break-ups because they perceive interpersonal conflicts as threatening. Triggered negative communication patterns such as using less constructive conflict resolution strategies, escalating things or leaving them unresolved, and engaging in verbal and physical aggression during conflict (Carnelley et al., 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012; Pistole & Arricale, 2003; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995) can be considered among the reasons why they are relatively closer to experiencing romantic break-up. The attachment dimensions of individuals who score high in attachment anxiety and/or attachment avoidance dimensions and the findings about romantic relationships are further detailed below since there is more than one type of insecure attachment orientation.

3.1.7.2.1. High Attachment Anxiety

Individuals who score high in the attachment anxiety dimension (and low in attachment avoidance dimension) have a negative working model of self and a positive working model of others. They believe that they are at a disadvantage in romantic

relationships as they are not good enough and worthy of being loved (Gordon & Chen, 2013). Their beliefs that they are not "worthy enough" to be with their partners cause them to misinterpret their partner's feelings for them (Noller, 2005). Their partners' unreciprocated commitment supports and reinforces their negative self perception (Murray & Holmes, 2009; Murray et al., 2006), which in turn causes lower levels of self-esteem (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Individuals with high attachment anxiety are more likely to monitor situations for signs of their partner's commitment, detect relationship threats, generate considerable distress and reactivity to daily interactions by reevaluating their relationship, desire more security when they think of trust, and exhibit more negative affect and behavior (e.g., Campbell et al., 2005; Collins et al., 2006; Gere et al., 2013; McClure et al., 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012; Snapp et al., 2014). They, compared to securely attached individuals, prioritize intimacy over trust in relationships (Ren et al., 2017), as they use it to verify their relationships.

When their partner is responsive to their needs, if not all the time, anxiously attached individuals' hopes of having a responsive partner are kept alive (Beckes et al., 2017). This causes them to adopt hyperactivation strategies to have their partners close and available to give support. They show more jealousy, clinging behaviors, and low trust toward partners, and demand closeness and intimacy (Feldman & Downey, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Spielmann et al., 2013). If their hyperactivation efforts fail, they become more vulnerable, dependent, and/or "clingy" (Beckes et al., 2017), which deepens their negative self-views with feelings of unworthiness, shame, and weakness (Arriaga et al., 2018).

However, greater demand for intimacy (e.g., showing sticky behavior) and commitment is triggered by the idea that their partners are seeking ways to break-up with

them (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016). They withdraw as a result of wavering commitment and inability to obtain desired intimacy (e.g., Lemay & Dudley, 2011; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003; Murray & Holmes, 2009; Overall et al., 2014). Feelings of unworthiness, shame, and weakness (Arriaga et al., 2018) create chronic anxiety that is manifested by fear of abandonment or rejection by others (Arriaga et al., 2018). Chronically anxiously attached individuals will ultimately have a negative view of others because the commitment level of their partners will never be enough for them and they cannot get a response at the level they want on a regular basis (Arriaga et al., 2006; Arriaga et al., 2018; Bartz & Lydon, 2006; Campbell et al., 2005). Consistent with their autobiographical memory formed to detect any threat to their romantic relationship, they are more likely to recall more negative memories with higher emotional intensity (Dykas et al., 2014; Young & Acitelli, 1998), more negative over time (Feeney & Cassidy, 2003), and less likely to notice the positive aspects of their romantic relationships (Collins et al., 2006; Pietromonaco & Barrett, 2000).

Anxiously attached individuals experience heightened levels of distress, show less affection, and tend to induce guilt and escalate the conflict readily by engaging in verbal and physical aggression (Campbell et al., 2005; McClure et al., 2013; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012; Overall et al., 2014), though they have a higher concern of losing intimacy under anxiety-provoking situations (Pistole & Arricale, 2003). These two competing motivations that preserve the intimacy and demand a positive change in the relationship cause individuals with high attachment anxiety to show both submissive and dominant responses in conflictual situations (Gaines et al., 1997; MacDonald et al., 2019; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Even if they were the ones who initiated the conflict for a better change, when their focus shifts to stopping the disagreement, averting abandonment, and losing their partner

(McNulty, 2010), they show submissive behaviors, premature attempts to forgive (Dewitte et al., 2021), and incur costs so that partner can incur benefits (Pistole & Arricale, 2003, Impett & Peplau, 2002; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Shi, 2003). But these behaviors, in turn, trigger resentment feelings (Arriaga et al., 2018). They also feel a higher cost of leaving their relationship because they are more invested in maintaining it (Pistole et al. 1995). These individuals are more willing to be in a romantic relationship than to be single, even if they are not happy in their relationships (Joel et al., 2011; Slotter & Finkel, 2009; Spielmann et al., 2013); and if they are single, they are more willing to be in a romantic relationship regardless of who the potential partner is (Spielmann et al., 2013).

3.1.7.2.2. High Attachment Avoidance

Individuals who score high in the attachment avoidance dimension (and low in attachment anxiety dimension) have a positive view about themselves and a negative view about others. Individuals with high attachment avoidance detached and developed distrust of others as a result of being left alone with the perceived threat in infancy, though they had a desire to reunite with their caregivers (Bowlby, 1973). Similarly, in adulthood, while they desire intimacy, they refrain from disappointment and pain (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009), they are cautious about "letting their guard down" (Arriaga et al., 2018; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Noftle & Shaver, 2006; Simpson et al., 1992), and are more wary of partners who demand more intimacy and interdependence (Arriaga et al., 2018). They are also more likely to forego opportunities to experience the benefits of closeness and intimacy, such as being cared for, supported, and validated by others (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Reis et al., 2004; Spielmann et al., 2013). But suppose they decide to go against what they have learned over the years, let their guard down, and seek

intimacy. In that case, their partner's lack of reciprocity triggers feelings of shame or disapproval that instill fear of social pain, and undermines the desirability of a relationship (Arriaga et al., 2018), and causes them to show first anxiety reactions and then learned avoidance behaviors (Diamond & Hicks, 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016).

Chronic high attachment avoidance is manifested by discomfort with dependence and intimacy in adulthood (Arriaga et al., 2018), and chronically avoidant individuals are more likely to feel frustrated when they are forced to decide between their personal goals and activities, and their partner and relationship (Arriaga et al., 2018). Because they tend to avoid intimacy and closeness, they are less likely to be in a romantic relationship (Ho et al., 2012; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Schindler et al., 2010), and to form a committed one (Birnie et al., 2009; Schindler et al., 2010). These people do not want to start a new relationship after a break-up (Davis et al., 2003) because they think that their new relationship will also end in failure (Birnie et al., 2009) and they will eventually be hurt by these relationships (Baldwin et al., 1993). For this reason, even if they are in a relationship, they keep their guard by prioritizing independence in relationships over intimacy (Bartholomew, 1990; Ren et al., 2017). They display less nonverbal intimacy, affection, and expressiveness during interactions (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016), use less self-disclosure (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007), and on average, have lower gratitude feelings towards their partners (Mikulincer et al., 2006). Thus, attachment avoidance was negatively correlated with relationship evaluations (Ho et al., 2012; Li & Chan, 2012; Tan et al., 2012).

They also prefer not to express their feelings when they are in a romantic relationship, even if it means leaving conflictual situations unresolved (Bartholomew, 1990; Bradford et al., 2002; Edelstein & Gillath, 2008; Farrell et al., 2016; Fraley & Shaver, 1997;

Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Spielmann, Maxwell et al., 2013; Overall et al., 2013), while they are more likely to misinterpret partner's behaviors (Arriaga et al., 2014; Collins & Feeney, 2004; Tan et al., 2012). Under avoidance-triggering situations, they instill deactivation strategies to distancing themselves from emotionally charged interactions to avert vulnerability and gain control through self-reliance (Cassidy et al., 2009; Collins & Gillath, 2012; Diamond & Hicks, 2005; Dykas & Cassidy, 2011; Edelstein & Gillath, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2005; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002, 2009; Simpson & Rholes, 2012). They show less accommodative behaviors (Etcheverry et al., 2013; Nisenbaum & Lopez, 2015), and provide less emotional support when their partners experience stress (Collins et al., 2006; Collins & Feeney, 2000; Feeney & Collins, 2001; Feeney et al., 2013; Feeney & Thrush, 2010; Jayamaha et al., 2017; Simpson et al., 1992). Moreover, they use deactivation strategies and bottle up their anger, resentment, and hostility emotions (Edelstein et al., 2012; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Nisenbaum & Lopez, 2015), which in turn makes a recovery after a conflict to be more difficult for avoidantly attached individuals (Salvatore et al., 2011).

The effect of attachment security on the decision-making process in romantic relationships was explained in this section with empirical evidence about how attachment security shapes individuals' affect, behavior, and cognition. However, attachment security is not the only factor impacting on the decision-making process in romantic relationships. In the next section, basic psychological needs and the effects of these needs on decisions about the future of romantic relationships were presented.

3.2. Self-Dertermination Theory

3.2.1. Basic Psychological Needs Theory

All organisms are innately motivated to improve their conditions to a point that can be considered optimal, if not ideal, to maintain their well-being. Reaching or maintaining optimal well-being is possible by meeting physical needs as well as psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2017). From the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) perspective, well-being is defined as fully functioning in which individuals experience happiness more and feelings of anxiety and depression less. With its six mini-theories, SDT is a theory of motivation that investigates the psychological conditions that enable or hinder individuals to reach their optimal well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002; Knee et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Although the aftermath of their decisions cannot always be observed immediately, as proactive beings, individuals vigorously seek growth, integrity, and wellness from infancy.

Basic-Psychological Needs Theory, a mini-theory of SDT, suggests that human beings have three basic needs; namely, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, that underlie growth, integrity, and wellness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Knee et al., 2013; Ng et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2004, 2017; Slemp et al., 2018; Yu et al., 2018). Fulfilling them allows individuals to experience well-being (Demir & Özdemir, 2010; Howell et al., 2011; Knee & Uysal, 2011; La Guardia et al., 2000; Ryan et al., 2010; Tay & Diener, 2011; Uysal et al., 2010).

However, individuals' basic psychological needs are not always fulfilled. Until a decade ago, low basic psychological need fulfillment has been associated with ill-being. However, Bartholomew and colleagues (2011b) have shown that low basic psychological

need fulfillment may indicate either lack of need satisfaction (i.e., need dissatisfaction) or need thwarting (i.e., inhibition of basic psychological needs). Need thwarting is a more threatening experience (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020) as it predicts ill-being (Balaguer et al., 2012; Bartholomew et al., 2011a, b; Campbell et al., 2018; Costa et al., 2015; Selvi & Bozo, 2020; Vahlstein et al., 2020).

It has shown that psychological need satisfaction and frustration are not mutually exclusive terms. Need satisfaction and thwarting uniquely predicted various study variables (Chen et al., 2015; Costa et al., 2015; Nishimura & Suzuki, 2016; Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013). Therefore, it would be wrong to think of low psychological need satisfaction as the equivalent of high psychological need thwarting.

Despite it is a very widely studied concept, autonomy meaning in SDT, unlike the other definitions, is being self-volitional and authentic, having a sense of choice, and freedom (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2004, 2017). Under heteronomy, the opposite experience of autonomy, individuals feel that their behaviors are controlled and they are compelled to behave in a specific direction. Individuals could acquire a sense of autonomy or heteronomy regardless of being independent, interdependent, or dependent.

Competence is defined as experiencing a sense of mastery and challenge (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2017). All humans have an inherent tendency for growth and mastery from infancy, but only experience feelings of operating effectively in certain domains of value to them. Though the domains of value may vary, achieving a sense of competence depends on the self-relevant domains with optimally challenging tasks.

Relatedness contains the feelings of acceptance, connectedness, and warmth one derives from their immediate surroundings (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Knee et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2017). In line with the Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982, Mikulincer

& Shaver, 2016) and the Need to Belong Theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), human beings came into the world with an instinct to form solid and stable interpersonal bonds, to experience warmth, and to feel connected. This instinct is separate from the urge for food, as depicted in Harlow's primates study (Harlow & Zimmermann, 1959).

3.2.2. Empirical Findings about Basic Psychological Needs in Romantic Relationships

The satisfaction of these three basic psychological needs is vital from infancy, but as the person ages, the people they turn to meet these needs also change. These needs, which are met by parents during infancy, also begin to be met by close friends with the start of school. With romantic involvements, too, these needs are met in different contexts by significant individuals (parents, friends, and the romantic partners). From adolescence and early adulthood, friends and romantic partners become the central figures of their well-being, the ones individuals turn to most when they feel down (Collins & Madsen, 2006; Rayle & Chung, 2007; Surjadi et al., 2011) and for their psychological need fulfilments within their relationships become essential for their well-being. Yet, Ratelle and colleagues (2013) had shown that individuals benefited the most only when they received need support from all their close relationship figures, namely, parents, friends, and romantic partners. Establishing and maintaining basic psychological need supportive relationships are essential for better well-being as these resources cannot replace or compensate for one another.

Satisfaction of psychological needs enhances subjective well-being, contributing to physiological and psychological health. When their basic psychological needs are satisfied, individuals tend to be less defensive, experience fewer symptoms such as pain, dizziness,

and fainting, have lower blood pressure; while they have an ability to integrate internal and external inputs in a more coherent and meaningful way (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryff, 1989; Weinstein et al., 2016). Fulfilled basic psychological needs affect individuals to be more committed to their relationships and have higher satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2000; La Guardia et al., 2000; La Guardia & Patrick, 2008; Le & Agnew, 2001; Patrick et al., 2007), to be willing to rely on significant others (Ryan et al., 2005), to be more eager to express their emotions (La Guardia, 2007), and to have higher emotional awareness, openness to experience those emotions, and emotional disclosure to their partners (La Guardia, 2007; La Guardia & Ryan, 2007). They show more positive behaviors such as agreement and affection in their relationship and report experiencing happiness when they are autonomously motivated to be in a relationship (Blais et al., 1990). Moreover, what they experience today shapes their expectations for the future. Thus, individuals whose relatedness needs are fulfilled within the relationship expect their relatedness need to be fulfilled in the future (Simpson et al., 2007).

Dyadic study designs in recent years have illustrated how the partners' satisfied psychological needs positively influence one's own psychological needs. When individuals are autonomously motivated to be in that relationship, their partners experience higher need support. In other words, they attend more to their partners' need fulfillment when individuals are volitionally in that relationship (Deci & Ryan, 2014; Hadden et al., 2015; Knee et al., 2013). In a study on 124 close-friend dyads, Deci and colleagues (2006) showed that giving autonomy support provides benefits for both the giver and the receiver. While giving autonomy support to a friend predicts positive relational functioning and well-being, receiving autonomy support enables individuals to experience satisfaction, closeness, and vitality as well as to be emotionally reliant and securely attached. In line with previous

research (Deci et al., 2006; Patrick et al., 2007), fulfillment of relatedness need promotes the well-being of both individuals across four weeks (Hadden et al., 2013). Therefore, what they get from their relationship (relational outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, and stability) is also closely linked to the way individuals meet their partner's needs. The interdependent nature of close relationships could explain this because the way one behaves is both a reaction and a cause of the partner's behaviors.

The only study that used basic need dissatisfaction and thwarting along with the basic need satisfaction in romantic relationships hypothesized that need thwarting would be a better predictor of diminished relational functioning than need dissatisfaction and satisfaction (Costa et al., 2015). Data collected from 433 participants revealed that need satisfaction positively predicted interpersonal competence, while need thwarting positively predicted negative relationship experiences and negatively predicted interpersonal competence.

3.2.3. Empirical Findings about the Relationship between Attachment Security and Basic Psychological Needs

Prior research has also shown the relationship between attachment security and basic psychological need satisfaction. Individuals were found to be securely attached in friendship and romantic relationships when their basic psychological needs were satisfied (La Guardia et al., 2000). Yet, another study revealed that partners' attachment anxiety dimension was positively related with individuals' relatedness need, and negatively related with individuals' autonomy and competence needs (Hadden et al., 2016). Partners' attachment avoidance dimension and individuals' relatedness need were negatively associated, while partner's attachment avoidance dimension positively predicted

individuals' autonomy need. Hadden and colleagues (2016) elaborated this as a misperception of partners' autonomy support while it was merely avoidant individuals' desire for space and freedom.

The associations of attachment security to partner behaviors and well-being (La Guardia et al., 2000) were found to be mediated by need satisfaction. In two studies, Slotter and Finkel (2009) found that when their attachment anxiety was primed, individuals preferred to remain committed in their romantic relationship even though they were aware that their basic needs were not met within that relationship. However, when their attachment security was primed, they could realize that their partner was not able to meet their basic needs, which led to a decrease in commitment. These findings may explain why some individuals prefer to be committed to unhealthy romantic relationships where basic psychological needs are unfulfilled. While attachment security provides a direct explanation for relational outcomes, basic psychological needs may provide more detailed information about the relationship context.

3.2.4. Empirical Findings about the Relationship between Basic Psychological Needs and Accommodative Behaviors

When it comes to reactions to a partner's negative behavior, fulfillment of basic psychological needs affects individuals to show more accommodative behaviors such as talking more and using perspective taking strategy to understand their partner (Hadden et al., 2014; Knee et al., 2005), being less ego-involved (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hadden et al., 2014; Hodgins & Knee, 2002), less likely to fixate on negative thoughts and emotions (Knee et al., 2005; Knee et al., 2002; La Guardia, 2007; La Guardia & Patrick, 2008; Patrick et al., 2007). Those with low autonomy tend to show more destructive reactions such as defensive

behaviors, withdrawal, or counterattack (Schnarch, 1997). In their studies, Hodgins and colleagues (1996) found that individuals with trait autonomy experience more satisfying and honest interactions with their family and friends. In another study (Knee et al., 2005), autonomously motivated individuals were found to have deeper and more satisfying relationships, and have more relative satisfaction after disagreements.

According to La Guardia and colleagues (2000), the need for competence might be the least essential basic psychological need within relationships since individuals have other sources to fulfill that need. Yet, the satisfaction of competence need in relationships also positively impacts on relational outcomes. Research had shown that when their partner showed need supportive behaviors, individuals tended to be less defensive during a conflict, and be more satisfied and committed to their relationship (Patrick et al., 2007).

Prior studies also showed that the need for relatedness was prioritized in relationships (Hui et al., 2013; McClure & Lydon, 2018; Patrick et al., 2007; Vanhee et al., 2018). Satisfied relatedness need led individuals to engage in more accommodative behaviors to a partner's negative behavior (Patrick et al., 2007), especially when their autonomy need was also fulfilled (Kluwer et al., 2020). This suggests that meeting more than one basic psychological needs within a relationship increases the likelihood of pro-relationship behaviors and decreases the destructive behaviors. Moreover, need for autonomy seems to intensify the impact of need for relatedness which shows that autonomy need can have an additional impact on other needs even though it cannot compensate for one another. In addition, supported need for autonomy intensified the effect of need for relatedness (Kluwer et al., 2020); this puts forward that autonomy need may have an additional positive influence on relatedness need.

Costa and colleagues (2015) studied the role of basic need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting on interpersonal competence, which is relevant the conflict management strategies. They found basic psychological need satisfaction and thwarting related to interpersonal competence, and it can be argued that need satisfaction and thwarting could explain individuals' reactions toward dissatisfying situations.

The effect of basic psychological needs on the decision-making process in romantic relationships was explained in this section by presenting empirical evidence on how basic psychological needs influence individuals' affect, behavior, and cognition. The following section presents relationship contingent self-esteem and its effect on the decision-making process in romantic relationships.

3.3. Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem

Another essential personality factor studied in this thesis is relationship contingent self-esteem (RCSE). Self-esteem is a subject that has been widely studied in various contexts. Pursuing self-esteem via a particular domain(s) is termed contingent self-esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Individuals with higher contingent self-esteem experience intense fluctuations in their worth and value when they succeed or failed in the domain(s) of contingency (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001; Crocker et al., 2003; Crocker & Park, 2004; Knee et al., 2008; Park et al., 2006; Park & Crocker, 2008).

Although contingent self-esteem studies are generally conducted on academic performance, romantic relationships can also be another domain for contingent self-esteem (e.g., Knee et al., 2008). The innate tendency to create and maintain bonds is important for anyone. However, as an unhealthy form of self-esteem, RCSE arises when individuals define their values based on whether they are partnered and the success or failure of their

relationships (Cambron et al., 2010; Knee et al., 2008). Like how self-relevant events affect individuals' self-esteem, having RCSE makes individuals more sensitive about the events within a relationship and be under the influence of them since those events represent something positive or negative about their self-worth.

3.3.1. Empirical Findings about Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem in Romantic Relationships

High RCSE individuals' relationship satisfaction, closeness, and commitment have greater fluctuations during the events in their romantic relationships (Knee et al., 2008). Their hyper-vigilant nature makes them overly sensitive about negative events, and they seek validation from their partner. Individuals with contingent self-esteem were in a vicious cycle of providing and validating their worth and value (Crocker & Park, 2004; Park et al., 2006), their attention could not be diverted to the needs of others or their relationships (Park & Crocker, 2005). However, getting affirmation from their partner does not mean they focus on their basic psychological needs. High RCSE individuals were more likely to have unsatisfied basic psychological needs (Knee et al., 2008), and neglect them (Crocker & Park, 2004).

The fact that they were dissatisfied with their relationships despite being very close to their partner shows the contradiction of the perceptions of individuals with high RCSE (Knee et al., 2008). For them, negative relationship events were associated with lower well-being (Cambron et al., 2010; Knee et al., 2008) and lower self-esteem following negative events (Knee et al., 2008).

3.3.2. Empirical Findings about the Relationship between Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem and Accommodative Behaviors

Of the events that can occur in a relationship, individuals with high RCSE may be specifically sensitive about relationship conflict, which involves a potential risk of romantic break-up. Break-up –being single again– could be an unbearable event for them, as their self-worth is on whether they were partnered and the nature of their relationship with their partner (Knee et al., 2008). For this reason, remaining calm and not showing strong reactions were challenging tasks for them after negative partner behaviors (Schnarch & Regas, 2012; Skowron & Friedlander, 1998). High RCSE individuals may seek ways to avoid break-ups even in dissatisfying relationships. And if they were single, finding a mate might be urgent for them (Sanchez et al., 2008; Sanchez & Kwang, 2007). After a break-up, they became more emotionally distraught and more likely to engage in obsessive behaviors such as stalking their ex-partners (Park et al., 2011), which could be another motivational factor for them to be romantically involved with someone.

3.3.3. Empirical Findings about the Relationship between Attachment Security and Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem

Although attachment insecurity and RCSE are hypersensitive to problems in romantic relationships, they operate with different motivations. Accumulated experiences through a lifetime, named as working models in the Attachment Theory, shape the reactions of insecurely attached individuals, while events within a romantic relationship shape high RCSE individuals' feelings of self-worth and thus their reactions. Therefore, the RCSE could explain responses to relationship events that attachment anxiety could not (Knee et al., 2008).

3.3.4. Empirical Findings about the relationship between Basic Psychological Needs and Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem

High RCSE individuals with unsatisfied basic psychological needs might feel they have no control over the events. Like insecurely attached individuals, those with high RCSE tend to respond to conflicts with defensive behaviors, elevated stress levels, anxiety, and depression. Although it is not what they aim for, their behaviors might be destructive to the relationship since they are more likely to engage in hyper-vigilant behaviors toward negative signals. This can be interpreted as they were more likely to show more passive behaviors (relative to taking an active role in problem-solving) during conflicts.

Empirical findings in this section have shown the possible effect of RCSE on the decision-making process in romantic relationships by showing its impact on individuals' affect, behavior, and cognition. In the following section, the objective of this chapter was explained in detail.

3.4. Objective of the Study 2

This chapter aims to understand the role of personal and relational factors in the decision-making process with survey data. Study 2 investigated the role of attachment security, basic psychological need satisfaction/dissatisfaction/thwarted, and relationship contingent self-esteem on the decisions made. The following hypotheses for this study have been proposed based on the theoretical relationships outlined above and previous empirical studies. The hypotheses of Study 2 were presented briefly in Table 6.

Table 6
Hypothesized Relationship among Study Variables

	Exit	Voice	Loyalty	Neglect
Attachment Anxiety	-	-	+	+
Attachment Avoidance	+	N.A.	N.A.	+
Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem	N.A.	N.A.	+	N.A.
Basic Psychological Needs - Satisfied	N.A.	+	N.A.	N.A.
Basic Psychological Needs - Dissatisfied	+	-	-	+
Basic Psychological Needs - Thwarted	-	-	+	+

H1: Anxiously attached individuals show less active behaviors (*Exit* (*a*) and *Voice* (*b*) responses) and more passive behaviors (*Loyalty* (*c*) and *Neglect* (*d*) responses).

H2: Avoidantly attached individuals show more destructive behaviors (*Exit (a)* and *Neglect (d)* responses).

H3: Individuals with higher scores on relationship contingent self-esteem show more passive constructive behaviors (*Loyalty* responses).

H4: Individuals show more active and constructive behaviors (*Voice* responses) when their basic psychological needs are satisfied in the relationship.

H5: Basic psychological needs dissatisfied individuals show more destructive behaviors (*Exit (a)* and *Neglect (d)* responses) and less constructive behaviors (*Voice (b)* and *Loyalty (c)* responses).

H6: Individuals with thwarted basic psychological needs show less active behaviors (*Exit (a)* and *Voice (b)* responses) and more passive behaviors (*Loyalty (c)* and *Neglect (d)* responses).

3.5. Method

3.5.1. Participants

A total of 329 undergraduate students (185 Female, 56.2% of the total) from the METU in Turkey participated in this study in exchange for course credit. Eligibility requirements were being heterosexual, between 18 and 28 years old, unmarried, and being in a romantic relationship for more than three months or had a romantic relationship that

lasted more than three months. Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 30 years, with a mean of 22.97 and a median of 23 years. Of them, 62.3% were in a romantic relationship, while 87.2% had been in a romantic relationship before.

3.5.2. Measurement

The survey battery has consisted of My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale, Experiences in Close Relationships Revised version Scale, Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem Scale, Psychological Need Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Thwarting Scale (PNSDTS), two vignettes, and some questions to obtain demographic information. Unless otherwise indicated, items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

3.5.2.1. Experiences in Close Relationships Revised version (ECR-R) – Short Form

The Experiences in Close Relationships Revised version (ECR-R) measure (Fraley et al., 2000) was used to measure attachment orientations. This is a 36-item scale that measures attachment anxiety and avoidance dimensions. Attachment anxiety items were formed to assess individual's degree of fear of rejection and abandonment and also the willingness of preoccupation with the attachment figure. Attachment avoidance items evaluate the degree of discomfort with intimacy and dependency in romantic relationships. A sample item for the anxiety subscale is "I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them". A sample item for the avoidance subscale is "I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down". In this study, instead of the 36-item of ECRR scale, a 10-item scale was used.

The 36-item ECR-R was adapted into Turkish by Selçuk and colleagues (2005) and both subscales of the ECR-R Turkish were found to have high internal consistency (anxiety, α=.86; avoidance, α= .90) and high test-retest reliability (anxiety, α= .82; avoidance, α= .81) (see Appendix C). In this study, Cronbach alpha was .839 for the attachment anxiety dimension and .800 for the attachment avoidance dimension.

3.5.2.2. Psychological Need Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Thwarting Scale (PNSDTS)

Psychological Need Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Thwarting Scale (PNSDTS) were generated by Costa and colleagues (2015). A sample autonomy item for need satisfaction is "I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to live my life.", for need dissatisfaction is "I generally don't feel free to choose how to do things for myself.", and for need thwarting is "I feel forced to follow decisions made for me.". For competence and relatedness subscales, sample items for need satisfaction are "People I know tell me I am good at what I do." and "I get along with people I come into contact with.", for need dissatisfaction are "I often feel like I don't have the opportunity to improve myself." and "I feel like I can't really trust the people around me.", and for need thwarting are "Situations occur in which I am made to feel incapable." and "I feel I am rejected by those around me.", respectively.

The PNSDTS has not been adapted to Turkish before; therefore, the translation was made in this study. First, the scale was translated into Turkish independently by two doctorate psychology students, and then the back translation was done by a doctorate psychology student and a near-native English speaker. Finally, back translations were compared to the original scale and the Turkish translation of PNSDTS was found suitable

(see Appendix D). In this study, internal consistency of autonomy, competence, and relatedness subscales for need satisfaction were .651, .604, and .780; for need dissatisfaction .825, .790, and .777; and for need thwarting .813, .807, and .691, respectively. For need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting, a composite score was also generated. The internal reliability of each composite score was .835 for need satisfaction, .901 for need dissatisfaction, and .864 for need thwarting.

3.5.2.3. Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem Scale (RCSE)

Participants also completed the 11-item Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem Scale (RCSE) (Knee et al., 2008). Items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item for RCSE is "I feel better about myself when it seems like my partner and I are emotionally connected".

The RCSE has not been adapted to Turkish before; therefore, the translation was made in this study. First, two doctorate psychology students translated the scale into Turkish independently. Then, the back translation was done by a doctorate psychology student and a near-native English speaker. Finally, back translations were compared to the original scale and the Turkish translation of RCSE was found suitable (see Appendix E). The internal consistency was found .830 in this study.

3.5.2.4. My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale (MRRPS)

Participants completed the 16-item My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale (MRRPS), measuring the perceived interpersonal behaviors of their partners using the stem "My partner/date…" (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). A sample item for the *exit* subscale is "When my partner says something really mean, I threaten to leave him/her.", for the *voice* subscale

is “When my partner behaves in an unpleasant manner, I calmly discuss things with him/her.”, for the *loyalty* subscale is “When my partner does something thoughtless, I patiently wait for things to improve.”, and for the *neglect* subscale is “When my partner behaves in an unpleasant manner, I spend less time with him/her.”. Items were rated on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never do this) to 9 (always do this).

The MRRPS was adapted into Turkish (Çırakoğlu, & Tezer, 2010) (see Appendix F). Internal consistencies of *exit, voice, loyalty,* and *neglect* subscales of the Turkish MRRPS were reported as .69, .73, .59, and .57, respectively. In this study, Cronbach alpha scores of *exit, voice, loyalty,* and *neglect* subscales were found to be .754, .818, .663, and .671, respectively.

3.5.2.5. Vignettes for Conflictual Situations

In addition to the scales listed above, two vignettes were generated to measure participants’ reactions (see Appendix G1 and G2). In one scenario, participants learned that their partner have been accepted into a doctorate program in the US and is considering enrolling in that program. However, it was the first time for the participants to learn about their partner’s application. In another scenario, participants saw their partners being intimate with someone (of their gender) at a nightclub. Two vignettes ended with an expression of discomfort with the situation and the question of what they would do next.

3.5.2.6. Demographic Information

Age, gender, the duration of the ongoing and ex romantic relationships, previous romantic relationships, and questions related to the last romantic break-ups were included in the demographic information (see Appendix H).

3.5.3. Procedure

The questionnaires used in the current study were first submitted for the Middle East Technical University Human Participants Ethic Committee (IRB) approval. After receiving the IRB approval (see Appendix A2), the convenience sampling technique was used to collect data. The study announcements were made via SONA Systems (a cloud-based participant pool management software) for students taking courses from the psychology department, and for those who had no access to the SONA Systems were made in classrooms at the METU. Students were informed that they could get course credits for participating in an online survey. After obtaining informed consent, which included the nature of the study stating that the participants could withdraw from the study at any point, the participants filled out a survey battery consisting of my responses to relationship problems, attachment orientation, relationship contingent self-esteem, psychological need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting scales, and the demographic form. Besides the demographic form, the order of the scales and the items were randomized.

3.5.4. Analytic Strategy

Data screening, data cleaning, descriptive data analysis, bivariate correlation analysis, and all regression analyses were performed with SPSS version 26.00 (statistical software package). JAMOVI version 1.1.9.0 was employed in confirmatory factor analyses and reliability analyses. Data was screened to ensure the homoscedastic and normal distribution (kurtosis and skewness .90 for all measures). Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted, for exit, voice, loyalty and neglect responses.

3.6. Results

After data screening and cleaning, descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations were described below. It was followed by the effects of attachment orientations, relationship contingent self-esteem, psychological need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting on responses to relationship problems (*exit*, *voice*, *loyalty*, and *neglect*). In the final section, results of the vignettes and findings of focus group sessions related to the vignettes were presented.

3.6.1. Data Screening and Cleaning

The data was examined for missing values. A total of 397 participants took place in this study. Thirteen participants were removed from the data set as they did not satisfy one of the eligibility requirements, as they either selected a non-heterosexual orientation or preferred to non-disclose. Six participants were significantly older than 28 years old, another eligibility requirement of this study. After removing 19 participants from the data set, 378 participants remained for the data cleaning. Univariate and multivariate outliers, normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were tested. A total of 16 participants with univariate and 33 with multivariate outliers were excluded from the data set, leaving 329 participants for the analyses.

3.6.2 Factor Analyses

Before forming composite variables from scale items, My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale, Attachment Scale, Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem Scale, and Psychological Need Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Thwarting Scale were factor analyzed.

3.6.2.1. Experiences in Close Relationships Revised Scale – Short Form

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 10-item Attachment orientation scale. The factor structure showed a moderate model fit [$\chi 2$ (34) = 129, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .091, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.074, .108), and CFI = .930].

3.6.2.2. Psychological Need Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Thwarting Scale

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 12-item Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale. The factor structure of the composite need satisfaction had a good model fit [$\chi 2$ (54) = 125, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .062, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.047, .076), and CFI = .937].

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 12 items of Psychological Need Dissatisfaction Scale. The factor structure of the composite need dissatisfaction had a good model fit [$\chi 2$ (90) = 296, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .082, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.072, .092), and CFI = .891].

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 15-item Psychological Need Thwarting Scale. The factor structure of the composite need thwarting scale had a moderate model fit [$\chi 2$ (54) = 340, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .125, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.112, .138), and CFI = .807].

3.6.2.3. Relationship Contingent Self Esteem Scale

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 11 items of RCSE scale. The factor structure had a poor fit the data [$\chi 2$ (44) = 699, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .210, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.196, .223), and CFI = .561].

3.6.2.4. My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 16 items of My Responses to Relationship Problems Scale. The factor structure moderately fit the data [$\chi 2$ (98) = 407, p < .001, RMSEA = .096, RMSEA 90 percent confidence interval (.086, .106), and CFI = .835].

3.6.3. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation

A bivariate correlation was conducted to reveal the relationship between study variables. *Exit* response for the relationship problems was positively related to *neglect*, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction, and psychological need thwarting, and negatively related to *voice*, *loyalty*, and psychological need satisfaction. *Voice* response showed a positive association with *loyalty* and psychological need satisfaction, and a negative association with *neglect*, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction, and psychological need thwarting. *Loyalty* response only had a positive correlation with relationship contingent self-esteem and psychological need thwarting. *Neglect* response had a positive association with attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction, and psychological need thwarting, while it was negatively associated with psychological need satisfaction. Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients among the study variables were presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation of the Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. My Resp. to Rel. Problems - Exit	3.554	1.640	1									
2. My Resp. to Rel. Problems - Voice	6.268	1.472	**-.484****	1								
3. My Resp. to Rel. Problems - Loyalty	4.323	1.477	**-.324****	**.385****	1							
4. My Resp. to Rel. Problems - Neglect	3.936	1.436	**.397****	**-.406****	.049	1						
5. Attachment Anxiety	3.153	1.337	**.361****	**-**.096	.028	**.133***	1					
6. Attachment Avoidance	2.505	1.143	**.350****	**-.241****	**-**.070	**.285****	**.505****	1				
7. Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem	3.642	.620	.037	.058	**.161****	**-**.053	**.368****	**-**.107	1			
8. Psychological Need Satisfaction	5.422	.691	**-.305****	**.320****	.022	**-.196****	**-.412****	**-.578****	.094	1		
9. Psychological Need Dissatisfaction	2.484	.875	**.380****	**-.218****	.085	**.266****	**.566****	**.487****	**.183****	**-.631****	1	
10. Psychological Need Thwarting	2.608	.905	**.282****	**-.161****	**.126***	**.248****	**.601****	**.471****	**.189****	**-.600****	**.853****	1

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

One-way ANOVA was conducted to reveal gender differences (if any) among study variables (see Table 8). Exit and voice responses did not differ by gender. However, men showed significantly higher *loyalty* behaviors, while women showed significantly more *neglect* behaviors. Attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, and relationship contingent self-esteem did not differ by gender. Women participants had significantly higher levels of basic psychological need satisfaction than men. Men's basic psychological need dissatisfaction and thwarting scores were significantly higher than women's.

Table 8
Gender Differences on Study Variables

		Women (N = 185)		**Men (N = 144)**	
	F(1,237)	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
MRRP - Exit	3.764	3.708	1.579	3.356	1.701
MRRP - Voice	.288	6.230	1.458	6.318	1.495
MRRP - Loyalty	**10.967****	**4.089**	**1.459**	**4.625**	**1.452**
MRRP - Neglect	**3.864**[a]	**4.073**	**1.478**	**3.760**	**1.367**
Attachment anxiety	.889	3.215	1.365	3.075	1.300
Attachment avoidance	.222	2.479	1.176	2.539	1.105
RCSE	1.470	3.606	.655	4.689	.570
BPN – Satisfied	**5.576***	**5.501**	**.657**	**5.321**	**.724**
BPN – Dissatisfied	**5.32***	**2.387**	**.841**	**2.610**	**.905**
BPN - Thwarted	**5.415***	**2.506**	**.904**	**2.739**	**.895**

Note. MRRP = My Responses to Relationship Problems; RCSE = Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem; BPN = Basic Psychological Need. $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; $^{a}p = .05$.

3.6.4. Regression Analyses

A series of regression analyses were conducted to investigate the relationship between personal and relational predictors and four alternative responses (*exit*, *voice*, *loyalty*, and *neglect*) to relationship problems (see Table 9). Results indicated that the model was a significant predictor of the *exit* response, *voice* response, *loyalty* response, and *neglect* response, where explained variance ranged between .056 and .218.

It was found that the *exit* response had a significant positive relationship with attachment anxiety (β = .24, p < .01), attachment avoidance (β = .14, p < .05), and psychological need dissatisfaction (β = .41, p < .01), and negative relationship with psychological need thwarting (β = -.29, p < .01). Thus study results supported hypotheses H2a, H5a, and H6a. The *voice* response had only a significant positive relationship with psychological need satisfaction (β = .28, p < .01), supporting hypothesis H4. The *loyalty* response had a significant positive association with relationship contingent self-esteem (β = .14, p < .05) and psychological need thwarting (β = .25, p < .05). Results supported hypotheses H3 and H6c. The *neglect* response had a significant positive relationship with attachment avoidance (β = .24, p < .01), supporting hypothesis H2d.

Table 9
Results of the Regression Analyses

	Exit	Voice	Loyalty	Neglect
***F*(6,322)**	**14.957****	**7.235****	**3.180****	**6.982****
R²	**.218**	**.119**	**.056**	**.115**
Attachment Anxiety	**.235** [.115, .463]**	.080 [-.078, .253]	-.096 [-.278, .066]	-.099 [-.268, .056]
Attachment Avoidance	**.141* [.012, .392]**	-.115 [-.330, .033]	-.079 [-.291, .086]	**.242** [.127, .482]**
Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem	-.052 [-.442, .166]	-.008 [-.310, .269]	**.139* [.030, .632]**	-.050 [-.398, .168]
Psychological Need Satisfaction	-.036 [-.420, .247]	**.277** [.271, .907]**	.060 [-.203, .457]	.080 [-.144, .477]
Psychological Need Dissatisfaction	**.408** [.398, 1.133]**	-.156 [-.613, .088]	-.022 [-.401, .327]	.186 [-.038, .647]
Psychological Need Thwarting	**-.286** [-.871, -.165]**	.146 [-.098, .574]	**.249* [.057, .755]**	.092 [-.183, .475]

n = 329; ***p* =< .01; **p* < .05. Values in brackets show the lower and upper bounds of the 95 percent confidence intervals.

3.6.5. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation among Subscales of the Study Variables

A bivariate correlation was conducted to reveal the relationship between study variables, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness subscales of basic psychological need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting. Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients among the study variables were presented in Table 10.

Exit response for the relationship problems was positively related to *neglect*, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction and psychological need thwarting subscales, and negatively related to *voice*, *loyalty*, and

psychological need satisfaction subscales. *Voice* response indicated a positive association with *loyalty*, and psychological need satisfaction subscales, and a negative association with *neglect*, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction subscales, and thwarted autonomy and relatedness subscales. *Loyalty* response had a positive correlation with relationship contingent self-esteem, psychological need dissatisfaction autonomy subscale, and thwarted basic psychological autonomy subscale. *Neglect* response had a positive association with attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, psychological need dissatisfaction subscales, and psychological need thwarting subscales, while it had a negative association with psychological need satisfaction subscales.

Table 10
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlation among Subscales of the Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. MRRP – Exit	3.554	1.640	1															
2. MRRP – Voice	6.268	1.472	**-.484****	1														
3. MRRP – Loyalty	4.323	1.477	**-.324****	**.385****	1													
4. MRRP – Neglect	3.936	1.436	**.397****	**-.406****	.049	1												
5. Attach. Anxiety	3.153	1.337	**.361****	**-**.096	.028	**.133***	1											
6. Attach. Avoidance	2.505	1.143	**.350****	**-.241****	**-**.070	**.285****	**.505****	1										
7. RCSE	3.642	.620	.037	.058	**.161****	-.053	**.368****	**-**.107	1									
8. PNS – Autonomy	5.456	.883	**-.275****	**.228****	**-**.060	**-.154****	**-.437****	**-.518****	**-**.047	1								
9. PNS – Competence	4.905	.958	**-.266****	**.238****	.039	**-.156****	**-.306****	**-.392****	.099	**.453****	1							
10. PNS – Relatedness	5.704	.719	**-.221****	**.325****	.079	**-.178****	**-.276****	**-.512****	**.185****	**.593****	**.530****	1						
11. PND – Autonomy	2.536	1.078	**.288****	**-.186****	**.136***	**.288****	**.517****	**.460****	**.196****	**-.689****	**-.335****	**-.430****	1					
12. PND – Competence	2.380	.936	**.310****	**-.221****	.038	**.210****	**.499****	**.431****	.086	**-.572****	**-.427****	**-.405****	**.717****	1				
13. PND – Relatedness	2.535	1.010	**.392****	**-.164****	.041	**.190****	**.457****	**.374****	**.188****	**-.514****	**-.261****	**-.388****	**.619****	**.546****	1			
14. PNT – Autonomy	2.630	1.192	**.242****	**-.139***	**.151****	**.247****	**.408****	**.358****	**.130***	**-.645****	**-.301****	**-.336****	**.790****	**.608****	**.552****	1		
15. PNT – Competence	2.965	1.226	**.204****	**-**.055	.108	**.192****	**.643****	**.429****	**.215****	**-.493****	**-.326****	**-.345****	**. 616****	**.659****	**.508****	**.550****	1	
16. PNT – Relatedness	2.228	.905	**.252****	**-.226****	.033	**.158****	**.395****	**.362****	.106	**-.498****	**-.223****	**-.421****	**.572****	**.527****	**.564****	**.489****	**.439****	1

Note. MRRP = My Responses to Relationship Problems; RCSE = Relationship Contingent Self-Esteem; PNS = Psychological Need Satisfaction; PND = Psychological Need Dissatisfaction; PNT = Psychological Need Thwarting; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

Two vignettes were created to measure participants' reactions to dissatisfying situations had the same options that represent *exit* ("I consider breaking up."), *voice* ("I talk to him or her about what's upsetting me."), *loyalty* ("I patiently wait for things to improve."), and *neglect* responses ("I criticize him/her for things that are unrelated to the real problem."). Preliminary study results with 121 participants indicated that vignettes created for this study failed to grasp variance (see Table 11). In both vignettes, the majority of the participants (76% in vignette 1 and 73% in vignette 2) indicated that they would select *voice* when there is a problem in their romantic relationship. That was followed by the *loyalty* response (15%) in the first vignette and the *exit* response (21%) in the second vignette. Therefore, these vignettes were not included in the remaining data collection process.

Table 11
Distribution of the Vignette Answers

		Exit	**Voice**	**Loyalty**	**Neglect**	**Total**
Vignette 1	**Female**	2(2%)	49(40%)	10(8%)	1(1%)	62(51%)
	Male	7(5%)	43(36%)	8(7%)	1(1%)	59(49%)
	Total	9(7%)	92(76%)	18(15%)	2(2%)	121
		Exit	**Voice**	**Loyalty**	**Neglect**	**Total**
Vignette 2	**Female**	12(10%)	48(39%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	62(51%)
	Male	13(11%)	41(34%)	1(1%)	4(3%)	59(49%)
	Total	25(21%)	89(73%)	2(2%)	5(4%)	121

Note. Percentages were shown in the parentheses.

3.7. Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the role of individual and relational predictors on individuals' responses to relationship problems. Study variables were analyzed for gender differences. Although inconsistent findings were found in studies on the relationship between *loyalty* behaviors and gender, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Gaines and colleagues (1997; Okutan et al., 2017; Taluy, 2013). Men showed more *loyalty* and less *neglect* behaviors in response to dissatisfying situations, although their basic needs were significantly less satisfied, more dissatisfied, and more neglected in their romantic relationships. This can be interpreted as men in young adulthood are more willing to maintain their romantic relationships compared to women. But, it can also be interpreted as that men who invest less in their relationship will not be willing to participate in a study on romantic relationships, even in exchange for course credits. Therefore, there could be a selection bias by non-random sampling. The results of the study partially supported the proposed hypotheses. The findings are discussed in the section below.

3.7.1. Findings of the Regression Analyses

Anxiously attached individuals are expected to show more passive and less active behaviors when they experience dissatisfying situations. Because of the negative self-views, common among individuals with high attachment anxiety, the break-up decision is less likely to be made by these people (Slotter & Finkel, 2009). However, the findings did not support the hypothesis (*H1a*). Attachment anxiety was only positively associated with the *exit* response and not with the other responses. Though they are reluctant to break-up, their demand for a positive change in relationships can make them engage in verbal and physical aggression during conflictual situations (Campbell et al., 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012;

Overall et al., 2014). Thus, although the break-up decision is used as a clear and ultimate break-up in this study, for some individuals, it might not be perceived as a means of a final break-up, but as a means to tell the partner to pull oneself together. If *exit* response was used to change the partner's behavior to maintain the romantic relationship, then it can be argued that for some participants, *exit* behaviors are something active and constructive for the relationship. The correlation table (Table 7) shows a positive relationship between attachment anxiety and *neglect* behaviors. This illustrates the dilemma that anxiously attached individuals are in (the desire to maintain their romantic relationship and change the relationship for the better) and how their responses are destructive for their romantic relationships the ones they want to maintain.

Avoidantly attached individuals interact less with their partners and do not want to share their thoughts and feelings even in situations that do not satisfy them (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012). Consistent with the vast attachment theory literature, attachment avoidance was positively associated with *exit* and *neglect* responses, supporting Hypothesis 2. Having a higher tendency to show *exit* and *neglect* responses shows that avoidant individuals tend to engage in destructive behaviors in romantic relationships. Similarly, the correlation table (Table 7) showed that these individuals exhibited fewer *voice* behaviors. This can also be interpreted as avoidant individuals who are not satisfied with the relationship are more prone to walk away and show less constructive behaviors.

Individuals get higher scores on relationship contingent self-esteem when they attribute their values to the success or failure of their romantic relationships. For them, being in a romantic relationship (even in an unsatisfying one) is better than being alone. Thus, supporting the hypothesis (*H3*), a significant positive relationship was found between the relationship contingent self-esteem and the *loyalty* response. As not being in a romantic

relationship is too costly for them, the only response they would give is the passive and constructive response, *loyalty*. Since there is no feedback mechanism to the partner about the dissatisfying situation, there will be no risk of deterioration of the relationship.

The results confirmed *Hypothesis 4* that individuals whose basic psychological needs were satisfied in the romantic relationship were expected to show constructive and active behavior (*voice* response) under dissatisfying situations. Individuals actively seek situations that fulfill their psychological needs. Those who are generally satisfied with their relationships and whose basic needs are met in a relationship seek conditions that can improve the relationship without giving up on their romantic relationships, as temporary fluctuations in basic need satisfaction do not create a big turmoil. The correlation table (Table 7) also showed that individuals' basic needs satisfaction decreased *exit* and *neglect* behaviors. It can be said that more constructive behaviors are exhibited in conflictual situations. Also, the subscales correlation table (Table 10) showed that autonomy, competence, and relatedness were all positively related to *voice* behaviors, and negatively related to *exit* and *neglect* behaviors. Therefore, though competence need was argued to be the least important basic psychological needs in romantic relationships (La Guardia et al., 2000), it is significantly related to EVN responses.

Individuals were expected to be motivated to exhibit less constructive behaviors (*voice* and *loyalty* response) and more destructive behaviors (*exit* and *neglect* response) when their psychological needs were dissatisfied. Regression results partially supported this hypothesis (H5a). Individuals show more destructive and active behaviors (*exit* responses) when they feel their basic needs are dissatisfied. Even though their partners do not intend to dissatisfy their needs, individuals whose basic psychological needs are not satisfied in the relationship may question why they are still in that relationship in case of conflict. In

addition, bivariate correlation results (Table 7) illustrated that they are more likely to show another destructive behavior (*neglect* behavior) and less likely to show *voice* response as response to dissatisfying situations. Dissatisfied autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs, as shown in Table 10, were related positively to *exit* and *neglect* behaviors, and negatively to *voice* behaviors. Yet, Table 10 showed a significant positive correlation between the dissatisfied autonomy need and *loyalty* behaviors. As this link could not be found in composite basic psychological need dissatisfaction, checking all subscales to see different patterns could be beneficial to find unique associations. The positive relationship between dissatisfied autonomy need and *loyalty* behaviors shows that if individuals encounter a conflictual situation, the only constructive behavior they are willing to do about their relationship is *loyalty* behaviors. This can be interpreted as they do not prefer to take an active role in saving their relationships.

For psychological need thwarting situations, more passive behaviors (*loyalty* and *neglect* behaviors) and less active behaviors (*exit* and *voice* behaviors) were expected since individuals could feel as if they were incapable of changing the situations into something satisfying. Yet, the findings partially supported this hypothesis (H6a and H6c), indicating that individuals with thwarted basic psychological needs could show more *loyalty* responses to relationship problems and fewer *exit* responses. People whose basic needs are oppressed by their partners do not see themselves as capable of creating a better life, which prevents them from taking action (*voice* response) to improve their relationship. As their oppressor partner might retaliate, an *exit* response could be perceived as a difficult decision to make. The fear of retaliation might cause them to show more passive behaviors (*loyalty* and *neglect* responses), as depicted in the correlational table (Table 7). Because of this, all they can do is hope their partners somehow figure out their mistakes and improve. When Table 10 (the

correlation table with subscales) is examined, it is seen that the positive relationship between aggregated basic psychological needs thwarted and *loyalty* responses comes from thwarted autonomy need. None of the other basic psychological needs were related to *loyalty* behaviors. Moreover, all the subscales were positively related to *exit* and *neglect* behaviors. Autonomy and relatedness were negatively associated with *voice* response, while thwarted competence need was not associated with it. It could be argued that when individuals' autonomy and relatedness needs were thwarted, the desire to do something constructive for the relationship decreases. The absence of a relationship between the thwarted competence need and *voice* response lack of association may be related to learned helplessness as they would not think that they can change their relationships for the better.

3.7.2. Vignettes

In the first vignette, more than three-quarters of participants stated they would talk to their partner about what upset them (*voice* behavior), followed by 14.87% selecting they would patiently wait for things to improve (*loyalty* behavior). These two responses generated 90.9% of the total responses, which remained so little variance for the other options. Only 2 participants declared that they would criticize their partners on issues unrelated to the main problem, which falls into the scope of passive-aggressive behaviors. Similarly, almost three-quarters of participants preferred to talk with their partner about the upsetting situation (*voice* behavior) in the second vignette, followed by one-fifth (25 participants) choosing to break-up with their partner (*exit* behavior). Again, these two options in vignette 2 generated 94.2% of the total responses, leaving little room for the other options.

These results can be explained in two ways. The first one could be the quality of the vignettes. If the vignettes failed to engage participants to feel the dilemma and empathize with themselves in such a situation, it might have triggered them to choose the non-emotional, rational, option. This contrasts with the fact that people do not act rationally in every decision. It is possible that vignettes failed to capture the impulsiveness of individuals' decision-making process. The second one may be the social desirability (Grimm, 2010). It could be why most participants selected the *voice* response with so little room for others.

3.8. Limitations and Future Directions

The findings of this study should be interpreted cautiously, considering the limitations. Results have relied on correlational data; and therefore the direction of causality cannot be determined. Longitudinal and experimental studies are needed to provide more substantial evidence regarding the nature and direction of the relationships found in this study. This study examined only three predictors' effects on EVLN. However, different predictors in the literature have been previously shown to be related to romantic break-ups (e.g., commitment) and have not yet been found to be related. It will be possible to shed light on romantic break-ups with comprehensive studies on how the break-up decision is made.

Instead of using a questionnaire, two vignettes were generated for this study. Individuals were asked to decide what they would like to do under two specific situations and they were forced to select only one reaction. Although a variance between answers was expected to be seen, as discussed, vignettes failed. There was no use in measuring individuals' responses with these two vignettes. Social desirability, like in any self-reported

study, may be the reason for slight variance. Yet, if the reason individuals' similar responses was not social desirability, then the vignettes might be problematic.

Along with collecting data for the two other research questions (RQ1 and RQ3), to understand if and what is wrong with the vignettes, 18 focus group studies were conducted in late 2016. Since the answers to the research questions were presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, only the findings related to vignettes from the focus group sessions were in the following section.

3.9. Findings of the Vignette Evaluations in the Focus Group Sessions

The vignette evaluations of each focus group session were combined to see the pattern (if any) (see Appendix I). Separate vignette evaluations for women, men, singles, and couples were also tabulated (see Appendix J[J1, J2] and Appendix K[K1, K2], respectively). In general, the first and second vignettes made participants indecisive. While some of them liked the vignettes, some utterly disliked them. Participants had an opinion on the remaining three vignettes. While the third and fourth were perceived as good scenarios, they agreed to dislike the fifth one (see Table 12).

Regardless of gender and relationship status, participants seem unable to decide if they like the second scenario, about seeing partner being intimate with someone else. They also identify themselves with the protagonist in the fourth scenario, about the partner's behavior even though he/she knows that participants won't like it. The fifth scenario failed to engage participants in, about learning partner's online dating app account.

Women and singles tended to like the third scenario and disliked the first one, about the partner's future plan without them in it. The first vignette made men and couples identify

with the protagonist, while the third made them unable to decide what to feel about catching a partner's lie.

Table 12
An Overview of the Vignette Evaluations

	1st vignette	2nd vignette	3rd vignette	4th vignette	5th vignette
Women	FI	U	I	I	FI
Men	I	U	U	I	FI
Singles	FI	U	I	I	FI
Couples	I	U	U	I	FI
All sessions	U	U	I	I	FI

Note. I = identify with the protagonist; FI = failed to identify with the protagonist; U = unable to decide what to feel.

In each session, participants agreed on not just choosing an option if they would be the protagonist. Some said they would choose one option first (e.g., *voice* response), and according to the situation, follow the others (e.g., *exit* or *neglect* response). For some, the four alternative options did not provide the variety they were looking for. For example, shouting or arguing with partners is not covered by the *voice* option. But they said that if they needed to pick one option, they would have selected the *voice* one.

Some stated that some of the situations narrated in the vignettes would not trigger negative emotions or conflictual situations. Although there was no need for them to make a decision, each vignette ended with an expression of discomfort with the situation and did not give them the option to feel something different. Those who could not identify with the protagonist stated that the situation was doubtful to happen. As identifying with the protagonist is essential for vignettes to be successful, only the fourth vignette managed to trigger that identification. The first and third vignettes followed it, but only some participants, not all, could identify with the protagonist.

As a result of the vignette evaluations in the focus group sessions, if a vignette is to be used, it is seen that preliminary data should be collected from the target sample on what disturbing/conflictual situations are. Also, instead of creating a structured vignette (e.g., providing multiple choice questions), open-ended questions (for example, with a "what would you do?" question) should be used. Thus, the participants can express themselves more easily and can indicate their responses closer to the decisions they will take under dissatisfying situations.

CHAPTER 4

REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS

People do not decide to terminate their romantic relationship in every situation they encounter. Understanding when individuals decide to move on is vital to understanding what is forgivable in a relationship and what is beyond repair. Another issue that needs to be examined regarding break-ups is the reasons that cause the romantic break-ups. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the third research question of this thesis: What are the reasons for romantic break-ups? (RQ3). The reasons for break-ups have been presented in different studies in the literature (e.g., breach of trust (Negash et al., 2014; Shackelford et al., 2002), alternative partners (Ritchie et al., 2021), unmet psychological needs (Connolly & McIsaac, 2009; Sprecher, 2002)). Though studies mostly examine the nature of only one type of reason for romantic break-ups, in-depth examinations of the reasons for romantic break-ups were also published in recent years (Chandra & Parija, 2021; Joel et al., 2018). This study aims to contribute the in-depth studies about romantic break-ups.

4.1. Method

The data was collected from the 18 focus group sessions. How these sessions were carried out was presented in detail in Chapter 2 (pp. 12). To avoid repetition, the method was briefly described in this section.

4.1.1. Participants

The data was collected through one pilot and 17 focus-group sessions in November and December 2016. Eligibility requirements were being heterosexual, at least 18 years old, being in a romantic relationship for more than three months or had a romantic relationship that lasted more than three months, and not being engaged, married, or widowed. A total of 131 undergrad and grad students (74 women, 56.49% of the total) participated in this study. They ranged in age from 18 to 28 years, with a mean age of 23. Seventy-four participants (56.49%) were currently in a romantic relationship.

Ninety-seven of the 131 participants attended single-sex sessions. Initially, focus group studies were planned to be performed only in single-sex sessions. However, after the completion of the 13 single-sex sessions, additional five mixed-group sessions were held. The main reasons for doing additional mixed-group sessions were to reveal whether there was any difference between single-sex and mixed-group sessions, and when there was a representative of the opposite sex in the room, how they would express their opinions. During the focus group studies, women participants were represented more in both singles' and couples' sessions than men.

4.1.2. Measurement

All focus group sessions were semi-structured with open-ended questions (see Appendix B). Questions were related to three phases of romantic relationships: initiation of the relationships, during the relationships, and termination of the relationships. Followed by participants were asked to write five reasons for break-ups on a blank paper (see Appendix L). Then, they were given another blank evaluation form to evaluate the reasons for break-ups they wrote on the blank papers (see Appendix M). They also read five vignettes at the

end of the focus group sessions to evaluate and discuss the texts (see Appendix G), the findings of which were presented in Chapter 3.

4.1.3. Procedure

A call for participation in focus-group sessions was made through the SONA systems (a subject pool software for universities) for students who were heterosexual, at least 18 years old, unmarried, and in a romantic relationship for more than three months, or had a romantic relationship that lasted more than three months but not involved in a romantic relationship at the time of the data collection. Study announcements were uploaded to SONA systems separately for single men, single women, couple men, and couple women. Interested individuals selected the time slots that were suitable for them on the system and made an appointment for a pre-interview meeting.

Participants attended a pre-interview meeting and a focus group session. They were informed about the study and the confidentiality of the sessions in the pre-interview meeting. They were also told that they could withdraw from the study anytime. When they come for the focus group session if they do not want to talk about their private lives in the presence of someone they know, attending another focus group session was also possible. They filled out some questionnaires, answered some demographic questions, and picked a date for a focus group session on the pre-interview day. Focus group sesions were carried out in the METU Department of Business Administration focus group study room. All focus group studies lasted approximately two hours, and sessions were audio-visually recorded. Some complimentary food and drink were offered before and throughout sessions. Sessions were held after the classes on weekdays.

Before the sessions started, the importance of confidentiality was stressed and demanded from session members. Since sharing experiences was based on willingness, participants answered questions anytime they wanted to share with the group. The structure of questions varied depending on participants' relationship status. When they were in a romantic relationship at the time of data collection, they were asked to talk specifically about that relationship. There were also participants who were not in a romantic relationship at the time of data collection. They have had at least one romantic relationship that has lasted more than three months. Single participants with more than one romantic relationship experience were free to talk about one of their romantic relationships as long as they met the study conditions. Yet, they were asked to choose the most vivid one in their memory or the most recent one so that they could remember events relatively easy.

All sessions begin with questions about how they met their partners. With these questions at the beginning of the sessions, it was aimed to provide the participants an environment in which they could feel much more comfortable before talking about the issues in their relationships they might hesitate to discuss. Although the sessions proceeded semi-structured, participants answered questions related to three phases of relationships: initiation of the relationships, during the relationships, and termination of the relationships. In the final step, they provided some reasons for break-ups, and evaluated them and the vignettes.

4.2. Findings and Discussion

4.2.1. Relationship Structure

The relationship structure did not vary among 18 focus group sessions. The duration of relationships ranged between medium to long term ($M_{duration}$ = 805 days ~ 2 years and 2.5

months). Two-thirds of the participants were in a romantic relationship for more than a year. Even though they were young on average, there were some participants in a romantic relationship for more than three years. It has been observed that most romantic relationships were established between people living in the same city. Some participants shared the same house with their partners. In contrast, at most one participant in each session reported living in a different city from their partner, even for a particular time. Those in long-term relationships kept in touch with their partners through technology-assisted communication tools and often traveled to the other city to be together (i.e., twice a month).

4.2.2. The Reasons for Break-ups in Romantic Relationships

People do not decide to terminate their romantic relationship in every situation they encounter. Understanding when individuals decide to move on is vital to understanding what is forgivable in a relationship and what is beyond repair. A blank sheet was given to all participants at the end of each session to learn their five reasons for romantic break-ups. They were asked to fill out the sheets individually. Although the reasons were written in many ways and forms in 18 focus group sessions, they were gathered under some categories. The break-up reasons and their definitions used in this study were derived from Joel and colleagues (2018) study. Joel and colleagues categorized 25 reasons for romantic break-ups, while in this study, the break-up reasons fit only 21 categories. These categories, definitions, and a few examples for each break-up reasons participants provided in Turkish (and their English translations) were tabulated below (see Table 13).

Some reasons whose meaning could not be determined were coded as uncodable. For instance, a single woman wrote “yetersizlik hissiyle gelen suçluluk/guilt that comes with a sense of inadequacy” into her list. Yet, the sentence itself did not provide information

on whether this feeling of inadequacy originated from a partner-driven source. Likewise "eski sevgililer faktörü/ex-partners factor" could be categorized under breach of trust (an actual/perceived threat to the relationship), alternative partners (if stated ex-partner wants to reunite), and violation of expectations and lack of validation (if the partner makes a comparison between the current and ex-partners). Thus any assessment attempt without a context could be inconclusive. Another reason that a man listed "ilişkinin karadelik haline gelmesi/having relationship like a black hole" seems a bit of lack of enjoyment and a bit too demanding. Similarly, "eğlenmek için başlıyor olması/ it began for fun" reason might seem to be relevant to the categories of violation of expectations, lack of enjoyment, and incompatibility. However, this sentence alone is not clear enough to understand which category is more suitable for the reason.

Table 13
A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Alternative partner	Someone fell in love with someone else, someone is leaving the current relationship for someone else, you believe you can get someone better	Başka birinden etkilenme Yeni birinden hoşlanma Başka birine karşı bir şey hissediyor olmak	Having feelings for someone else Liking someone new Feeling something for someone else
Breach of trust	The partner was deceptive, the partner cheated or was suspected of cheating, couldn't trust the partner	İhanet Sadakatsizlik Yalan Samimiyetsizlik Karşı tarafa güvenememe Karşısındaki insanı aptal yerine koyma Sürekli test etme ihtiyacı	Betrayal Unfaithfulness Lie Insincerity Inability to trust the partner Fooling the other person The need for continuous testing
Conflict	Too much arguing, we aren't getting along, fighting all the time—different from incompatibility in that the emphasis is on the frequency and unpleasantness of the conflict as opposed to a root "lack of fit" problem	Kavgaların dayanılmayacak bir hal alması Şiddetli geçimsizlik Sürekli kavga	Unbearable fights Severe conflicts Constant fights

Table 13
A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Deal Breaker	Addiction, abuse, legal issues, psychological problems, partner was controlling—the emphasis should be on partner's problems. With the exception of cheating or lying, which goes under trust	Mental disorder Baskı kurma Kısıtlayıcı/Kendini kısıtlanmış hissetmek Kendime vakit ayırmama razı olmaması Karşı tarafın sahibiymiş gibi davranılması	Mental disorder Coerce Restrictive/Feeling restricted Partner's unwillingness to spare time for myself Treating the other party as a property
Discomfort with commitment	You feel it is moving too fast, feel smothered or trapped, need space, it is getting too serious, need to be alone, want to be single—the emphasis is on the self, instead of the partner	Bağlılıktan uzak durma Çok ciddi ilişki	Avoiding commitment Very serious relationship
Emotional distance	Loss/lack of love, grew apart, not talking, not enough closeness	İletişimsizlik Sevgiyi ve aşkı kaybetme Sevginin azalması/Sevmemek Yakınken bir anda uzak konuma düşülmesi	Miscommunication Loss of love Lack of love Falling apart when being close to one another

Table 13
A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
External reasons	Environmental influences, for example, someone had to move away. Anything that's outside the relationship or outside of both partners' control	Mesafe Araya giren uzun mesafe Farklı şehir, ülkede yaşamak Yaşanılan yerlerin değişmesi (ayrı şehirler, ülkeler)	Distance Long distance Living in different cities or countries A change in the living environment (different cities, countries)
General frustration	Refers to general frustration rather than frustration related to specific. For example, "partner gets on my nerves," "annoyed," "partner irritates me," "frustrated by partner," and so on.	Birbirine karşı toleransın düşmesi Bıkkınlık Huzurlu hissetmeme Mutlu edememe/olamama	Low tolerance towards each other Boredom Not feeling peaceful Not being happy / not making happy
Incompatibility	You don't see eye-to-eye, different lifestyles, you have different values, diverging personalities, you don't get along	Geleceğe dönük farklı istekler Beklentilerin farklı olması Dünya görüşü farklılıkları Kafa uyuşmazlığı (siyasi görüş, düşünce)	Different future plans Different expectations World view differences Conflict of mind (political views, thoughts)

Table 13

A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Inequity	The relationship is one-sided or unbalanced, one member of the relationship is under-benefitted, there is unfairness	Bencillik Eşitsizlik Ego Kendisini ilişkide daha önemli görmesi Fedakarlık göstermeme	Selfishness Inequality Ego Putting oneself first in the relationship Giving no devotion
Jealousy	Jealousy	(Aşırı) Kıskançlık	(Extreme) Jealousy
Lack of enjoyment	The relationship got stale, boring, you're no longer getting anything out of it, things aren't fun anymore	Heyecanın bitmesi Monotonlaşma Sıradanlık Sıkılma	Loss of excitement Monotony Ordinariness Boredom
Lack of validation	For example, you don't feel appreciated, respected, understood, you don't feel heard, you feel taken for granted	Hoşgörüsüzlük İlişki içinde kendini değersiz hissetme Saygısızlık Hakaret Karşı tarafı olduğu gibi kabul etmeme Hayatta yapmak istediklerinin küçümsenmesi	Intolerance Feeling worthless in the relationship Disrespect Insult Not accepting the partner as she/he is Belittlement of wanting what to do in my life

Table 13

A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Partner's personality	Partner flaws that could make a person want to leave. For example, this person is lazy, boring, and too flaky. Has to be about the partner him or herself and not a product of the two individuals or the relationship as a whole	Cimrilik Karamsarlık İnatçı olması Gereksiz gurur	Stinginess Pessimism Being stubborn Unnecessary pride
Partner withdrawal	The partner is no longer supportive, no longer committed, seems to be losing interest, isn't affectionate anymore. Different from loss of attraction or emotional distance in that it is clearly the partner who is withdrawing	Artık birbirini anlamaya çabalamamak İlgisizlik Onu görmek için özel zaman yaratmamak, çabalamamak Boşvermişlik	No longer trying to understand each other Indifference Not creating a special time to see him/her, not trying Given up
Physical distance	Bad sex life, no sex life, not enough physical affection	Cinsellik	Sex life

Table 13
A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Pursuit of other opportunities	For example, you want more excitement or personal growth, want the freedom of singlehood—just not alternative partners which goes above	İlişkinin ihtiyaçlara cevap verememesi İlişkinin kişiye yeni bir şey katmamaya başlaması	The relationship fails to satisfy the needs The relationship does not add anything new to the person
Social consequences	Your parents disapprove, the relationship is harming your friendships—social pressure to leave, not getting along with partner's friends or family	Ailelerin karşı çıkması Toplum/Arkadaş baskısı Aile ya da başkaları gibi dış sebepler Aile baskısı	Parents disapprovement (of the relationship) Community/Friend pressure External causes, such as family or others Family pressure
Too demanding	The relationship is emotionally taxing, demanding, or exhausting. For example, the relationship is taking too much time, they don't have time for the relationship, and the partner needed a lot of attention	Zaman yetersizliği Meşguliyet Fazla ilgi beklemek Kendime ait alanımın olmaması	Lack of time Being busy Expecting too much attention Not having my personal space

Table 13

A General Overview of the Break-up Categories, Descriptions, and Participants' Reasons (Continued)

Categories	Description	Participants' Reasons in Turkish and in English	
Violation of expectations	This person is not who you thought you were, things have changed, the partner has changed, this relationship isn't what you thought it was going to be. General "this isn't what I signed up for" comparisons that don't fit in the other, more specific categories	Hayal kırıklığı Beklentilerin cevap bulmaması Çok yüksek standartlar, beklentiler Tatminsizlik	Frustration Failed expectations Very high standards, expectations Dissatisfaction
Uncodable	It's ambiguous what they mean, or none of the categories fit	Eğlenmek için başlıyor olması Eski sevgililer faktörü İlişkinin karadelik haline gelmesi	It began for fun Ex-partners factor Having relationship like a black hole

The analyses revealed that breach of trust was the only reason repeated in all sessions, regardless of participants' gender and relationship status. The fact that trust is the main reason for break-ups even at this young age, where individuals have just begun to experience committed relationships, can be interpreted as, regardless of how old the individual is, trust in a relationship as the most essential feature that nourishes/destroys the relationships. So much so that the loss of trust inevitably takes the relationship to the dissolution phase. Subsequently, incompatibility, emotional distance, and lack of validation were listed as the reasons for romantic break-ups in at least 80% of each gender subgroup, relationship status group, and the aggregated focus group sessions (for the common reasons for break-ups see Table 14, for detailed info see Appendix N). Compatibility and validity reasons may be the features that individuals rarely pay attention at the relationship formation phase. Because when they are noticed before the relationship begins, at least one of the parties is expected to be more reluctant to start that relationship. For this reason, it can be argued that these three reasons arise or are noticed when individuals spend more time together in a relationship.

Jealousy and external reasons were repeated in four-fifths of singles and couples sessions as well as the composite session. In the original break-up reasons categorization (Joel et al., 2018) jealousy was coded in the deal breaker category. Though some participants in this study perceived jealousy negatively, I noticed that in some sessions, jealousy was not perceived so negatively. Because for some, jealousy was expressed as an indicator of partners' love and affection, and is considered acceptable to some extent. Since the data was collected from university students, winter and summer breaks, internships in other cities or countries, being an exchange student for a semester or academic year, and graduation could be possible external reasons for individuals to break-up. Although some

participants stated that they managed to have long-distance relationships, they also emphasized that they were in the same city at the relationship formation phase. As their relationships become more stable over time, a physical distance may not be perceived as detrimental to the relationship.

Inequity was a more frequently listed reason among those in a romantic relationship, while conflict was another reason only those in a romantic relationship and the total focus group sessions mentioned. Individuals who are in a romantic relationship can remember problems they encounter more quickly than those who are not in a romantic relationship, which makes it easy to remember them when it comes to writing down the common reasons for break-ups. Among the reasons for women, singles, couples, and the aggregated session, partner withdrawal was listed as another reason for break-ups. The fact that this reason is less frequent in the men's group can be interpreted as them being the relatively withdrawing party in relationships. Also, deal breaking was similarly not listed in the men's sessions, which raises the idea that men may be the party that exhibits more deal breaking behaviors in romantic relationships.

Social consequences, unlike in men's, singles', couples', and total focus group sessions, were not among the frequently listed causes in the women's group. Although family and friends' disapproval of the relationship is in the definition of social consequences, it can be said that the friend factor is more decisive for this specified age group. The family approval is expected to be less common reason for break-ups, considering that in Turkish culture, families are generally unaware of relationships (especially their daughters' romantic relationships) before a marriage decision is taken. This can be interpreted as that women initiate relationships after getting approval from their friends, or not keeping their friends who disapprove of their relationships around. Lack of enjoyment

was another reason for romantic break-ups. It was listed in all sessions regardless of gender and relationship status (for detailed information see Appendix O1, O2, P1, and P2 for women, men, singles, and couples' reasons, respectively).

Table 14
The Common Reasons for Break-ups

The Common Reasons	All	Women	Men	Singles	Couples
Breach of trust	X	X	X	X	X
Incompatibility	X	X	X	X	X
Emotional distance	X	X	X	X	X
Lack of validation	X	X	X	X	X
Jealousy	X	X*	X*	X	X
Inequity	X	X*	X*	X*	X
Conflict	X*				X*
Social consequences	X*		X*	X*	X*
Partner withdrawal	X	X	X*	X	X
Deal breaker	X*	X*		X*	X*
External reasons	X	X*	X*	X	X
Lack of enjoyment	X*	X*	X*	X*	X

Note. *X* in at least four fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons, *X** in at least more than three fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons of the participant's romantic break-ups.

As mentioned above, the data was collected from 13 single-sex and five mixed-group sessions. Although the number of mixed-group participants (17 women and 17 men) was one-third of the participants in the single-sex sessions (57 women and 40 men), this still gives an idea of whether there is a difference between session types. Table 15 was generated to provide a comparison between the break-up reasons collected from single-sex and mixed-group sessions. The four common reasons (i.e., breach of trust, incompatibility, emotional distance, and lack of validation) were listed in all sub-sessions, strengthening the argument that these four reasons can be the main reasons for break-ups. Individuals in

single-sex sessions appeared to list a greater variety of reasons for romantic break-ups than those in the mixed-group, regardless of which session they were in (i.e., women, men, singles, and couples) (for detailed information see Appendix R1 and R2). There may be some reasons to explain this difference. Fewer mixed-group sessions may have resulted in fewer reasons for break-ups listings. Another explanation might be that mixed-group session participants may feel less comfortable in an environment where people of the opposite sex were present.

Table 15
Comparison between the Reasons for Break-ups between Single-Sex and Mixed Group Sessions

Comparison between the Reasons for Break-Ups based on Session Types	Women		Men		Singles		Couples	
	Single -Sex	Mixed Group	Single -Sex	Mixed Group	Single -Sex	Mixed Group	Single -Sex	Mixed Group
Breach of trust	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Incompatibility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Emotional distance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lack of validation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jealousy	X		X	X*	X	X	X	X*
Inequity	X		X		X		X	X*
Conflict	X*						X*	X*
Social consequences	X*		X		X		X*	X
Partner withdrawal	X	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X
Deal breaker	X				X*		X*	
External reasons	X*	X	X		X	X	X*	X
Lack of enjoyment	X		X*	X*	X		X*	X

Note. *X* in at least four fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons, *X** in at least more than three fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons of the participant's romantic break-ups.

Participants later rated their romantic break-up reasons between 1 (I would keep my relationship) and 5 (I would definitely break-up with my partner) for their romantic relationships. The reasons scored on four and above were treated as the reasons for a definite

break-up. The analysis revealed that individuals came up with a much narrower list to end their romantic relationships (see Table 16). Although individuals listed their own five common reasons for break-ups, when it comes to a decision about the future of their relationships, only breach of trust, emotional distance, incompatibility, and lack of validation would stand for a break-up (for detailed info see Appendix S). Inequity and external reasons were counted as legitimate reasons for a break-up only for singles, while partner withdrawal was retained in women, singles, and the total of the focus group sessions (for detailed information see Appendix T1, T2, U1, and U2 for women, men, singles, and couples' reasons respectively).

Table 16
The Common Reasons to End Their Relationship

The Common Reasons to End Own Relationships	All	Women	Men	Singles	Couple
Breach of trust	X	X	X	X	X
Incompatibility	X	X*	X	X	X
Emotional distance	X	X	X	X	X
Lack of validation	X	X	X	X	X
Inequity				X*	
Partner withdrawal	X*	X*		X	
External reason				X	

Note. *X* in at least four fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons, *X** in at least more than three fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons of the participant's romantic break-ups.

When Table 14 and Table 16 were compared, it turns out that some of the common reasons for break-ups listed earlier do not apply when it comes to ending their relationships. Although the participants in all sessions stated that they attach importance to jealousy and lack of enjoyment, they did not see them enough to terminate their romantic relationships.

While conflict, social consequences, and deal breaker were listed in some sessions (i.e., aggregated session, women's, men's, singles', and couples' sessions) as reasons for break-ups, they were not seen as crucial reasons for ending their romantic relationships. Inequity and external reasons, though mentioned as a reason for break-up in all sessions, were counted as a reason to end their romantic relationships only in singles' sessions. Although partner withdrawal was rated as a common reason in all sessions, it was mentioned only in the women, singles, and the total sessions. Thus, the differences in these two tables (Table 14 and Table 16) can also be interpreted in a sense that people tolerate some of what they see as a reason to break-up to maintain their relationships.

Another table, Table 17, was generated to provide a comparison between the reasons to end their romantic relationships collected from single-sex and mixed-group sessions. As beforementioned, four common reasons (i.e., breach of trust, incompatibility, emotional distance, and lack of validation) were listed in all sub-sessions, which supports the claim that these four reasons are indeed perceived as the main reasons for break-ups. Similar to Table 15, individuals in single-sex sessions appeared to list a greater variety of reasons for break-up than those in the mixed group (for detailed information see Appendix V1 and V2).

Table 17
Comparison between the Reasons to End their Relationships between Single-Sex and Mixed Group Sessions

Comparison between the Reasons to End their Relationships based on Session Types	Women		Men		Singles		Couples	
	Single-Sex	Mixed Group	Single-Sex	Mixed Group	Single-Sex	Mixed Group	Single-Sex	Mixed Group
Breach of trust	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Incompatibility	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Emotional distance	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lack of validation	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Inequity	X		X*		X			
Social consequences				X*				X*
Partner withdrawal	X				X	X		
External reason					X	X		
Lack of enjoyment	X*				X*			

Note. *X* in at least four fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons, *X** in at least more than three fifths of the sessions, these categories were stated as the reasons of the participant's romantic break-ups.

4.3. Conclusion

The data obtained from 18 focus group studies revealed that 20 categories (the reasons other than uncodable) that individuals perceive as valid reasons to end romantic relationships could be classified into three: personal reasons, partner's personal reasons, and the relational factors. It can be thought that these first two categories are independent of external factors. But the third depends on the dynamics of the relationship, in which both parties have a stake in its formation, and this category can be affected by environmental factors. Among the reasons listed in Table 13 with their explanations and examples, emotional distance, lack of validation, social consequences, too demanding, alternative partner, partner withdrawal, partner's personality, violation of expectations, deal breaker, discomfort with commitment, and pursuit of other opportunities could be classified under

the first and second categories, and breach of trust, incompatibility, inequity, physical distance, conflict, external reason, lack of enjoyment, general frustration, and jealousy under the third category.

Regardless of the focus group sub-sessions (by sex, relationship status, and session types), items from these three categories constitute the most common reasons for romantic break-ups. It is safe to say that relationships can be disrupted by both individual and relational factors, since common causes are not tied to just one category. The person who wants to continue the romantic relationship can only control a small subset of the reasons. While they have control over personal and relational factors, there can always be a partner-related factor that can bring the relationship to the dissolution phase.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This thesis aimed to understand romantic break-ups in young adulthood with a quantitative and qualitative study. Chapter 2 presented the first step of the qualitative study and aimed to answer the first research question: What is a break-up? Although the findings showed different interpretations of romantic break-ups, individuals, regardless of their gender, generally evaluated romantic break-ups as more negative events (e.g., "hell, loneliness, depression, pain, disappointment"). The negative evaluation of romantic break-ups can also be considered as a feature that makes the decision to break-up difficult or causes individuals to avoid taking this decision as much as possible. Individuals tended to perceive romantic break-ups more positively only if they are already unhappy in their relationships (e.g., "I think it's a relief. I felt so suffocated in the final stages of my relationship. When it was ended, I was relieved that I did not have to deal with it anymore."). Participants, who were neutral to this notion, described romantic break-ups as a life event everyone will experience one day. Therefore, instead of being at odds with it, they expressed that they were more understanding and more accepting (e.g., "it's a process, neither a good nor a bad thing, it can be experienced").

The findings revealed that the connotations participants presented under five dimensions: beliefs about break-ups, emotions, (re)adjustment of self and time, grieving, and expectations for the future. The first dimension emerging from the focus group sessions

is beliefs about romantic break-ups. The answers given by the participants were closely related to how they perceived the break-up as an event. If the connotations were considered in the continuum of good and bad, some participants gave more neutral answers, while others evaluated it at more extreme ends. How they perceive romantic break-ups also influences how they respond to a break-up. So much so that those who see break-ups as an ordinary event stated that they would not wear themselves out during the break-up process. For them, it is a phase that they must go through. Yet, for some others, romantic break-ups are sad, devastating events.

The emotion dimension contains both positive and negative emotions. As noted above, people who were happy in their relationships expressed more negative emotions (e.g., longing, sadness, emptiness, pain, disappointment). In contrast, those who were unhappy stated more positive emotions (e.g., relief, happiness, relaxation, peaceful). Another argument could be that individuals' beliefs about romantic break-ups are also closely related to the emotions they experience. Those who perceive break-ups as neutral may experience and express less intense emotions (e.g., relief, relaxation, peaceful, emptiness, disappointment) after a break-up.

Whatever emotion it triggers, a romantic break-up means they cannot do the things they once did together. They need to change their routine or develop new habits. During the break-up process, they decide what they will devote to the time they plan to spend with their partners. Individuals can acquire new habits or revert to their old habits. Therefore, the romantic break-up creates the need to reconstruct their selves and time by finding out who they are after losing their extended-self (i.e., partners).

Romantic break-up also means a loss, which brings with it a complex structure of grieving (Cooley et al., 2010, 2014; Reimer & Estrada, 2021). Thoughts, behaviors,

feelings, support system, eating and drinking patterns, and music emerged as the sub-dimensions of grief. Although their ex-partners were not gone, they perceive break-ups as death because they can no longer see their exes and do things they once did together. For some, romantic break-ups mean the loss of a partner and a best friend, as they cannot reach out to them for affection and soothing. They may engage in stalking behaviors because being unable to reach them openly and find themselves crying about their loss. Developing different eating and drinking habits, experiencing rapid mood swings, and depression are also common in romantic break-ups (Davis et al., 2003; McKiernan et al., 2018; Rhoades et al., 2011; Studley & Chung, 2015). They may prefer to listen to music suitable for their mood. Previous research indicates that music is closely used for emotion regulation purposes (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007). Data collected from individuals who choose to listen to sad music when experiencing negative events revealed that listening to sad music enables them to validate negative emotions, regulate emotional experiences, and assist recollection of and reflection on past events (Garrido & Schubert, 2011; Sachs et al., 2015; Taruffi & Koelsch, 2014). Social support from close others helps individuals get through the break-up period by strengthening the adaptation process (Felmee et al., 1990; McKiernan et al., 2018, Barutçu Yıldırım & Demir, 2015). Although friends were mentioned as social support in this study, it should be considered that there may be figures other than close friends in the support system in different age groups.

Individuals may have darker expectations for the future. This is more likely for people who were happy in their romantic relationships and did not think they would ever break-up because these people do not believe that they will be as happy in another romantic relationship as in their ended one. They may think that they have lost the possibility of being happy again. Yet, this perception may also be related to the grieving process. Conversely,

it is the opposite for people who are unhappy in their ending relationships. These people think that they can establish better romantic relationships in the future, and they have more positive expectations for the future.

The findings of 18 focus group sessions revealed that a romantic break-up is a complex phenomenon. Although the connotations are generally related to the grieving process, it can be said that the perspective on romantic break-ups may be related to both the experienced emotions (valence and intensity) and the duration of the grieving process. It is also possible that the expectations about the future are also related to the beliefs about romantic break-ups. It is possible that after a romantic break-up, people will go to reconstruct themselves and their time. For this reason, the break-up phase can also be considered as a process in which people get to know themselves.

Chapter 3 aimed to answer to the second research question: What are the predictors affecting responses to dissatisfying situations? Attachment security, basic psychological need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting, and relationship contingent self-esteem were the predictors investigated in Chapter 3. Study variables were analyzed for gender differences. Men showed more *loyalty* and fewer *neglect* behaviors in response to dissatisfying situations, although their basic needs were significantly less satisfied, more dissatisfied, and more neglected in their romantic relationships. This can be interpreted as men in young adulthood are more willing to maintain romantic relationships than women. But, it can also be interpreted that men who invest less in their relationship will not be willing to participate in a study on romantic relationships, even in exchange for course credits. Therefore, there could be a selection bias by non-random sampling.

The results of four regression analyses illustrated that, in line with the literature (e.g., Gaines et al., 2000; Goodcase et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2019; Pietromonaco et al.,

2004; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1995), the *exit* behaviors seems to be taken more when individuals have higher attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. While individuals prefer to show more *exit* behaviors when their basic psychological needs are dissatisfied, they avoid any *exit* behavior when their needs are thwarted. Only basic psychological need satisfaction was related positively to the *voice* behaviors, while only attachment avoidance was positively correlated with *neglect* behaviors. *Loyalty* behaviors are shown more when individuals have higher relationship contingent self-esteem and thwarted basic psychological needs. These 7 variables examined were closely related to the decisions about the future of the relationships.

In addition, when the sub-dimensions of basic psychological needs are examined, it is observed that each sub-dimension is not related to EVLN outcomes in the same way (see Table 10). This can be evaluated as each basic need satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and thwarting may be related to different response behaviors. Findings showed that the dissatisfied and thwarted autonomy need was positively associated with *loyalty* behavior, while the thwarted autonomy and relatedness needs were negatively related to *voice* behavior. These results can also be interpreted as individuals who are not autonomously in the relationship give up taking an active role in problem-solving and show a more passive stance. In particular, dissatisfied three basic psychological needs trigger less *voice* behavior, and dissatisfied and thwarted basic psychological needs were positively correlated with *exit* and *neglect* behaviors supporting this view.

Although vignettes were used in this study, they were not preferred due to their failure to distinguish actions. Focus group sessions revealed participants could not identify themselves with the characters without context. They raised questions about the duration of the relationship and/or how well they interact with their supposed partner. Also, they did

not like that each vignette ended with an expression of discomfort with the situation and did not give them the option to feel something different. They also disliked being forced to select only one option. They mentioned they would engage in more than one EVLN reaction simultaneously or sequentially. For this reason, if individuals' responses to dissatisfying situations are to be measured using vignettes, it would be more appropriate to generate them in a more flexible structure, such as with open-ended questions. In addition, some conflictual conditions should be presented on a list, and participants should be asked which ones could create a conflict. Therefore, vignette measurements of individuals' responses to unsatisfying situations could be more realistic.

Chapter 4 aimed to answer the third research question: what are the reasons for break-ups? The reasons for break-ups have been presented in different studies in the literature (e.g., breach of trust (Negash et al., 2014; Shackelford et al., 2002), alternative partners (Ritchie et al., 2021), unmet psychological needs (Connolly & McIsaac, 2009; Sprecher, 2002)). Yet, these studies examine the nature of only one type of reason for romantic break-ups. One year after the focus group sessions were conducted, Joel and colleagues (2018) published an article about an in-depth examination of stay/leave decisions in romantic relationships, where the categories used in this thesis were originated from.

In the 18 focus group sessions, participants were asked to list five common reasons to end romantic relationships and evaluate their list for their romantic relationships. Findings revealed that breach of trust, incompatibility, emotional distance, and lack of validation were recurrent reasons across all sessions. Jealousy was a break-up reason for singles and couples. Inequity was mentioned only in couples' sessions, while partner withdrawal was mentioned in women's, singles', and couples' sessions. External reasons were valid causes for singles and couples, while lack of enjoyment was mentioned in only

couples' sessions. However, when it comes to ending their romantic relationships, all reasons mentioned above were not perceived as valid reasons to end their romantic relationships. Only breach of trust, emotional distance, and lack of validation were mentioned in all sessions. Inequity was a reason to end their romantic relationships for men's, singles', and couples' sessions. Singles added partner withdrawal and external reasons to their list. These findings showed that although individuals perceive some problems as reasons for romantic break-ups, the existence of these problems will not be enough to give up on their romantic relationships, and they may not want to them.

Table 18
The Break-up Categories Emerged from Focus Group Sessions

Alternative partner	General frustration	Partner's personality
Breach of trust	Incompatibility	Physical distance
Conflict	Inequity	Pursuit of other opportunities
Deal Breaker	Jealousy	Social consequences
Discomfort with commitment	Lack of enjoyment	Too demanding
Emotional distance	Lack of validation	Violation of expectations
External reasons	Partner withdrawal	Uncodable

Evaluating Chapter 3 findings and Chapter 4 findings together will be helpful in approaching romantic break-ups from a more holistic perspective. As mentioned above, attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, basic psychological need dissatisfaction, and basic psychological need thwarting were found to be related to *exit* behaviors. Twenty-one reasons emerged from the focus group sessions (see Table 18). Among them, breach of trust, conflict, inequity, jealousy, lack of validation, physical distance, and too demanding reasons could be argued to be related to attachment anxiety. Having more negative mental models of self, anxiously attached individuals invest more in their romantic relationships than their

partners (Simpson & Rholes, 2017). This could create “inequity” and “lack of validation” problems in their romantic relationships.

No matter how much their partners invest, anxiously attached individuals perceive them as uninterested in their romantic relationship, do not trust their partners, and interpret more situations as threatening events (Campbell et al., 2005; Davis et al., 2004; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012). They show more jealousy (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2015), experience fear of being abandoned (Powers et al., 2006; Wei et al., 2007), and engage in frequent conflicts (McClure et al., 2013; Overall et al., 2014). Their beliefs about their partner’s intention can cause “breach of trust”, elevated levels of “conflict”, and also “jealousy”. They demand intimacy and closeness in their romantic relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012, 2016; Spielmann et al., 2013), which may cause them to be perceived as “too demanding” by their partners. They even use sexual intercourse for reassurance about how their relationship is going and receiving care from their partners (Davis et al., 2004; Ren et al., 2017). Therefore, if there is a “physical distance” (bad, low sexual relationship, not enough physical affection) problem in their romantic relationship, they may interpret this as a sign of relationship dissolution.

Of the 21 break-up reasons, discomfort with commitment, emotional distance, and partner withdrawal could also be related to attachment avoidance. Avoidantly attached individuals have more negative mental models of others, they distrust their partners, avoid being dependent, suppress their attachment needs, and limit the closeness in their romantic relationships (Besharat et al., 2014; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012; Wei et al., 2007). Unable to trust their partner, even when they need support, they suppress their negative emotions and show less self-disclosure (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). However, their behaviors can be interpreted as “emotional distance” and “discomfort

with commitment". Their unwillingness to express their feelings and thoughts causes them to leave conflictual situations unresolved (Bartholomew, 1990; Fraley & Shaver, 1997; Spielmann, Maxwell et al., 2013; Overall et al., 2013), which can be interpreted by their partners as "partner withdrawal", a sign of relationship dissolution.

Of the 21 break-up reasons, emotional distance, general frustration, partner withdrawal, and pursuit of other opportunities could also be related to basic psychological needs. As mentioned in Chapter 3, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are the three basic psychological needs, and meeting these needs provides growth, integrity, and wellness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Knee et al., 2013; Yu et al., 2018). Autonomy need is about being self-volitional and authentic, having a sense of choice and freedom (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Competence is defined as experiencing the sense of mastery and challenge (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Relatedness is about the feelings of acceptance, connectedness, and warmth (Knee et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2017). When individuals' basic psychological needs are dissatisfied, they may experience a "general frustration" in which they do not understand exactly what the problem is, and they may want to "pursue other opportunities". They could also feel their partner as "emotionally distant" and "withdrawn". However, individuals whose basic psychological needs were frustrated may still experience a "general frustration", yet they may not actively want to "pursue other opportunities", even if they see their partner as "emotionally distant" and/or "withdrawn". The difference between these two categories is that one no longer feels autonomous and competent due to pressure, and does not take an active role in meeting his/her own needs. Therefore, while investigating individuals' decision-making mechanisms in romantic break-ups, it should be checked whether basic psychological needs are dissatisfied, as well as whether they are thwarted.

5.1. Limitations and Future Directions

This study also has some limitations that need to be addressed. The most important limitation of this study is that relational commitment was not included in this study, although its importance in romantic break-ups has been shown in the literature (Etcheverry & Le, 2005; Finkel et al., 2002; Finkel & Campbell, 2001; Le & Agnew, 2003; Le et al., 2010; Menzies-Toman & Lydon, 2005; Merolla & Harman, 2018; Rusbult et al., 1991). Future studies should add relational commitment to the research design. The second limitation was self-report measures which create the social desirability risk. Combining them with other/partner-reported measures or observations is expected to remove the social desirability effect.

The current findings are based on only cross-sectional data. Although this dissertation combines qualitative and quantitative methods, and establishes the links between attachment orientations, basic psychological needs, relationship contingent self-esteem, and responses to relationship problems, the causality between these constructs can not be derived from the results. Establishing a causal link with longitudinal studies is needed to understand the romantic break-up process. Using couple dyad samples along with the longitudinal design will also be helpful, as it allows us to observe how couples go in different directions in a relationship, what events lead them to romantic break-up, and how they go through the break-up phase.

The generalizability of quantitative study results is potentially limited due to the convenience sampling method. The data were collected from the METU students. It did not provide randomness in young adult samples and created a lack of representativeness. It is also important to emphasize that there is no claim of generalizability for qualitative study.

The findings revealed that the style of questions and the type of focus group sessions were important. Because, as shown in Chapter 4, asking the participants common reasons for break-ups and whether they would end their relationship will lead researchers to get different results. In addition, researchers seeking diversity in answers may want to conduct single-sex focus group sessions. In addition, although not measured in this study, it would be important to consider when the data were collected after the separation, since it is expected that individuals' affect, thoughts, and behaviors after a romantic break-up will vary over time (for example, two days after the separation and six months after the separation). For this reason, it would be useful for break-up researchers to define the post break-up time period in which they will collect the data.

The factors that directly or indirectly affect the break-up process should be investigated to understand romantic break-ups better. Who initiates the break-up could be one of these predictors. Studies have shown conflicting results about the relationship between experienced emotions and the break-up initiator. Some studies have reported that those who initiate the break-up feel better afterward (DeLecce & Weisfeld, 2016; Barajas Márquez et al., 2017). In contrast, some studies found no significant break-up initiator difference in adverse break-up symptoms (Robak & Griffin, 2012). As there are contradicting findings, future studies should focus on determining under which conditions the break-up initiation affects five dimensions of romantic break-ups.

Another factor could be the power dynamics in romantic relationships. Those who hold power in a relationship make more decisions about the relationship and benefit more from these decisions. In a way, power dynamics seem to be related to inequity, which was stated in Chapter 4 as a reason for break-ups. Investment in the relationship is also another predictor. It was found that individuals who hold power in a relationship typically invest in

less, and more men were found to have the power (Sprecher et al., 2006). Additionally, anxiously attached individuals invest more in their romantic relationships (Pistole et al., 1995; Simpson & Rholes, 2017). Therefore, it can be argued that attachment anxiety and the investment and power in the relationship are interrelated.

Although there is no gender difference was found in this thesis, previous studies show gender differences in experienced emotions (Choo et al., 1996; Hill et al., 1976; Sprecher, 1994; Sprecher et al., 1998), depression (Mearns, 1991), readjustment after break-ups (Preetz, 2022). It will be useful for the break-up literature for future studies to investigate (if any) gender difference effect and to find out under which conditions this effect is observed.

5.2. Contribution and Implication of the Study

Romantic break-ups have received relatively less attention in the romantic relationship literature. Therefore, this thesis makes an important contribution to the literature by first examining how young adults perceive romantic break-ups, then the role of individual and relational predictors in decisions taken in unsatisfying situations, and finally by investigating the reasons of romantic break-ups. Using quantitative and qualitative data together to deepen our understanding is one of the unique features of this study. Therefore, this thesis makes it possible to deepen and broaden our understanding of romantic break-ups.

Basic psychological needs and their role in individual well-being have been extensively studied in different domains. Nevertheless, basic psychological need dissatisfaction and thwarting are still relatively understudied components of the SDT. This thesis contributes to the SDT literature by examining not only basic psychological need

satisfaction but also need dissatisfaction and thwarting in the of romantic break-up context. The findings of this study revealed that all three components have unique explanatory power on responses to unsatisfactory situations.

Establishing safe and satisfying couple and family relationships is important to physical and psychological well-being (Kansky & Allen, 2018; Oishi et al., 2007; Özdemir & Demir, 2019). Young adulthood is a period in which committed relationships and conflict management strategies are observed for the first time. It has been found in the existing literature that romantic relationships in young adulthood have significant effects on individuals' well-being, behavior, and later romantic relationships (Fincham & Cui, 2011; Shulman & Connolly, 2013; Xia et al., 2018). This thesis can be used by therapists to help, treat, and heal clients' distressed relationships and to create more secure bonds between close partners. They can also help their clients to understand the spillover effect of their past relationships on the later ones.

At the time when the scope of this thesis was formed, there was no in-depth research about the causes of romantic break-ups in the literature. One of the purposes of this research is to reveal the reasons that push individuals to decide to break-up in romantic relationships. During the thesis preparation process, in-depth publications were made about the causes of romantic break-ups in the US and Canada samples. However, to the author's knowledge, this is the first in-depth study of the reasons of romantic break-ups in the Turkish sample. Therefore, this thesis also contributes to the existing literature on romantic break-ups and romantic relationships in young adulthood in Turkey.

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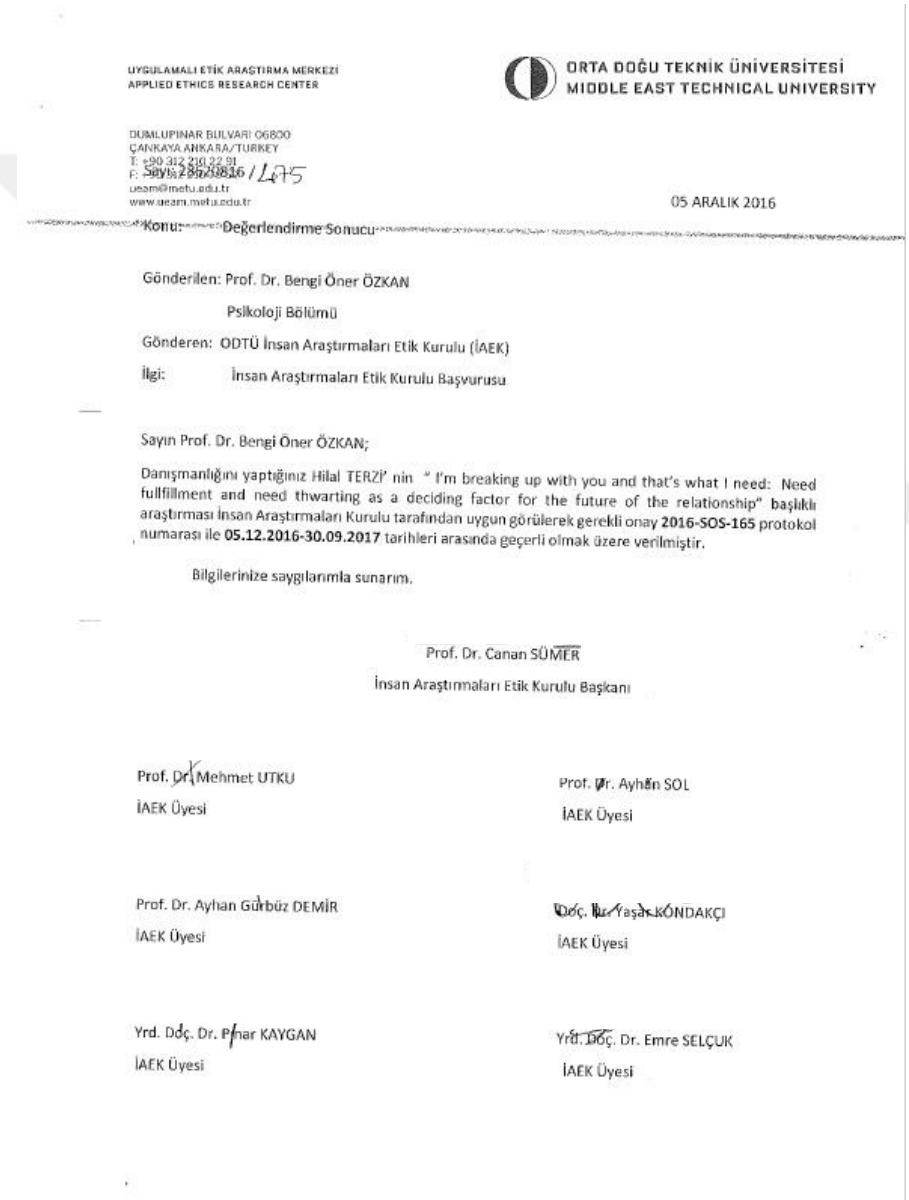
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. ETHICAL BOARD APPROVALS

APPENDIX A1. ETHICAL BOARD APPROVAL FOR FOCUS GROUP STUDY



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05 ARALIK 2016

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderilen: Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner ÖZKAN
Psikoloji Bölümü

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner ÖZKAN;

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Hilal TERZİ' nin " I'm breaking up with you and that's what I need: Need fullfillment and need thwarting as a deciding factor for the future of the relationship" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay **2016-SOS-165** protokol numarası ile **05.12.2016-30.09.2017** tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER
İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başkanı

Prof. Dr. Mehmet UTKU
İAEK Üyesi

Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL
İAEK Üyesi

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR
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Doç. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI
İAEK Üyesi

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
İAEK Üyesi

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
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APPENDIX A2. ETHICAL BOARD APPROVAL OF SURVEY

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Gönderen: Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER
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İlgi: Etik Onayı

Sayın Prof.Dr. Bengi ÖNER ÖZKAN'ın danışmanlığını yaptığı Hilal TERZİ'nin "I'm breaking up with you and that's what I need: Need fulfilment and need thwarting as a deciding factor fort he future of the relationship " başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay **2016-SOS-076** protokol numarası ile **05.05.2016-31.12.2016** tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

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(Bulunmadı)
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Prof. Dr. Mehmet UTKU
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Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR
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Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
İAEK Üyesi

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK
İAEK Üyesi

APPENDIX B. FOCUS GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

İlişki Kurulma Aşaması/Initiation Phase

1. Kendinizi kısaca tanıtır mısınız?
2. Sevgilinizle ne sıklıkla görüşüyordunuz? Aynı evde kalanlar, uzak mesafe ilişkisi olanlar olabilir.
3. Size göre iyi bir ilişki nasıl olmalıdır?

   Geçmiş ilişkilerinizden iyi bir ilişki olarak tanımladığınız bir ilişki var mıydı? İlişnizin hangi özellikleri size böyle olduğunu düşündürdü?
4. Sevgilinizle nasıl tanıştınız bize anlatır mısınız?
5. Peki tanışma şekli bir ilişkiyi daha değerli ya da daha az değerli yapar mı?

   Örn. Sosyal medya, ya da dating sitelerinden tanışan kişilerle arkadaşları aracılığıyla ya da katıldıkları ortak bir etkinlikte tanışan kişilerin yaşadıkları ilişki farklı mıdır?
6. Sosyal medya üzerinden ilişkiye başlayan ya da ilişkiyi bitiren var mı?
7. Online arkadaşlık sitelerine üyeliğiniz var mı? (Varsa hangileri?)
8. Dating sitelerine üyeliğiniz var mı? Sosyal medyayı kullanıyor musunuz?

İlişki Süresince/During Relationship Phase

9. ‘The One’ ya da ruh eşine inanıyor musunuz? Böyle birisi var mı?
10. Hangi özellikler kişiyi ‘The One’ yapar?

Ya da ‘The One’ hangi özelliklere sahip olmalıdır?

11. Daha önce işte bu kişi ‘The One’ dediğiniz oldu mu? Eski sevgiliniz sizin için ‘The One’ mıydı?
12. Bazı insanlar hayatta tek bir kişinin The One/ruh eşi olduğunu düşünür, bazı insanlarsa bir yaşamda kişinin birden fazla ‘The One’ nın olacağına inanır. Siz hangi görüşe yakınsınız?
13. İlişkilere başlarken o ilişki için bir raf ömrü biçiyor musunuz? (Yani bu ilişki uzun ömürlü olur, ya da maksimum 2 aya biter dediğiniz oluyor mu?)

    (Peki ya yaz aşkları?)
14. Sizce ilişkiye başlarken biçilen raf ömrü ilişkiyi etkiler mi? Nasıl?
15. Sevgilinizle ne sıklıkla tartışıyordunuz?

    İlişkinizde neler tartışma konusu oluyordu?
16. Peki barışmalarınız? Barışırken sadece tek bir kişi mi aktif olarak görev üstleniyordu, yoksa iki kişi de barışmak için çaba sarf ediyor muydu?

İlişkinin Sonlanma Aşaması/Termination Phase

17. Ayrılık denince aklınıza neler geliyor?
18. Terk eden olmakla terk edilen olmak arasında fark var mı?

    Siz hangi tarafta olmak isterdiniz? Neden?
19. İlişkiniz bittikten sonra neler yaşadınız?
20. Sizce ayrılıklar iyi veya kötü müdür?

21. İlişkinin bitmesi, o ilişkinin aslında iyi bir ilişki olmadığını mı gösterir?
22. Şimdi sizlere birer kağıt dağıtacağım. Daha sonra üzerinde ayrıntılı olarak konuşacağız ama öncelikle sizin cevaplarınızı merak ediyorum. Lütfen bu kağıda, ilişkilerinizin ya da çevrenizdeki ilişkilerin bitmesine sebep olan 5 faktörü yazınız.
23. Lütfen sizlere dağıtacağım 2. kağıttaki değerlendirme tablosunu kullanarak ilişkinizde partneriniz sizin burada sıraladığınız sebeplerle size gelseydi ilişkinizle ilgili hangi kararı verirdiniz, işaretleyiniz.
24. Bildiğiniz gibi sosyal psikolojide doktora yapıyorum.Size tez konumla ilgili olarak bazı hikayeleri okutmak istiyorum. Lütfen bu hikayeleri okuyup, ardından en beğendiğiniz hikayeye 5,en beğenmediğiniz hikayeye de 1 verecek şekilde notlayınız.
25. Hikayelerdeki beğendiğiniz kısımlar nelerdi?
26. Hikayelerdeki beğenmediğiniz kısımlar nelerdi?
27. Size gerçekçi geldi mi?
28. Daha gerçekçi nasıl yapabiliriz? Önerileriniz nelerdir?

APPENDIX C. EXPERIENCES IN CLOSED RELATIONSHIPS REVISED SCALE

Aşağıda kişilerin sevgilileriyle beraberken hissedebilecekleri bazı ifadelere yer verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadeye ne ölçüde katıldığınızı işaretleyiniz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Sizin durumunuzu yansıttığını düşündüğünüz rakam bizim için en doğru yanıttır.

!!! Halihazırda bir romantik ilişki içerisinde değilseniz lütfen soruları önceki sevgililerinizle beraberken nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünerek cevaplandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiç katılmıyorum			Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum			Tamamen katılıyorum

_____ 1. Sevgilimin beni başka insanlara denk olamadığımı düşünmesinden endişe duyarım.

_____ 2. Özel duygu ve düşüncelerimi sevgilimle paylaşmak konusunda kendimi rahat hissederim.

_____ 3. İlişkilerimi kafama çok takarım.

_____ 4. Sevgilime güvenip dayanmak konusunda kendimi rahat bırakmakta zorlanırım.

_____ 5. Sıklıkla, sevgilimin beni gerçekten sevmediği kaygısına kapılırım.

_____ 6. Sevgilimle yakın olma konusunda çok rahatımdır.

_____ 7. Sevgilimin beni, benim onu önemsediğim kadar önemsemediğinden endişe duyarım.

_____ 8. Sevgilime açılma konusunda kendimi rahat hissetmem.

_____ 9. Sevgilim kendimden şüphe etmeme neden olur.

_____ 10. Gerçekte ne hissettiğimi sevgilime göstermemeyi tercih ederim.

APPENDIX D. BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED SCALES

APPENDIX D1. BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED SATISFACTION IN RELATIONSHIPS SCALE

Aşağıda kişilerin romantik ilişkilerinde hissedebilecekleri bazı ifadelere yer verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadenin size ne derecede uyduğunu işaretleyiniz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Sizin durumunuzu yansıttığını düşündüğünüz rakam bizim için en doğru yanıttır.

!! Halihazırda bir romantik ilişki içerisinde değilseniz lütfen soruları genel olarak romantik ilişkilerinizde nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünerek cevaplandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiç katılmıyorum			Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum			Tamamen katılıyorum

İlişkimde...

_____ 1. Hayatımı nasıl yaşayacağıma karar vermekte özgür hissederim.
_____ 2. Genel olarak düşüncelerimi ve fikirlerimi ifade etmekte özgür hissederim.
_____ 3. Günlük hayatta muhattap olduğum kişiler hislerimi dikkate alırlar.
_____ 4. Günlük hayatta yeterince kendim olabildiğimi hissediyorum.
_____ 5. Tanıdığım kişiler yaptığım işte iyi olduğumu söyler.
_____ 6. Yakın zamanda ilgi çekici yeni beceriler edinebildim.
_____ 7. Çoğu günde, uğraştığım şeyde başarılı olduğum hissine kapılırım.
_____ 8. Etkileşimde olduğum kişileri gerçekten severim.
_____ 9. İletişimimin olduğu kişilerle iyi anlaşırım.
_____ 10. Düzenli olarak etkileşimde bulunduğum kişilerin arkadaşım olduğunu düşünürüm.
_____ 11. Hayatımdaki kişiler bana değer verir.
_____ 12. Genellikle, insanlar bana karşı oldukça cana yakındırlar.

APPENDIX D2. BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED DISSATISFACTION IN RELATIONSHIPS SCALE

Aşağıda kişilerin romantik ilişkilerinde hissedebilecekleri bazı ifadelere yer verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadenin size ne derecede uyduğunu işaretleyiniz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Sizin durumunuzu yansıttığını düşündüğünüz rakam bizim için en doğru yanıttır.

!! Halihazırda bir romantik ilişki içerisinde değilseniz lütfen soruları genel olarak romantik ilişkilerinizde nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünerek cevaplandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiç katılmıyorum			Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum			Tamamen katılıyorum

İlişkimde...

_____ 1. Genellikle kendimi işleri nasıl yapacağımı seçmekte özgür hissetmem.

_____ 2. Çoğunlukla olduğum kişiden farklı bir kişi gibi davranmak zorunda hissederim.

_____ 3. Çoğu zaman yaptığım şeyi yapmaktan başka bir seçeneğim yokmuş gibi hissederim.

_____ 4. Günlük hayatta ne yaptığım, çoğu zaman yapmak istediğim şeyler olmuyor.

_____ 5. Görüş ve düşüncelerimi çoğunlukla kendime saklamam gerektiğini hissederim.

_____ 6. Genelde yaptığım işte başarı sağladığımı hissetmem.

_____ 7. Sıklıkla kendimi geliştirebileceğim fırsatlara sahip olmadığımı hissederim.

_____ 8. Genellikle yaptığım işte kendimi kabiliyetli hissetmem.

_____ 9. Çoğu zaman diğer insanlara kıyasla kendi etkinliklerimde oldukça kötü olduğumu düşünürüm.

_____ 10. Çoğunlukla performansımdan tatmin olmam.

_____ 11. Genelde hayatımdaki diğer kişilerle iletişime geçmekten kaçınmaya çalışırım.

_____ 12. Etrafımdaki kişilere gerçekten güvenemezmişim gibi hissederim.

_____ 13. Çoğu zaman başkalarıyla etkileşimde bulunmak için çok fazla fırsatım olmaz.

_____ 14. Genellikle başkalarının yanında huzursuz hissederim.

_____ 15. Kendimi diğer insanlardan uzak hissetme eğilimindeyim.

APPENDIX D3. BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED THWARTING IN RELATIONSHIPS SCALE

Aşağıda kişilerin romantik ilişkilerinde hissedebilecekleri bazı ifadelere yer verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadenin size ne derecede uyduğunu işaretleyiniz. Doğru ya da yanlış cevap yoktur. Sizin durumunuzu yansıttığını düşündüğünüz rakam bizim için en doğru yanıttır.

!! Halihazırda bir romantik ilişki içerisinde değilseniz lütfen soruları genel olarak romantik ilişkilerinizde nasıl hissettiğinizi düşünerek cevaplandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiç katılmıyorum			Ne katılıyorum Ne katılmıyorum			Tamamen katılıyorum

İlişkimde…

_____ 1. Seçim yapmamın engellendiğini hissederim.

_____ 2. Belli şekillerde davranmaya zorlandığımı hissederim.

_____ 3. Benim adıma alınmış kararları takip etmeye zorlanmış hissederim.

_____ 4. Benim adıma yapılmış planlara uymak zorunda hissediyorum.

_____ 5. Potansiyelimi kullanabilmem için gerekli şans verilmediğinden kendimi yetersiz hissederim.

_____ 6. Kendimi aciz hissettiğim durumlar olur.

_____ 7. Bana kendimi yetersiz hissettiren şeylerin söylendiği zamanlar vardır.

_____ 8. Bir şey başardığımda diğer insanların beni kıskandığını hissederim.

_____ 9. Yetersiz hissettirildiğim durumlar vardır.

_____ 10. Etrafımdaki kişiler tarafından reddedildiğimi hissederim.

_____ 11. Diğer insanların beni dışladıklarını hissederim.

_____ 12. Başkalarının benden hoşlanmadığını hissederim.

APPENDIX E. RELATIONSHIP CONTINGENT SELF ESTEEM SCALE

Lütfen aşağıdaki soruları 1 ile 5 arasında notlandırınız.

1	2	3	4	5
Bana hiç uymuyor		Bana kısmen uyuyor		Bana çok fazla uyuyor

_____1. Sevgilimle iyi anlaştığımızı düşündüğümde kendimle ilgili daha iyi hissederim.

_____2. Sevgilimle aramdaki duygusal bağı hissettiğimde kendimle ilgili daha iyi hissederim.

_____3. ilişkimin ne kadar başarılı olduğu öz-değerimin önemli bir ölçütüdür.

_____4. Öz-değerimle ilgili hislerim ilişkimin ne kadar iyi gittiğine bağlıdır.

_____5. İlişkim iyi gittiğinde, genel olarak kendimi daha iyi hissederim.

_____6. İlişkim yarın bitecek olsaydı, bunun kendimle ilgili hislerimi etkilemesine izin vermezdim.

_____7. İlişkimde işler yolunda gitmediği zamanlarda öz-değerim etkilenmez.

_____8. Sevgilimle kavga ettiğim zamanlarda, kendimle ilgili genel olarak kötü hissederim.

_____9. İlişkim kötüye gittiğinde, öz-değerimle ilgili hislerim etkilenmez.

_____10. Başkaları sevgilimle iyi bir ilişkim olduğunu söylediğinde kendimi daha iyi hissederim.

_____11. Sevgilim beni eleştirdiğinde ya da benimle ilgili hayal kırıklığına uğramış gözüktüğünde kendimi gerçekten kötü hissederim.

APPENDIX F. MY RESPONSES TO RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS SCALE

0 = Bunu asla yapmam, 2 = Bunu çok nadir yaparım, 4 = Bunu ara sıra yaparım, 6 = Bunu sık yaparım, 8 = Bunu her zaman yaparım

Partnerim/flörtüm/çıktığım kişi...

1. keyifsizken beni kıracak bir şey söylediğinde, durumu düzeltmeye ve sorunu çözmeye çalışırım.
2. bana öfkelendiğinde ve bir süre beni görmezlikten geldiğinde, ayrılmayı düşünürüm.
3. bana karşı kaba ya da düşüncesiz davrandığında, ona sadık kalırım ve durumun düzelmesini beklerim.
4. düşüncesiz veya hoş olmayan biçimde davrandığında, bir süre başka bir şey yaparım ve durumla ilgilenmekten kaçınırım.
5. keyifsizken beni kıracak bir şey söylediğinde, o kadar öfkelenirim ki çıkıp gitmek isterim.
6. düşüncesiz veya hoş olmayan biçimde davrandığında, onu affederim ve olanları unuturum.
7. bana öfkelendiğinde ve bir süre beni görmezlikten geldiğinde, bir süre uzak dururum ve sorunla ilgilenmekten kaçınırım.
8. bana karşı kaba ya da düşüncesiz davrandığında, durumu düzeltmeye ve koşulları iyileştirmeye çalışırım.
9. keyifsizken beni kıracak bir şey söylediğinde, surat asarım ve bir süre ondan uzak kalmaya çalışırım.
10. bana karşı kaba ya da düşüncesiz davrandığında, ilişkimizi bitirmeyi düşünmeye başlarım.
11. düşüncesiz veya hoş olmayan biçimde davrandığında, olup biteni onunla sakin bir biçimde tartışırım.
12. bana öfkelendiğinde ve bir süre beni görmezlikten geldiğinde, öylece durup onun öfkesinin geçmesini beklerim.
13. düşüncesiz veya hoş olmayan biçimde davrandığında, ben de onunki kadar hoş olmayan bir şey yaparım.

14. bana öfkelendiğinde ve bir süre beni görmezlikten geldiğinde, bir çözüm bulmaya çalışarak onunla ne olup bittiği hakkında konuşurum.
15. keyifsizken beni kıracak bir şey söylediğinde, yanlış anladığımı varsayıp olayın üstünde durmam.
16. bana karşı kaba ya da düşüncesiz davrandığında, bütün olanları boş verir ve onunla daha az zaman geçirmeye çalışırım.

APPENDIX G. VIGNETTES

APPENDIX G1. VIGNETTE #1

Arkadaşınızla bir kafede otururken, telefonunuz çalar; arayan sevgilinizdir. Size, Amerika'daki bir üniversiteden kabul aldığını ve oraya gitmeyi düşündüğünü söyler. Sevgilinizin sizinle konuşmadan başvuru yapmasından ve eğitimine orada devam etmeyi düşünmesinden rahatsız olursunuz. Artık ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir.

- Ne karar verirdiniz?
  - ☐ İlişkiyi bitirirdim.
  - ☐ Her şeyin zamanla düzeleceğini inanırdım, sadece sabredip beklerdim.
  - ☐ Rahatsız olduğumu dile getirirdim.
  - ☐ Konu hakkında konuşmaktan kaçınır, fakat daha ufak sorunlarla ilgili tepki gösteririm.

APPENDIX G2. VIGNETTE #2

Arkadaşınız ve sevgilinizle beraber bir eğlence mekanındasınızdır. İçecek almak için arkadaşınızla birlikte masadan uzaklaşırsınız. Masanıza yaklaştığınızda karşı cinsten birisinin sevgilinizle samimi bir şekilde oturduğunu görürsünüz. Bu görüntüden rahatsız olursunuz. Artık, ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir.

- ❖ Ne karar verirdiniz?
  - ☐ İlişkiyi bitirirdim.
  - ☐ Her şeyin zamanla düzeleceğini inanırdım, sadece sabredip beklerdim.
  - ☐ Rahatsız olduğumu dile getirirdim.
  - ☐ Konu hakkında konuşmaktan kaçınır, fakat daha ufak sorunlarla ilgili tepki gösterirdim.

APPENDIX G3. VIGNETTE #3

Her sabah olduğu gibi güne facebooka girerek başlarsınız. Çok da samimi olmadığınız arkadaşlarınızın etiketlendiği bir doğum günü kutlamasının fotoğraflarını görürsünüz newsfeed in en üst sıralarında. Fotoğraflara bakarken birden sevgilinizi o fotoğraf karelerinden birinde fark edersiniz. En son en son dün gece konuştuğunuzu hatırlarsınız. Size kendini biraz hasta hissettiği için erken yatacağını söylemiştir. Doğum günü partisine gideceğini sizden saklamış olmasından ve yalan söylemesinden rahatsız olursunuz. Artık ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir.

- Ne karar verirdiniz?
  - ☐ İlişkiyi bitirirdim.
  - ☐ Her şeyin zamanla düzeleceğini inanırdım, sadece sabredip beklerdim.
  - ☐ Rahatsız olduğumu dile getirirdim.
  - ☐ Konu hakkında konuşmaktan kaçınır, fakat daha ufak sorunlarla ilgili tepki gösterirdim.

APPENDIX G4. VIGNETTE #4

Sevgilinizin, onunla ortak ders alan ve kendisinden pek de hoşlanmadığınız hem cinsinizin sosyal medyada paylaştığı fotoğrafları beğendiğini ve bazı fotoğraflara da yorum yazdığını görürsünüz. O kişiden hoşlanmadığınızı bildiği halde sevgilinizin böyle bir şey yapmasından rahatsız olursunuz. Artık ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir.

- Ne karar verirdiniz?
  - ☐ İlişkiyi bitirirdim.
  - ☐ Her şeyin zamanla düzeleceğini inanırdım, sadece sabredip beklerdim.
  - ☐ Rahatsız olduğumu dile getirirdim.
  - ☐ Konu hakkında konuşmaktan kaçınır, fakat daha ufak sorunlarla ilgili tepki gösterirdim.

APPENDIX G5. VIGNETTE #5

Telefonunuz çalar; arayan arkadaşınızdır. Size, arkadaşlık uygulamalarından birinde sevgilinizi gördüğünü söyler. Sevgiliniz arkadaşlık uygulamalarını kullanmasından ve aktif bir hesabının olmasından rahatsız olursunuz. Artık ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir.

- Ne karar verirdiniz?
  - ☐ İlişkiyi bitirirdim.
  - ☐ Her şeyin zamanla düzeleceğini inanırdım, sadece sabredip beklerdim.
  - ☐ Rahatsız olduğumu dile getirirdim.
  - ☐ Konu hakkında konuşmaktan kaçınır, fakat daha ufak sorunlarla ilgili tepki gösterirdim.

APPENDIX H. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONS

1. Cinsiyetiniz: □ Kadın □ Erkek

2. Yaşınız: _____

3. Cinsel yöneliminiz:
□ Heteroseksüel (karsi cinsten etkileniyorum)
□ Homoseksüel (kendi cinsimden etkileniyorum)
□ Biseksüel (her iki cinsten de etkileniyorum)
□ Aseksüel (hicbir cinsten etkilenmiyorum)

4. Sevgiliniz var mı?
□ Evet □ Hayır

4. sorunun cevabı evetse:

5. Ne kadar süredir birliktesiniz? _____ Yıl _____ Ay _____ Gün

6. Daha önce başka romantik ilişkileriniz oldu mu?
□ Evet □ Hayır

6. sorunun cevabı evetse:

7. Önceki ilişkilerinizde hiç terk edildiniz mi?
□ Evet □ Hayır

8. Önceki ilişkilerinizde hiç terk ettiniz mi?
□ Evet □ Hayır

APPENDIX I. VIGNETTES and PARTICIPANTS' ASSESSMENTS

Focus Group Sessions Date & Sex (F/M)	V1	V1	V1	V1	V1	V2	V2	V2	V2	V2	V3	V3	V3	V3	V3	V4	V4	V4	V4	V4	V5	V5	V5	V5	V5
Color Codes Single / Couple	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**
1511F	2	2		2	2	1	1	4	2		2	1	2		3		1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	
1811M	1	1	1		4	2	2	1	2			1	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2		
2111F	3	2		3		1	2	2		3	1	2		3	2		1	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
2311M	2	1			1		1	1	2			2	1		1			1	2	1	2		1		1
2511F	4	1		1	1	2	2		2	1		1	2	2	3	1		3	1	3	2	2	3	1	
2811M	3	1	2			1	3		1	1		1		1	4			2	3	1	2	1	2	1	
2911F	2	1		3	1	3	1	1		1	1	3	1		1		1	1	2	3	1	1	2		2
0112F	6	3				2	2	2	2	1		1	2	4	2		2	1	1	5	1	2	3	2	1
0212M	3		3		3		4		2	3	3	1	4	1			1	1	5	2	3	3	1	1	1
0512F	2		2	1	3	3			4	1		1	2	2	3		4	3		1	3	3	1	1	
0612M	1		3	2		1	3		1	1			1	2	3	1	1	1		2	3	1		1	
0712M				3	2		1		2	2	1	2	2				2	2		1	4		1		
0812F	2	4	1	2		4		1	3	1		3	3	1	2			4		5	3	2		3	1
2112F				1	2	1	1		1			1	1	1				2		1	2	1			
2112M	2				1				2	1			1	1	1	1		2				3			
2612F			1		1		1		1			1		1		2							1		1
2612M					1		1						1			1						1			
2812F	1				3		1	2	1		1	1		2			1	2	1		2	1			1
2812M		1	1		2				2	2	2	1	1					2	2		2	2			
2912F		2			1			2	1		1			2		1	1			1	1		1		1
2912M			1		2		1	2			1			2		1	1			1	1	1		1	
3012F					3		2	1			1		1	1		1			2		1	1	1		
3012M		1	1	1	1		1	2	1		1	1	1	1		2			1	1	1	1			2
Total	34	20	16	19	34	21	30	21	32	18	15	24	28	30	26	12	17	32	27	34	41	33	22	13	12
Worst/Best	54		16	53		51		21	50		39		28	56		29		32	61		74		22	25	

APPENDIX J. VIGNETTES and PARTICIPANTS' ASSESSMENTS by GENDER

APPENDIX J1. VIGNETTES AND WOMEN'S ASSESSMENTS

Focus Group Sessions Date & Sex (F/M)	V1	V1	V1	V1	V1	V2	V2	V2	V2	V2	V3	V3	V3	V3	V3	V4	V4	V4	V4	V4	V5	V5	V5	V5	V5
Color Codes Single / Couple	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**
1511F	2	2		2	2	1	1	4	2		2	1	2		3		1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	
2111F	3	2		3		1	2	2		3	1	2		3	2		1	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
2511F	4	1		1	1	2	2		2	1		1	2	2	3	1		3	1	3	2	2	3	1	
2911F	2	1		3	1	3	1	1		1	1	3	1		1		1	1	2	3	1	1	2		2
0112F	6	3				2	2	2	2	1		1	2	4	2		2	1	1	5	1	2	3	2	1
0512F	2		2	1	3	3			4	1		1	2	2	3		4	3		1	3	3	1	1	
0812F	2	4	1	2		4		1	3	1		3	3	1	2			4		5	3	2		3	1
2112F				1	2	1	1		1			1	1	1				2		1	2	1			
2612F			1		1		1		1			1		1		2							1		1
2812F	1				3		1	2	1		1	1		2			1	2	1		2	1			1
2912F		2			1			2	1		1			2		1	1			1	1		1		1
3012F					3		2	1			1		1	1		1			2		1	1	1		
Total	22	15	4	13	17	17	13	15	17	8	7	15	14	19	16	5	11	20	12	23	20	18	15	9	8
Worst/Best	37		4	30		30		15	25		22		14	35		16		20	35		38		15	17	

APPENDIX J2. VIGNETTES AND MEN'S ASSESSMENTS

Focus Group Sessions Date & Sex (F/M)	V1	V1	V1	V1	V1	V2	V2	V2	V2	V2	V3	V3	V3	V3	V3	V4	V4	V4	V4	V4	V5	V5	V5	V5	V5
Color Codes Single / Couple	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**
1811M	1	1	1		4	2	2	1	2			1	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2		
2311M	2	1			1		1	1	2			2	1		1			1	2	1	2		1		1
2811M	3	1	2			1	3		1	1		1		1	4			2	3	1	2	1	2	1	
0212M	3		3		3		4		2	3	3	1	4	1			1	1	5	2	3	3	1	1	1
0612M	1		3	2		1	3		1	1			1	2	3	1	1	1		2	3	1		1	
0712M				3	2		1		2	2	1	2	2				2	2		1	4		1		
2112M	2				1				2	1			1	1	1	1		2				3			
2612M					1		1						1			1						1			
2812M		1	1		2				2	2	2	1	1					2	2		2	2			
2912M			1		2		1	2			1			2		1	1			1	1	1		1	
3012M		1	1	1	1		1	2	1		1	1	1	1		2			1	1	1	1			2
Total	12	5	12	6	17	4	17	6	15	10	8	9	14	11	10	7	6	12	15	11	21	15	7	4	4
Worst/Best	17		12	23		21		6	25		17		14	21		13		12	26		36		7	8	

APPENDIX K. VIGNETTES and PARTICIPANTS' ASSESSMENTS by RELATIONSHIP STATUS

APPENDIX K1. VIGNETTES AND SINGLE PARTICIPANTS' ASSESSMENTS

Focus Group Sessions Date & Sex (F/M)	**V1**	**V1**	**V1**	**V1**	**V1**	**V2**	**V2**	**V2**	**V2**	**V2**	**V3**	**V3**	**V3**	**V3**	**V3**	**V4**	**V4**	**V4**	**V4**	**V4**	**V5**	**V5**	**V5**	**V5**	**V5**
Color Codes Single / Couple	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**
1811M	1	1	1		4	2	2	1	2			1	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2		
2111F	3	2		3		1	2	2		3	1	2		3	2		1	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
2511F	4	1		1	1	2	2		2	1		1	2	2	3	1		3	1	3	2	2	3	1	
2811M	3	1	2			1	3		1	1		1		1	4			2	3	1	2	1	2	1	
0112F	6	3				2	2	2	2	1		1	2	4	2		2	1	1	5	1	2	3	2	1
0712M				3	2		1		2	2	1	2	2				2	2		1	4		1		
2612F			1		1		1		1			1		1		2							1		1
2612M					1		1						1			1						1			
2912F		2			1			2	1		1			2		1	1			1	1		1		1
2912M			1		2		1	2			1			2		1	1			1	1	1		1	
Total	17	10	5	7	12	8	15	9	11	8	4	9	9	18	12	7	8	12	9	15	15	11	15	6	4
Worst/Best	27		5	19		23		9	19		13		9	30		15		12	24		26		15	10	

APPENDIX K2. VIGNETTES AND COUPLE PARTICIPANTS' ASSESSMENTS

Focus Group Sessions Date & Sex (F/M)	V1	V1	V1	V1	V1	V2	V2	V2	V2	V2	V3	V3	V3	V3	V3	V4	V4	V4	V4	V4	V5	V5	V5	V5	V5
Color Codes Single / Couple	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**	**1 (Worst)**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5 (Best)**
1511F	2	2		2	2	1	1	4	2		2	1	2		3		1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	
2311M	2	1			1		1	1	2			2	1		1			1	2	1	2		1		1
2911F	2	1		3	1	3	1	1		1	1	3	1		1		1	1	2	3	1	1	2		2
0212M	3		3		3		4		2	3	3	1	4	1			1	1	5	2	3	3	1	1	1
0512F	2		2	1	3	3			4	1		1	2	2	3		4	3		1	3	3	1	1	
0612M	1		3	2		1	3		1	1			1	2	3	1	1	1		2	3	1		1	
0812F	2	4	1	2		4		1	3	1		3	3	1	2			4		5	3	2		3	1
2112F				1	2	1	1		1			1	1	1				2		1	2	1			
2112M	2				1				2	1			1	1	1	1		2				3			
2812F	1				3		1	2	1		1	1		2			1	2	1		2	1			1
2812M		1	1		2				2	2	2	1	1					2	2		2	2			
3012F					3		2	1			1		1	1		1			2		1	1	1		
3012M		1	1	1	1		1	2	1		1	1	1	1		2			1	1	1	1			2
Total	17	10	11	12	22	13	15	12	21	10	11	15	19	12	14	5	9	20	18	19	26	22	7	7	8
Worst/Best	27		11	34		28		12	31		26		19	26		14		20	37		48		7	15	

APPENDIX L. TEMPLATE of the REASONS for BREAK-UPS

İlişkilerin/ilişki(leri)nizin bitmesine sebep olan 5 temel faktör yazınız.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

APPENDIX M. SELF-EVALUATION TEMPLATE of the REASONS

Bu beş faktörü aşağıdaki tabloya yazınız.

Aşağıda ilişkinizde karşılaşabileceğiniz bazı durumlar listelenmiştir. Lütfen her bir durumu tek tek değerlendirerek, böyle bir durumla karşılaşmanız halinde ilişkinizle ilgili ne tür bir karar alacağınızı karşılarındaki 5 aralıklı cetvel üzerinde ilgili rakamı yuvarlak içine alarak belirtiniz. **1----------3----------5** **İlişkimi sürdürürdüm İlişkime biraz ara verirdim İlişkimi kesinlikle bitirirdim**	1	2	3	4	5
1.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX N. REASONS for BREAK-UPS

Reasons for Break-Ups	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 7 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 8 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Women 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Men 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Women 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Men 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 30 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner		1	1				1		1				1				1					1	
Breach of trust	6	6	10	4	7	5	8	7	10	7	8	7	8	1	5	1	3	2	4	1	3	5	5
Conflict	2	2		2	1		2	1	2				1	1	1					2			2
Deal Breaker	2		2	1	1			2		1	1	1	1			1	1		1			1	
Discomfort with commitment					1			1															
Emotional distance	5	3	6	1	2	1	2	7	6	5	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	4	1		2	1	3
External reasons	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	1		1	2		1	2	2		1	1	1			
General frustration				1	3			2		6		2	4										
Incompatibility	8	2	5	2	2	8	5	8	5	5	7	5	7	2	3	8	1	5	2	4	5		1
Inequity	1	5	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	2					2	1			1	2
Jealousy	5	2	3	3	3		2	1	2	5	4	1	3	1		2	2		1		2		
Lack of enjoyment	2	2	3		2	3	1	3	4	1		2	1	2	1				2				1
Lack of validation	4	1	2	4	2	3	3	4	8	3	2	2	6		2	5	4	1	4	1		2	2
Other	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1				1		2	1		1						1
Partner withdrawal	4	3	3		2	2	5	7	1	1	3	1	4	1		1	1			1	1	1	1
Partner's personality	1	2	1		1								1	1				1			1		
Physical distance	1											3	1								1		
Pursuit of other opportunities			1		1																		
Social consequences	1	2	3	1		1	1	2	4	1		1		2			1	2	1				
Too demanding				2	2			1		1						1	3						1
Violation of expectations		3				2													2				

APPENDIX O. REASONS for BREAK-UPS by GENDER

APPENDIX O1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR WOMEN

Reasons for Break-Ups for Women	Single-Sex Group Couples 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 8 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 30 Dec.
Alternative partner		1		1			1					1
Breach of trust	6	10	7	8	7	7	8	1	1	2	1	5
Conflict	2		1	2	1		1	1			2	
Deal Breaker	2	2	1		2	1	1		1			1
Discomfort with commitment			1		1							
Emotional distance	5	6	2	2	7	5	3	3	1	4		1
External reasons	1	1	1	1	3			1	2	1	1	
General frustration			3		2	6	4					
Incompatibility	8	5	2	5	8	5	7	2	8	5	4	
Inequity	1	3	3	2	1	1	2			2		1
Jealousy	5	3	3	2	1	5	3	1	2			
Lack of enjoyment	2	3	2	1	3	1	1	2				
Lack of validation	4	2	2	3	4	3	6		5	1	1	2
Other	2	2	1	1	1			2				
Partner withdrawal	4	3	2	5	7	1	4	1	1		1	1
Partner's personality	1	1	1				1	1		1		
Physical distance	1						1					
Pursuit of other opportunities		1	1									
Social consequences	1	3		1	2	1		2		2		
Too demanding			2		1	1			1			
Violation of expectations												

APPENDIX O2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR MEN

Reasons for Break-Ups for Men	Single-Sex Group Singles 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Singles 7 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 30 Dec.
Alternative partner	1			1				1			
Breach of trust	6	4	5	10	8	7	5	3	4	3	5
Conflict	2	2		2			1				2
Deal Breaker		1			1	1		1	1		
Discomfort with commitment											
Emotional distance	3	1	1	6	3	2	2	2	1	2	3
External reasons	2	1	2	1	1	2	2		1		
General frustration		1				2					
Incompatibility	2	2	8	5	7	5	3	1	2	5	1
Inequity	5	1	1	1	3	1			1		2
Jealousy	2	3		2	4	1		2	1	2	
Lack of enjoyment	2		3	4		2	1		2		1
Lack of validation	1	4	3	8	2	2	2	4	4		2
Other	1	1	1			1	1	1			1
Partner withdrawal	3		2	1	3	1		1		1	1
Partner's personality	2									1	
Physical distance						3				1	
Pursuit of other opportunities											
Social consequences	2	1	1	4		1		1	1		
Too demanding		2						3			1
Violation of expectations	3		2						2		

APPENDIX P. REASONS for BREAK-UPS by RELATIONSHIP STATUS

APPENDIX P1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR SINGLES

Reasons for Break-Ups for Singles	Single-Sex Group Men 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Men 7 Dec.	Mixed-Group Women 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Men 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Women 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Men 29 Dec.
Alternative partner	1	1						1		
Breach of trust	6	10	7	5	7	7	1	3	1	3
Conflict	2		1		1				2	
Deal Breaker		2	1		2	1	1	1		
Discomfort with commitment			1		1					
Emotional distance	3	6	2	1	7	2	1	2		2
External reasons	2	1	1	2	3	2	2		1	
General frustration			3		2	2				
Incompatibility	2	5	2	8	8	5	8	1	4	5
Inequity	5	3	3	1	1	1				
Jealousy	2	3	3		1	1	2	2		2
Lack of enjoyment	2	3	2	3	3	2				
Lack of validation	1	2	2	3	4	2	5	4	1	
Other	1	2	1	1	1	1		1		
Partner withdrawal	3	3	2	2	7	1	1	1	1	1
Partner's personality	2	1	1							1
Physical distance						3				1
Pursuit of other opportunities		1	1							
Social consequences	2	3		1	2	1		1		
Too demanding			2		1		1	3		
Violation of expectations	3			2						

APPENDIX P2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR COUPLES

Reasons for Break-Ups for Couples	Single-Sex Group Women 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Women 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Men 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Women 8 Dec.	Mixed-Group Women 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Men 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Women 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Men 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Women 30 Dec.	Mixed-Group Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner			1	1			1					1	
Breach of trust	6	4	8	10	7	8	8	1	5	2	4	5	5
Conflict	2	2	2	2			1	1	1				2
Deal Breaker	2	1			1	1	1				1	1	
Discomfort with commitment													
Emotional distance	5	1	2	6	5	3	3	3	2	4	1	1	3
External reasons	1	1	1	1		1		1	2	1	1		
General frustration		1			6		4						
Incompatibility	8	2	5	5	5	7	7	2	3	5	2		1
Inequity	1	1	2	1	1	3	2			2	1	1	2
Jealousy	5	3	2	2	5	4	3	1			1		
Lack of enjoyment	2		1	4	1		1	2	1		2		1
Lack of validation	4	4	3	8	3	2	6		2	1	4	2	2
Other	2	1	1					2	1				1
Partner withdrawal	4		5	1	1	3	4	1				1	1
Partner's personality	1						1	1		1			
Physical distance	1						1						
Pursuit of other opportunities													
Social consequences	1	1	1	4	1			2		2	1		
Too demanding		2			1								1
Violation of expectations											2		

APPENDIX R. REASONS for BREAK-UPS by SESSION TYPES

APPENDIX R1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR SINGLE-SEX GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Single-Sex Group Participants	Couples Women 15 Nov.	Singles Men 18 Nov.	Singles Women 21 Nov.	Couples Men 23 Nov.	Singles Women 25 Nov.	Singles Men 28 Nov.	Couples Women 29 Nov.	Singles Women 1 Dec.	Couples Men 2 Dec.	Couples Women 5 Dec.	Couples Men 6 Dec.	Singles Men 7 Dec.	Couples Women 8 Dec.
Alternative partner		1	1				1		1				1
Breach of trust	6	6	10	4	7	5	8	7	10	7	8	7	8
Conflict	2	2		2	1		2	1	2				1
Deal Breaker	2		2	1	1			2		1	1	1	1
Discomfort with commitment					1			1					
Emotional distance	5	3	6	1	2	1	2	7	6	5	3	2	3
External reasons	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	1		1	2	
General frustration				1	3			2		6		2	4
Incompatibility	8	2	5	2	2	8	5	8	5	5	7	5	7
Inequity	1	5	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	2
Jealousy	5	2	3	3	3		2	1	2	5	4	1	3
Lack of enjoyment	2	2	3		2	3	1	3	4	1		2	1
Lack of validation	4	1	2	4	2	3	3	4	8	3	2	2	6
Other	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1				1	
Partner withdrawal	4	3	3		2	2	5	7	1	1	3	1	4
Partner's personality	1	2	1		1								1
Physical distance	1											3	1
Pursuit of other opportunities			1		1								
Social consequences	1	2	3	1		1	1	2	4	1		1	
Too demanding				2	2			1		1			
Violation of expectations		3				2							

APPENDIX R2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR MIXED-GROUP SESSION PARTICIPANTS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Mixed-Group Participants	Couples Women 21 Dec.	Couples Men 21 Dec.	Singles Women 26 Dec.	Singles Men 26 Dec.	Couples Women 28 Dec.	Couples Men 28 Dec.	Singles Women 29 Dec.	Singles Men 29 Dec.	Couples Women 30 Dec.	Couples Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner				1					1	
Breach of trust	1	5	1	3	2	4	1	3	5	5
Conflict	1	1					2			2
Deal Breaker			1	1		1			1	
Discomfort with commitment										
Emotional distance	3	2	1	2	4	1		2	1	3
External reasons	1	2	2		1	1	1			
General frustration										
Incompatibility	2	3	8	1	5	2	4	5		1
Inequity					2	1			1	2
Jealousy	1		2	2		1		2		
Lack of enjoyment	2	1				2				1
Lack of validation		2	5	4	1	4	1		2	2
Other	2	1		1						1
Partner withdrawal	1		1	1			1	1	1	1
Partner's personality	1				1			1		
Physical distance								1		
Pursuit of other opportunities										
Social consequences	2			1	2	1				
Too demanding			1	3						1
Violation of expectations						2				

APPENDIX S. REASONS for BREAK-UPS for OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Reasons for Break-Ups (for own relationships)	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles Women 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Men 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Singles Men 7 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples Women 8 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Women 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Men 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Women 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles Men 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Women 30 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner		1					1						1				1					1		
Breach of trust	4	4	4	3	6	3	4	7	9	5	6	6	9	1	2		3	1	4	1	3	5	3	
Conflict				2	1		2						1							2				
Deal Breaker			2	1				1		1		2	1			1								
Discomfort with commitment																								
Emotional distance	4	1	3	1	1	1	1	6	5	5	2	2	3	2	1	1		3	1		2		1	
External reasons		1			1	1		1				1				1				1				
General frustration				1	3					3		1	1											
Incompatibility	6	1		1	2	1	4	4	4	3	5	1	7		2	5	1	3	3	3	3		1	
Inequity		1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1		1	2											
Jealousy			1	2	2					2	1	1	2											
Lack of enjoyment	1				1	3	1	2				2	1						2					
Lack of validation	2		2	3	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	2	5		2	3	3		1	1		2	2	
Other	1		4	2	1	1	1							2	1									
Partner withdrawal	2	3	1		1		4	3		1		1	2			1	1			1				
Partner's personality	1												1					1			1			
Physical distance												2									1			
Pursuit of other opportunities					1																			
Social consequences	1							1		1							1	1	1					
Too demanding					2					2							3							
Violation of expectations		1				1																		

APPENDIX T. REASONS for BREAK-UPS for OWN RELATIONSHIPS by GENDER

APPENDIX T1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR WOMEN FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Women (for their relationships)	Single-Sex Group Couples 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 8 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 30 Dec.
Alternative partner				1			1					1
Breach of trust	4	4	6	4	7	5	9	1		1	1	5
Conflict			1	2			1				2	
Deal Breaker		2			1	1	1		1			
Discomfort with commitment												
Emotional distance	4	3	1	1	6	5	3	2	1	3		
External reasons			1		1				1		1	
General frustration			3			3	1					
Incompatibility	6		2	4	4	3	7		5	3	3	
Inequity		1	2	1	1	1	2					
Jealousy		1	2			2	2					
Lack of enjoyment	1		1	1	2		1					
Lack of validation	2	2	2	3	1	1	5		3		1	2
Other	1	4	1	1				2				
Partner withdrawal	2	1	1	4	3	1	2		1		1	
Partner's personality	1						1			1		
Physical distance												
Pursuit of other opportunities			1									
Social consequences	1				1	1				1		
Too demanding			2			2						
Violation of expectations												

APPENDIX T2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR MEN FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Men (for their relationships)	Single-Sex Group Singles 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Singles 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Couples 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Couples 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Singles 7 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 21 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 26 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 28 Dec.	Mixed-Group Singles 29 Dec.	Mixed-Group Couples 30 Dec.
Alternative partner	1							1			
Breach of trust	4	3	3	9	6	6	2	3	4	3	3
Conflict		2									
Deal Breaker		1				2					
Discomfort with commitment											
Emotional distance	1	1	1	5	2	2	1		1	2	1
External reasons	1		1			1					
General frustration		1				1					
Incompatibility	1	1	1	4	5	1	2	1	3	3	1
Inequity	1	1	1			1					
Jealousy		2			1	1					
Lack of enjoyment			3			2			2		
Lack of validation		3	1	3	2	2	2	3	1		2
Other		2	1				1				
Partner withdrawal	3					1		1			
Partner's personality										1	
Physical distance						2				1	
Pursuit of other opportunities											
Social consequences								1	1		
Too demanding								3			
Violation of expectations	1		1								

APPENDIX U. REASONS for BREAK-UPS for OWN RELATIONSHIPS by RELATIONSHIP STATUS

APPENDIX U1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR SINGLES FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Singles (for their relationships)	Single-Sex Group Men 18 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 21 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 25 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 28 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 1 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Men 7 Dec.	Mixed Group Men 26 Dec.	Mixed Group Women 26 Dec.	Mixed Group Women 29 Dec.	Mixed Group Men 29 Dec.
Alternative partner	1						1			
Breach of trust	4	4	6	3	7	6	3		1	3
Conflict			1						2	
Deal Breaker		2			1	2		1		
Discomfort with commitment										
Emotional distance	1	3	1	1	6	2		1		2
External reasons	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	
General frustration			3			1				
Incompatibility	1		2	1	4	1	1	5	3	3
Inequity	1	1	2	1	1	1				
Jealousy		1	2			1				
Lack of enjoyment			1	3	2	2				
Lack of validation		2	2	1	1	2	3	3	1	
Other		4	1	1						
Partner withdrawal	3	1	1		3	1	1	1	1	
Partner's personality										1
Physical distance						2				1
Pursuit of other opportunities			1							
Social consequences					1		1			
Too demanding			2				3			
Violation of expectations	1			1						

APPENDIX U2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR COUPLES FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Couples (for their relationships)	Single-Sex Group Women 15 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 23 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Women 29 Nov.	Single-Sex Group Men 2 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Women 5 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Men 6 Dec.	Single-Sex Group Women 8 Dec.	Mixed Group Women 21 Dec.	Mixed Group Men 21 Dec.	Mixed Group Women 28 Dec.	Mixed Group Men 28 Dec.	Mixed Group Women 30 Dec.	Mixed Group Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner			1				1					1	
Breach of trust	4	3	4	9	5	6	9	1	2	1	4	5	3
Conflict		2	2				1						
Deal Breaker		1			1		1						
Discomfort with commitment													
Emotional distance	4	1	1	5	5	2	3	2	1	3	1		1
External reasons													
General frustration		1			3		1						
Incompatibility	6	1	4	4	3	5	7		2	3	3		1
Inequity		1	1		1		2						
Jealousy		2			2	1	2						
Lack of enjoyment	1		1				1				2		
Lack of validation	2	3	3	3	1	2	5		2		1	2	2
Other	1	2	1					2	1				
Partner withdrawal	2		4		1		2						
Partner's personality	1						1			1			
Physical distance													
Pursuit of other opportunities													
Social consequences	1				1					1	1		
Too demanding					2								
Violation of expectations													

APPENDIX V. REASONS for BREAK-UPS for OWN RELATIONSHIPS by SESSION TYPES

APPENDIX V1. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS FOR SINGLE-SEX GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Single-Sex Group Participants (for own relationships)	Couples Women 15 Nov.	Singles Men 18 Nov.	Singles Women 21 Nov.	Couples Men 23 Nov.	Singles Women 25 Nov.	Singles Men 28 Nov.	Couples Women 29 Nov.	Singles Women 1 Dec.	Couples Men 2 Dec.	Couples Women 5 Dec.	Couples Men 6 Dec.	Singles Men 7 Dec.	Couples Women 8 Dec.
Alternative partner		1					1						1
Breach of trust	4	4	4	3	6	3	4	7	9	5	6	6	9
Conflict				2	1		2						1
Deal Breaker			2	1				1		1		2	1
Discomfort with commitment													
Emotional distance	4	1	3	1	1	1	1	6	5	5	2	2	3
External reasons		1			1	1		1				1	
General frustration				1	3					3		1	1
Incompatibility	6	1		1	2	1	4	4	4	3	5	1	7
Inequity		1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1		1	2
Jealousy			1	2	2					2	1	1	2
Lack of enjoyment	1				1	3	1	2				2	1
Lack of validation	2		2	3	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	2	5
Other	1		4	2	1	1	1						
Partner withdrawal	2	3	1		1		4	3		1		1	2
Partner's personality	1												1
Physical distance												2	
Pursuit of other opportunities					1								
Social consequences	1							1		1			
Too demanding					2					2			
Violation of expectations		1				1							

APPENDIX V2. REASONS FOR BREAK-UPS FOR OWN RELATIONSHIPS FOR MIXED-GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Reasons for Break-Ups for Mixed Group Participants (for own relationships)	Couples Women 21 Dec.	Couples Men 21 Dec.	Singles Women 26 Dec.	Singles Men 26 Dec.	Couples Women 28 Dec.	Couples Men 28 Dec.	Singles Women 29 Dec.	Singles Men 29 Dec.	Couples Women 30 Dec.	Couples Men 30 Dec.
Alternative partner				1					1	
Breach of trust	1	2		3	1	4	1	3	5	3
Conflict							2			
Deal Breaker			1							
Discomfort with commitment										
Emotional distance	2	1	1		3	1		2		1
External reasons			1				1			
General frustration										
Incompatibility		2	5	1	3	3	3	3		1
Inequity										
Jealousy										
Lack of enjoyment						2				
Lack of validation		2	3	3		1	1		2	2
Other	2	1								
Partner withdrawal			1	1			1			
Partner's personality					1			1		
Physical distance								1		
Pursuit of other opportunities										
Social consequences				1	1	1				
Too demanding				3						
Violation of expectations										

APPENDIX W. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

SURNAME, Name: TERZİ, Hilal
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
ORCID:
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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Ph.D. Degree in Psychology 09.2015 – 08.2022

Middle East Technical University*, Ankara, Turkey

Exchange Ph.D. Student in Psychology 09.2017 – 05.2018

University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, Canada

MS Degree in Psychology 09.2011 – 02.2015

Middle East Technical University*, Ankara, Turkey

- Master's Thesis:
  The Interplay between Self-Compassion, Attachment Security & Relational Attributions on Relationship Functioning

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration 09.2006 – 07.2011

Middle East Technical University*, Ankara, Turkey

**The medium of instruction at Middle East Technical University is English.*

WORK EXPERIENCE

Project Assistant 12.2021 – present

British Council Connect4Innovation UK-Turkey Higher Education Institutional Partnerships Fund, Participant Centered Learning [ParCeL] Project, Ankara, Turkey

Teaching Assistant 01.2012 – present

Department of Business Administration, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Project Assistant 08.2018 – 08.2019

TUBITAK* 2223D - Grant Program for Organizing Scientific Meeting within the Framework of Bilateral Cooperation Agreement, Workshop on Developments in the Case Study Method for Entrepreneurship Education, Ankara, Turkey

Project Assistant 09.2015 – 08.2018

Erasmus+ KA2 - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education, Case Study Alliance Turkey, Ankara, Turkey
http://cat.ba.metu.edu.tr/

Project Assistant 05.2013 – 09.2014

TUBITAK* 1001 - The Scientific and Technological Research Projects Funding Program
The Impact of Customer Complaint Management Processes on Firms' Marketing and Financial Performances, Ankara, Turkey
Project No: 112K462

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapter

Koseoglu, G., Wasti, A., & **Terzi, H.** (2021). Employee Turnover in Turkey. In D. G. Allen & J. M. Vardaman (Eds.), *Global Talent Retention: Understanding Employee Turnover around the World (Talent Management)*. Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 167-189. https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83909-293-020211009

Journal Articles

Terzi, H., Özdemir, F., & Özkan, T. (in press). The Relationship between Gender Gap in Employment and Hofstede's Culture Dimensions depending on Country Scores. *Studies in Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.26650/SP2021-941054

Wasti, S. N., **Terzi, H.,** & Kerti, F. (2022). Social Capital, Information Sharing, Ambidexterity and Performance for Technology Park Firms in Turkey. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *64*(5), 531–557. https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.22305

CONFERENCES

Selected Oral Presentations

Terzi, H. (2022, June). *Genç Yetişkinlikte Ayrılık: Romantik İlişkilerde Ayrılık Nedenlerinin Incelenmesi (Separation in Young Adulthood: Examining the Reasons for Break-Up in Romantic Relationships).* Paper presented in 4th Social Psychology Congress, Izmir, Turkey.

Terzi, H. (2018, June). *The Role of Thwarted Basic Needs within Romantic Relationships on Psychological Well-being.* Paper presented in GIMME 5 Session at 2018 ICAP, Montreal, Canada.

Terzi, H. and Sümer, N. (2017, June). *The Interplay between Self Compassion, Attachment Security & Relational Attributions on Relationship Functioning*. Paper presented at 2017 IARR Mini-Conference, Syracuse, NY, US.

Özdemir, F. and **Terzi, H.** (2015, July). *A Cross-Cultural Study: Systematic Association between Gender-Related Occupational Differences and National Culture Dimensions*. Paper presented at 14TH European Congress of Psychology, Milan, Italy.

Terzi, H. and Özkan, T. (2015, March). *A Deviance Regulation Theory Approach on the Compulsory Earthquake Insurance of Turkey*. Paper presented at 5TH Asian Conference on Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences, Osaka, Japan.

Poster Presentations

Terzi, H. (2020, February). A focus group study on romantic break-ups: What it is and when it happens. Presented in 2020 SPSP Convention, New Orleans, LA, United States.

Terzi, H., Aykutoğlu, B., Gündoğdu-Aktürk, E., & Taşfiliz, D. (2019, February). Speed-dating study in Turkey. Presented in 2019 SPSP Convention, Portland, OR, United States.

Invited Talk

Terzi, H. (2016, May). Değişimi Yönetmek: Multidisipliner Bir Bakış Açısı (Managing the Change: A Multidiscipliner Perspective). Presented at II. Psikoloji Oturumları, Ankara, Turkey.

HONOURS & AWARDS & GRANTS

Tuition and Travel Award

Summer Institute in Social Psychology and Personality (SISPP)
2019

Conference Travel Grants

Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

17TH International Association of Relationship Research Conference	2017
5TH Asian Conference on Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences	2015
5TH European Marketing Academy Regional Conference	2014

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member, International Congress of Applied Psychology (ICAP)	2018 – present
Member, International Association for Relationship Research (IARR)	2017 – present
Member, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)	2015 – present

APPENDIX X. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Genç Yetişkinlikte Romantik İlişkiler

Genç yetişkinlik, yaşam sürecinde keşif, istikrarsızlık ve değişim ile karakterize edilen gelişimsel bir aşamadır. Aile evinden ayrılmak, işe girmek veya evlenmek gibi önemli kilometre taşları tipik olarak bu dönemde gerçekleşir (Arnett, 2000; Fincham ve Cui, 2011). İlişkileri geliştirmek ve sürdürmek, genç yetişkinliğin temel gelişim görevlerinden biridir (Arnett, 2000; Barry ve ark., 2009; Barzeva ve ark., 2021; Collins ve Madsen, 2006). İlişki kalitesi ve bu ilişkilerden elde edilen destek, daha iyi fiziksel, psikolojik ve duygusal iyilik için oldukça önemlidir (Cohen, 2004; Kansky ve Allen, 2018; Kiecolt-Glaser, 2018; Oishi ve ark., 2007; Özdemir ve Demir, 2019).

Genç yetişkinler sadece kimliklerini farklı bağlamlarda keşfetmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda romantik kimliklerini, romantik ilişkilerde kim olduklarını, romantik ilişkilerde ne aradıklarını ve kiminle romantik bir ilişkide olmak istediklerini de oluştururlar (Arnett, 2000; Kroger ve ark., 2010; Montgomery, 2005). Ayrıca bu aşamada farklı romantik ilişki biçimlerini de deneyimlerler (Arnett, 2000; Fincham ve Cui, 2011). Romantik ilişkiler genellikle genç yetişkinler için yüksek refah, yakınlık, arkadaşlık ve mutluluğun ana kaynağıdır (Demir, 2010; Kamp Dush & Amato, 2005; Johnson ve ark., 2012; Kansky, 2018). Genel yaşam süresini arttırmanın yanı sıra (Merrill ve Afifi, 2017; Umberson ve Karas Montez, 2010; Yang ve ark., 2016), bu aşamadaki romantik deneyimler, genç yetişkinlerin davranışlarını ve daha sonraki romantik ilişkilerini de etkiler (Fincham ve Cui, 2011). ; Shulman & Connolly, 2013; Xia ve ark., 2018).

Yoğun romantik keşiflerinin bir sonucu olarak, daha fazla romantik ayrılık bu dönemde yaşanır (Eickmeyer, 2019; Halpern-Meekin ve ark., 2013; Shulman ve Connolly, 2013). Araştırmalar, genç yetişkinlik dönemindeki bireylerin neredeyse onda dördünün, iki yıldan daha kısa bir süre içinde en az bir ayrılık deneyimlediğini göstermiştir (Rhoades ve ark., 2011). Çatışma çözme ve çatışmayı iyileştirme ile ayrılık arasındaki ilişki incelendiğinde bu ilişkilerin ergenlik döneminde anlamlı olmadığı görülmüştür (Gottman ve Levenson, 2000, 2002; Salvatore ve ark., 2011). Bununla birlikte, romantik ilişki hedefleri genç yetişkinlikte uzun vadeli ilişki bağlılığını içermeye başlar, bu nedenle genç yetişkinlik döneminde çatışma çözme ve çatışma kurtarma, ilişki doyumu ve romantik ayrılıklarla ilişkili hale gelir (Ha ve ark., 2013). İnsanlar yaşla birlikte daha hoşgörülü olurlar ve çatışmaları daha az olumsuz algılarlar, bu sebeple genç yetişkinlik dönemi romantik ayrılıkların ve çatışma yönetimi becerilerinin ilişkide bağlılığın olduğu romantik ilişkiler üzerindeki zararlı etkilerinin daha iyi gözlemlenebildiği bir dönemdir (Carstensen ve ark., 1995; Fingerman ve Charles, 2010).

Romantik İlişkilerde Çatışma

Romantik ilişkiler, çiftlerin bireysel olarak bir arada yaşamanın yollarını aradığı dinamik yapılardır. Çiftlerin bireysel özellikleri ve aralarındaki etkileşim karmaşık bir ilişki dinamiği yaratır. Farklı varlıklar olmak, çiftlerin partnerlerinden veya partnerlerinin onlardan ne yapmalarını beklediklerinden farklı davranmalarına yol açar. En iyi romantik ilişkilerde bile, deneyim beklentilerle uyuşmadığında gerginliklerin ortaya çıkması muhtemeldir. İletişim, romantik ilişkilerin oluşumu, sürdürülmesi ve onarımı için önemlidir, özellikle ciddi ilişki çatışmalarından sonra kritik bir rol oynar (Dindia ve Timmerman, 2003; Emmers-Sommer, 2003). Çatışma sırasında incinme ve öfke gibi

olumsuz duygular ortaya çıkar ve bu da yakınlığı ve ilişki doyumunu zedeler ve ilişkinin sona erme olasılığını artırır (örn., Buss, 1989; Feeney, 2004; Leary ve Springer, 2001; Mills ve ark., 2002). Affetme ve ilişkiye dair umut, sorunların üstesinden gelinebileceği ve ilişkilerin sürdürülebileceği inancını desteklemektedir (Arya ve Kaushik, 2015; Braithwaite ve ark., 2011; Fincham ve ark., 2004; Fingerman ve Charles, 2010; Paleari ve Fincham, 2015).

Çiftlerin çatışmaları ele alma biçimleri, ilişkilerinin geleceğini etkiler (Gottman, 2011; Sillars ve Canary, 2012). Tüm romantik ilişkiler, geleceklerini belirleyecek bazı stresli olaylarla karşı karşıya kalır, ancak tüm romantik ilişkiler sona ermeye mahkum değildir. Zamanlama değişse de, ayrılıklar genellikle çiftlerden en az biri artık o ilişkiyi sürdürmek için motive olmadığında ortaya çıkar. Bireyler çatışmaları yapıcı bir şekilde çözdüklerinde boşanma olasılıkları azalmakta (Gottman ve Levenson, 2000, 2002), çözemedikleri zaman ise artmaktadır (Carrère ve ark., 2000; Gottman ve Levenson, 1992). Çok yaygın deneyimlenmelerine rağmen, romantik ayrılıklar travmatik deneyimlerin en kötü türlerinden biri olarak algılanır (Frazier ve Hurliman, 2001; Perilloux ve Buss, 2008), azalmış fiziksel refah ve yaşam doyumu (Chung ve ark. ., 2002; Eisenberger, 2012; Rhoades ve ark., 2011), ve artan psikolojik problemler (Boelen & Reijntjes, 2009; Eisma ve ark., 2021; Rhoades ve ark., 2011; Sbarra & Emery, 2005) ile ilişkilendirilirler.

Araştırmalar, ayrılma kararının bir anda verilmediğini, bunun yerine bireylerin ilişkide kalma/ayrılma kararını vermek için çok fazla zaman harcadıklarını göstermiştir (Mastekaasa, 1995; VanderDrift ve ark., 2009). Çiftler arasındaki sıradan etkileşimler, sonsuz eylem-tepki döngüleri yaratır. Ancak iş tatmin etmeyen durumlara geldiğinde bireyler farklı tepkiler gösterirler. Bazıları ilişkilerini bitirmeyi tercih ederken bazıları rahatsızlıklarını dile getirmeyi etmeyi tercih edebilir, bazıları ise ilişkilerini sürdürmek

isteyebilir. Tatmin edici olmayan durumlara karşı çok sayıda alternatif reaksiyon olmasına rağmen, bunlar *Çıkış-Konuşma-Bağlılık-Yokmuş gibi davranma* Modeli altında kategorize edilebilir (ÇKBY modeli; Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983; Rusbult ve ark., 1982).

Çıkış-Konuşma-Bağlılık-Yokmuş gibi davranma Modeli

"Çıkış, konuşma ve bağlılık: Firmalarda, kuruluşlarda ve devletlerde düşüşe tepkiler" adlı kitabında Hirschman (1974) çalışanların kurumlardaki tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verdikleri tepkileri üç alternatif başlık altında toplamıştır. Bu model, göç çalışmaları ve işyeri gibi çeşitli alanlara uygulanmıştır. Romantik ilişkiler alanında, Hirschman'ın orijinal ÇKB modeline yokmuş gibi davranma davranışı eklenerek, memnuniyetsizliğe verilen tepkiler genişletilmiştir (Rusbult ve ark., 1996; Rusbult, Zembrodt ve ark., 1983; Rusbult ve ark., 1982). *Çıkış* davranışı, ayrılma, evden gitme, boşanma ve ilişkinin sona ermesi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Rusbult ve ark., 1988). Bu kategoride bireyler bir şeyleri düzeltmeye, ilişkiyi kurtarmaya, çalışmadan uzaklaşmayı tercih eder. *Konuşma* davranışı, sorunları çözmek için eylemlerde bulunarak, onları tartışarak, çözüm arayarak ve uzlaşarak koşulları iyileştirmenin yollarını aktif ve yapıcı bir şekilde bulmaya çalışmak anlamına gelir (Hirschman, 1974; Rusbult ve ark., 1988). *Bağlılık* davranışı ise durumu kabul etmek ve konuyla ilgili herhangi bir şey yapmadan partnerin davranışında olumlu bir değişikliğin gerçekleşmesini beklemek olarak kategorize edilir (Rusbult ve ark., 1988). *Yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışı ise, partnerle temastan kaçınma, tartışmayı reddetme, asıl problemin dışındaki konularda problem yaratma gibi asıl sorunu gidermeye yönelik olmayan davranışlarda bulunma, partnere duygusal ve fiziksel olarak kötü davranmayı içeren davranışları kapsar. Alternatif eş arayışı bu kategori altında

gerçekleşebilir ve bu durum yokmuş gibi davranma davranışını gerçekleştiren kişinin ilişkisinden vazgeçtiğinin işareti olabilir.

Alternatif tipolojiler farklı alanlarda sunulup kullanılmış olsa da (Cheung, 2005; Hagedoorn ve ark., 1999; Leck ve Saunders, 1992; Luchak, 2003; Naus ve ark., 2007; Parhankangas ve Landström, 2004; Tucker ve Turner, 2011; Turnley ve Feldman, 1999; Van Yperen ve ark., 2000), bu çalışmada orijinal ÇKBY tipolojisi kullanılmıştır. Bu ÇKBY davranışları, aktif/pasif boyut ve yapıcı/yıkıcı boyut olmak üzere iki boyuta sahiptir (bkz. Tablo 1). Aktif/pasif boyutu, kişinin tatmin edici olmayan durumlarda nasıl davrandığına odaklanır ve aktif davranışların altında *çıkış* ve *konuşma*, pasif davranışların altında ise *bağlılık* ve *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışları bulunmaktadır. Yapıcı/yıkıcı boyut, alınan davranış kararıyla ilişkilerin nasıl etkileneceğine odaklanır. Uzlaşma/yapıcı davranışlar tüm ilişki için yapıcı davranışları (*konuşma* ve *bağlılık*) içerirken, kontrol edici/yıkıcı davranışlar ilişkilere zarar veren *çıkış* ve *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışlarını barındırır (Rusbult, 1987; Rusbult ve ark., 1982; Rusbult ve Zembrodt, 1983; Rusbult ve ark., 1991).

ÇKBY tipolojisi, yakın ilişkilerdeki çatışmayı anlamak için araştırmalarda kullanılmıştır (örn., Fletcher ve ark., 1999; Rusbult ve ark., 1982; Rusbult ve ark., 1991; Overall ve ark., 2010; Okutan ve ark., 2016). Bazı araştırmalar, *çıkış* davranışları ile *konuşma* davranışlarının negatif ilişkili olduğunu bildirmiştir (James ve John, 2021; Hirschman, 1974). Bireylerin ilişkilerinde *konuşma*nın bir seçenek olmadığını hissettikleri durumda *çıkış* davranışlarını seçeceği söylenebilir. Ek olarak, bireyler ilişkilerinde ne kadar uyumlu davranış sergilerse, yüksek evlilik doyumu ve istikrar gibi ilişkisel sonuçların o kadar olumlu olduğu bulunmuştur (Davis ve Rusbult, 2001; Etcheverry ve Le, 2005; Finkel ve Campbell, 2001; Karney ve Bradbury, 1995; Kelly ve ark., 2003; Sanderson ve Karetsky, 2002). Çalışmalar, *bağlılık* tepkileri ile önceki ilişki tatmini arasında tutarlı bir ilişki

olmadığını göstermiştir (Rusbult, Johnson ve ark., 1986). Bu nedenle bağlılık davranışlarının daha karmaşık faktörlere dayandığı söylenebilir.

Çalışmanın Amacı ve Planı

Bu doktora tezinin amacı, üç araştırma sorusuna (AS) cevap arayarak romantik ilişkilerin ayrılık evresini anlamaktır: Romantik ayrılık nedir? (AS1), tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkileri etkileyen yordayıcılar nelerdir? (AS2), ve romantik ayrılık nedenleri nelerdir? (AS3). Bu üç araştırma sorusuna cevap bulmak için biri nicel diğeri nitel olmak üzere iki araştırma yapılmıştır. Nitel araştırma nicel araştırmadan sonra gerçekleştirilmiş olsa da, bu çalışmalar verileri takip kolaylığı açısından bu tezde farklı bir sıra ile sunulmuştur. Araştırma sorusu, hipotezler ve bulgular her çalışma bölümünde belirtilmiştir.

Kasım ve Aralık 2016'da yürütülen 18 odak grup çalışmasından elde edilen veriler, ayrılığın ne olduğu sorusuna (AS1) yanıt vermek için Bölüm 2'de rapor edilmiştir. Tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkileri (AS2) etkileyen yordayıcıları belirlemek için yürütülen nicel çalışma Bölüm 3'te rapor edilmiştir. Odak grup oturumlarından elde edilen ayrılıkların nedenleri (AS3) ise Bölüm 4'te sunulmuştur. Ayrıntılı metodoloji Bölüm 2'de (sayfa 12) sunulurken tekrardan kaçınmak adına Bölüm 4'te kısaca anlatılmıştır. Bölüm 5 genel tartışma, çalışmanın kısıtlılığı ve sonraki çalışmalar için öneriler ile bu tezin alanyazına katkısını içermektedir.

Araştırma Sorusu 1: Romantik Ayrılık Nedir?

Romantik ayrılık, bir ilişkinin sona ermesi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Felmlee ve ark., 1990). Her zaman olmasa da bazen romantik ayrılıklar karşı tarafa bir ültimatom

vermek ve eğer değişmezlerse ayrılığın kesin olacağını göstermek için de kullanılır. Dolayısıyla romantik ayrılıklar bu amaçla kullanıldığında genel tanımının dışında ilişkinin bir parçası olarak da değerlendirilebilir. Ancak bu çalışmada romantik ayrılık ilişkinin sonu olarak tanımlanmıştır.

İnsanlar ayrılmayı umarak romantik bir ilişkiye başlamasalar da, çoğu insan romantik ayrılık yaşar. Rhoades ve arkadaşları (2011), genç yetişkinlerin yaklaşık onda dördünün iki yıldan kısa sürede en az bir ayrılık yaşadığını göstermiştir. Romantik ayrılık, etkisi kısa süren anlık bir olay değildir. Romantik ayrılık bir süreçtir ve bu çalışma ayrılık sonrası aşamaya odaklanmaktadır.

Bu tezin birinci ve üçüncü araştırma sorularına ((AS1) "romantik ayrılık nedir?" ve (AS3) "ayrılıkların nedenleri nelerdir?") yanıt bulmak amacıyla 2016 yılının Kasım ve Aralık aylarında bir dizi odak grup oturumu düzenlenmiştir. Bu bölüm birinci araştırma sorusunun bulgularına ayrıldığından, "Ayrılık kelimesini duyduğunuzda aklınıza ne geliyor?" sorusuna verilen cevaplarla bireylerin romantik ayrılıkları nasıl algıladıkları ve deneyimledikleri hakkındaki bilgi bulgular bölümünde sunulmuştur. Odak grup oturumlarına ait bulgular Bölüm 3 ve Bölüm 4'te de sunulmuştur. Odak grup oturumlarının bulgularının ilk kez sunulduğu bu bölümde yöntem ayrıntılı olarak açıklanmıştır.

Yöntem

Örneklem

Odak grup oturumlarına katılan katılımcılar, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi (ODTÜ) Psikoloji Bölümü'nün kullandığı SONA sistemine kaydolarak ders kredisi karşılığında seçilmiştir. Veriler, Kasım ve Aralık 2016'da bir pilot ve 17 odak grup oturumu yürütülerek toplanmıştır. Çalışmaya katılım koşullarında heteroseksüel olmak, en az 18

yaşında olmak, 3 aydan uzun süredir devam eden romantik bir ilişki içinde olmak veya daha önceden en az 3 ay sürmüş romantik bir ilişki yaşamış olmak yer almaktadır. Nişanlı, evli veya dul katılımcılar çalışmaya dahil edilmemiştir. Ön görüşmeye 139 heteroseksüel katılımcı katılmasına rağmen, bunlardan sekizi ya geri çekildikleri konusunda araştırmacıya bilgi vermiş ya da odak grup oturumuna katılmak için seçtikleri gün çalışmaya gelmemiş ve kendilerine gönderilen e-postalara cevap vermemiştir. Odak grup oturumlarına 131 lisans ve lisansüstü öğrenci (74 kadın, toplamın %56,49'u) katılmıştır (bkz. Tablo 2). Katılımcıların yaşları 18 ile 28 arasında değişmekte olup, ortalama yaş 23'tür. Yetmiş dört katılımcı (%56,49) çalışmanın yürütüldüğü tarihte romantik bir ilişki içindeydi (bkz. Tablo 2). Her odak grup oturumunda beş ila dokuz katılımcı bulunuyordu (bkz. Tablo 3).

Odak grup oturumları hem tek cinsiyet hem de karma cinsiyet olmak üzere iki farklı şekilde yürütüldü. Tek cinsiyet oturumlarına 131 katılımcının doksan yedisi katıldı. Başlangıçta odak grup çalışmalarının sadece tek cinsiyet oturumlarıyla yapılması planlanmıştı. Ancak, tek cinsiyet oturumlarının (13 odak grup oturumu) tamamlanmasından sonra, ilave 5 karma cinsiyet odak grup oturumu düzenlendi. Karma cinsiyet oturumlarının yapılmasının temel nedeni, tek cinsiyet ve karma cinsiyet oturumları arasında fark olup olmadığını ve odada karşı cinsten birisi bulunduğunda katılımcıların görüşlerini nasıl ifade ettiklerini anlamaktı. Bulgular, ilk araştırma sorusu kapsamında tek cinsiyet ve karma cinsiyet grup oturumları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığını göstermiştir. Odak grup çalışmaları sırasında, kadın katılımcılar erkeklere kıyasla hem bekarlar hem de çiftler oturumunda daha fazla temsil edilmiştir (bkz. Tablo 4).

İşlem

Tüm odak grup oturumları açık uçlu sorularla yarı yapılandırılmıştır (bkz. Ek B). Sorulan sorular ilişkilerin üç aşamasıyla da ilgilidir: ilişki başlangıcı, ilişki süreci ve ilişkilerin sona ermesi. Bu soruların cevaplandırılmasından sonra, katılımcılardan boş bir kağıda beş temel ayrılık sebebini yazmaları istendi (bkz. Ek K). Daha sonra, boş kağıda yazdıkları ayrılık nedenlerini değerlendirmeleri için başka bir boş kağıtta değerlendirme formu verildi (bkz. Ek L). Katılımcıların yazdıkları ayrılık nedenleri ve bu nedenlere yönelik değerlendirmeler Bölüm 4'te ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Mevcut çalışmada kullanılan anketler ve açık uçlu sorular ilk olarak Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi İnsan Katılımcıları Etik Kurulu'nun (UEAM) onayına sunulmuştur. Etik onayı alındıktan sonra (bakınız Ek A1), SONA sistemi aracılığıyla odak grup oturumlarını içeren bilimsel bir çalışmaya katılım çağrısı yapılmıştır. Katılımcılar bir ön görüşme toplantısına ve bir odak grup oturumuna katıldılar. Ön görüşmede katılımcılara çalışmanın kapsamı anlatıldıktan sonra oturumların gizliliği ve istedikleri zaman araştırmadan çekilebilecekleri konusunda bilgi verildi. Odak grup toplantısına geldiklerinde o oturumda tanıdıkları birinin olması ve bu kişilerin yanında özel hayatları hakkında konuşmak istememeleri halinde başka bir odak grup toplantısına katılabilecekleri de belirtildi. Katılımcılar ayrıca ön görüşmede bazı anketleri doldurup demografik soruları cevaplandırdılar ve odak grup oturumu için bir tarih seçtiler. Odak grup oturumları ODTÜ İşletme Bölümü odak grup çalışma odasında yapıldı. Tüm odak grup çalışmaları yaklaşık 2 saat kadar sürmüş ve oturumlar sesli ve görüntülü kayıt altına alınmıştır. Seanslardan önce ve seans boyunca bazı yiyecek ve içecekler katılımcılara ikram edilmiştir. Oturumlar hafta içi akşamları ders saati sonrasında yapılmıştır.

Bulgular

İlişki yapısı 18 odak grup oturumu arasında farklılık göstermemiştir. İlişkilerin süreleri orta ile uzun dönem arasında değişmektedir ($Ort_{süre}$ = 805 gün ~ 2 yıl ve 2,5 ay). Katılımcıların yaş ortalaması genç olsa da, oturumlarda 3 yıldan uzun süredir romantik ilişki içirisinde olan katılımcılar bulunmaktaydı. Katılımcılar romantik partnerleriyle büyük çoğunluğunlukla aynı şehirde yaşadıklarını belirtmiştir. Romantik partneriyle aynı evi paylaşan katılımcılar bulunurken, her oturumda en fazla bir katılımcı belirli bir süre için bile olsa sevgilisinden farklı bir şehirde yaşadığını söylemiştir. Uzun mesafe ilişkisi yaşayan katılımcılar genellikle görsel-işitsel teknolojik uygulamalar aracılığıyla partnerleriyle iletişim içinde olduklarını ve romantik partneriyle görüşebilmek için sıklıkla (örneğin ayda iki kez) diğer şehre seyahat ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Katılımcılara "ayrılık" kelimesini duyduklarında akıllarına ne geldiği soruldu. Bulgular, katılımcıların romantik ayrılığı genel olarak üzücü, yıkıcı bir olay olarak gördüklerini göstermekte. Yalnızlık, depresyon, hüzün, boşluk, özlem, yıkım, rahatlama, özgürlük, kendini yeniden tanıma ve alışkanlıkların değişmesi romantik ayrılıklar için sıklıkla hatırlanan kelime ve kelime öbekleriydi. Her iki taraf da romantik ilişkisine bir zamanlar yatırım yaptığı için bu durum ayrılığı başlatan taraf için de geçerliliğini korumaktadır. Katılımcıların aklına gelen çağrışımlar, analizlerden ortaya çıkan beş boyut altında kategorize edilmiştir. Bunlar, ayrılıkla ilgili inançlar, duygular, kimliğin ve zamanın (yeniden) inşası, yas evresi, ve geleceğe yönelik beklentilerdir (bkz. Şekil 3).

Araştırma Sorusu 2: Tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkileri etkileyen yordayıcılar nelerdir?

Çalışma ve Çalışmanın Hipotezleri

Bireyler tatmin edici olmayan durumlara farklı tepkiler gösterirler. Bölüm 3 bazı bireysel ve ilişkisel yordayıcıların (güvenli bağlanmanın, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanması/karşılanmaması/engellenmesi ve ilişki temelli öz-saygı) tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkiler (ÇKBY) üzerindeki rolünü tartışmakta ve bu tezin ikinci araştırma sorusunu yanıtlamaktadır: Tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen yanıtları etkileyen yordayıcılar nelerdir? (AS2). Bu çalışma için aşağıdaki hipotezler, özetlenen teorik ilişkiler ve önceki ampirik çalışmalar temelinde öne sürülmüştür.

H1: Bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı değerleri yüksek bireyler daha az aktif (*Çıkış* (a) ve *Konuşma* (b) tepkileri) ve daha fazla pasif davranışlar (*Bağlılık* (c) ve *Yokmuş gibi davranma* (d) tepkileri) gösterirler.

H2: Bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma değerleri yüksek bireyler daha fazla yıkıcı davranışlar gösterirler (*Çıkış* (a) ve *Yokmuş gibi davranma* (d) tepkileri).

H3: İlişki temelli öz-saygı puanları daha yüksek olan bireyler daha fazla pasif ve yapıcı davranışlar (*Bağlılık* tepkileri) gösterirler.

H4: Bireyler ilişkide temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları karşılandığında daha fazla aktif ve yapıcı davranışlar (*Konuşma* tepkileri) gösterirler.

H5: Temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları tatmin edilmeyen bireyler daha fazla yıkıcı (*Çıkış* (a) ve *Yokmuş gibi davranma* (d) tepkileri) ve daha az yapıcı davranışlar (*Konuşma* (b) ve *Bağlılık* (c) tepkileri) gösterirler.

H6: Temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları engellenen bireyler daha az aktif (*Çıkış* (a) ve *Konuşma* (b) tepkileri) ve daha fazla pasif davranışlar (*Bağlılık* (c) ve *Yokmuş gibi davranma* (d) tepkileri) gösterirler.

Yöntem

Örneklem

Bu çalışmaya ODTÜ'den toplam 329 lisans öğrencisi (185 Kadın, %56.2) ders kredisi karşılığında katılmıştır. Çalışmaya katılım koşulları heteroseksüel olmak, 18 ve 28 yaş arasında olmak, bekar olmak ve 3 aydan fazla süren romantik bir ilişki içinde olmak veya 3 aydan uzun sürmüş romantik bir ilişki yaşamış olmaktı. Katılımcıların yaşları 18 ile 30 arasında değişmekte olup, ortalama 22.97 ve medyan 23 yıldır. Bunların %62,3'ü romantik bir ilişki içindeyken, %87,2'si daha önce romantik bir ilişki içerisindeydi.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Anket bataryası, İlişki Sorunlarına Tepkilerim Ölçeği, Yakın İlişkilerde Yaşantılar Ölçeği Revize edilmiş versiyon, İlişki Temelli Öz-Saygı Ölçeği, Psikolojik İhtiyaçların Karşılanması, Karşılanmaması, ve Baskılanması Ölçeği (PNSDTS), iki vinyet ve demografik sorulardan oluşmaktadır.

Bulgular

Bu çalışmada toplam 397 katılımcı yer almıştır. On üç katılımcı, ya heteroseksüel olmayan bir cinsel yönelim seçtikleri ya da cinsel yönelimlerini açıklamamayı tercih ettikleri için (uygunluk koşullarından birini karşılamadıkları için) veri setinden çıkarılmıştır. Altı katılımcı, bu çalışmanın bir başka uygunluk koşulu olan 28 yaşından

belirgin bir şekilde büyüktü. Çalışmanın ön koşullarına uymayan katılımcılar veri setinden çıkartıldıktan ve veri temizliğinden sonra veri seti 329 katılımcıya düşmüştür.

Korelasyonel Bulgular

Çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya çıkarmak için korelasyonel analiz yapılmıştır. İlişki sorunlarına yönelik *çıkış* tepkisi; *yokmuş gibi davranma*, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmaması ve baskılanması ile pozitif yönde; *konuşma*, *bağlılık* ve psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanması ile negatif yönde ilişkilidir. *Konuşma* yanıtı, *bağlılık* ve psikolojik ihtiyaç karşılanması ile pozitif bir ilişki ortaya koyarken, *yokmuş gibi davranma*, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmaması ve baskılanması ile negatif ilişkili bulunmuştur. *Bağlılık* tepkisi, yalnızca ilişki temelli öz-saygı ve psikolojik ihtiyaç baskılanması ile pozitif bir ilişkiye sahiptir. *Yokmuş gibi davranma* tepkisi, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmaması ve baskılanması ile pozitif bir ilişkiye sahipken, psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanması ile negatif bir ilişkiye sahiptir. Çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki tanımlayıcı istatistikler ve korelasyon katsayıları Tablo 7'de sunulmuştur.

Çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki cinsiyet farklılıklarını (varsa) ortaya çıkarmak için tek yönlü ANOVA yapılmıştır (bkz. Tablo 8). *Çıkış* ve *konuşma* tepkileri cinsiyete göre farklılık göstermemektedir. Bununla birlikte, erkekler önemli ölçüde daha fazla *bağlılık* davranışları gösterirken, kadınlar önemli ölçüde daha fazla *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışı göstermiştir. Bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı ve kaçınma, ve ilişki temelli öz-saygı cinsiyete göre farklılık göstermemiştir. Kadın katılımcılar, erkeklerden önemli ölçüde daha yüksek düzeyde temel psikolojik ihtiyaç tatminine sahiptir. Erkeklerin temel psikolojik ihtiyaç

tatminsizliği ve bu ihtiyaçların engellenmesi puanları kadınlara göre anlamlı derecede yüksek bulunmuştur.

Regresyon Analizi

Bireysel ve ilişkisel faktörler ile ilişki sorunlarına verilen 4 alternatif tepki (*çıkış, konuşma, bağlılık* ve *yokmuş gibi davranma*) arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmak için bir dizi regresyon analizi yapılmıştır (bkz. Tablo 9). Sonuçlar, modelin, açıklanan varyansının .056 ile .218 arasında değiştiği *çıkış* yanıtı, *konuşma* yanıtı, *bağlılık* yanıtı ve *yokmuş gibi davranma* yanıtı için anlamlı bir yordayıcı olduğunu göstermiştir.

Çıkış yanıtının bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$), bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma ($\beta = .14$, $p < .05$) ve psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmaması ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$)) ile pozitif ve psikolojik ihtiyaçların baskılanması ile negatif ($\beta = -.29$, $p < .01$) yönde anlamlı bir ilişkisi olduğu bulunmuştur. Çalışma sonuçları H2a, H5a ve H6a hipotezlerini desteklemektedir. *Konuşma* yanıtının yalnızca psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini ile anlamlı bir pozitif ilişkisi bulunmuştur ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$), bu da H4'ü desteklemektedir. *Bağlılık* tepkisi, ilişki temelli öz-saygı ($\beta = .14$, $p < .05$) ve psikolojik ihtiyaçların baskılanması ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$) ile anlamlı bir pozitif ilişkiye sahiptir. Sonuçlar, H3 ve H6c'yi desteklemektedir. *Yokmuş gibi davranma* yanıtının, H2d'yi destekleyen, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$) ile anlamlı bir pozitif ilişkiye sahip olduğu bulunmuştur.

Korelasyonel Bulgular (Özerklik, Yeterlik ve İlişkisellik alt boyutları)

Temel psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini, tatminsizlik ve engellemenin özerklik, yeterlik ve ilişkisellik alt ölçeklerini içeren çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya çıkarmak için

korelasyon analizi yapılmıştır. Çalışma değişkenleri arasındaki tanımlayıcı istatistikler ve korelasyon katsayıları Tablo 10'da sunulmuştur.

İlişki sorunlarına yönelik *çıkış* tepkisi, *yokmuş gibi davranma*, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaç tatminsizliği ve psikolojik ihtiyaç giderme alt boyutlarıyla pozitif, *konuşma*, *bağlılık* ve psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini alt boyutlarıyla negatif ilişkilidir. *Konuşma* yanıtının, *bağlılık* ve psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini alt ölçekleri ile pozitif bir ilişkisi olduğu ve *yokmuş gibi davranma*, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaç tatminsizliği alt ölçekleri ve engellenmiş özerklik ve ilişkisellik alt ölçekleri ile negatif bir ilişkisi olduğu bulunmuştur. *Bağlılık* tepkisi, ilişki temelli öz-saygı, özerklik ihtiyaç tatminsizliği alt ölçeği ve engellenmiş temel psikolojik özerklik ihtiyacı alt ölçeği ile pozitif bir ilişkiye sahipti. *Yokmuş gibi davranma* tepkisi, bağlanma kaygısı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, psikolojik ihtiyaç tatminsizliği alt boyutları ve psikolojik ihtiyaç giderme alt boyutları ile pozitif bir ilişkiye sahipken, psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini alt boyutları ile negatif bir ilişkiye sahiptir.

Vinyet Ölçümü

Katılımcıların tatmin edici olmayan durumlara tepkilerini ölçmek için oluşturulan iki vinyet (kısa hikaye), *çıkış* ("Ayrılmayı düşünüyorum."), *konuşma* ("Beni üzen şey hakkında onunla konuşurum"), *bağlılık* ("Sabırla bir şeylerin düzelmesini beklerim.") ve *yokmuş gibi davranma* ("Onu asıl sorunla ilgisi olmayan şeyler için eleştiririm.") seçenekleriyle katılımcıların değerlendirmesine sunulmuştur. 121 katılımcıyla yapılan bu çalışmanın ön analiz sonuçları bu çalışma için oluşturulan vinyetlerde yeterli bir varyans yakalanamadığını göstermektedir (bkz. Tablo 10). Her iki vinyette de katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu (1. öyküde %76, 2. öyküde %73) romantik ilişkilerinde bir sorun olduğunda

konuşma seçeneğini seçeceklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bunu, ilk vinyette *bağlılık* yanıtı (%15) ve ikinci vinyette ise *çıkış* yanıtı (%21) takip etmiştir. Vinyetlerde yeterli varyansın yakalanamaması sebebiyle bu vinyetler sonraki veri toplama aşamasına dahil edilmemiştir. Çalışmaya ait diğer iki araştırma sorusu için (AS1 ve AS3) veri toplamanın yanı sıra, vinyetlerde yanlış bir şey olup olmadığını ve varsa neyin yanlış olduğunu anlamak için 2016 yılının sonlarında 18 odak grup çalışması yapılmıştır. Odak grup oturumlarında, kantitatif çalışma için geliştirilen 2 vinyetin yanı sıra geliştirilen 3 ayrı vinyet daha katılımcılara değerlendirmeleri için sunulmuştur.

Odak Grup Oturumlarından Elde Edilen Vinyet Bulguları

Her odak grup oturumunun vinyet değerlendirmeleri (bkz. Ek I), ve kadınlar, erkekler, bekarlar ve çiftler oturumlarının vinyet değerlendirmeleri de ayrı ayrı tablo haline getirilmiştir (bkz. sırasıyla Ek J[J1, J2] ve Ek K[K1,K2]). Her oturumda tekrarlanan bir şekilde, katılımcılar vinyetlerde bahsedilen durumu yaşamaları halinde sadece tek bir seçeneği seçmeyeceklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bazıları önce bir seçeneği seçeceklerini (örneğin *konuşma* yanıtı) ve duruma göre diğerlerini seçebileceklerini (örneğin, *çıkış* veya *yokmuş gibi davranma* yanıtı) söylemiştir. Bazıları içinse dört alternatiften oluşan seçenekler aradıkları davranış çeşitliliği sunamamaktadır. Örneğin, *konuşma* seçeneğinde yazan ifade partnerlerine bağırmak veya onlarla tartışmak anlamına gelmemektedir. Yine de bu katılımcılar, illa ki bir seçeneği seçmeleri gerekiyorsa *konuşma* seçeneğini seçeceklerini belirtmişlerdir.

Odak grup oturumlarındaki bazı katılımcılar vinyetlerin konusunun kendilerinde herhangi bir olumsuz duyguyu yaratmadığını/çatışmalı bir durumu tetiklemediğini belirtmiştir. Aslında bir karar vermelerine gerek olmamasına rağmen, her vinyet " ... rahatsız

olursunuz. Artık, ilişkinizle ilgili bir karar vermeniz gerekmektedir." ile sona erdiği için, katılımcılar vinyetlerin onlara rahatsız hissetme dışında bir seçenek tanımadığı belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca kendisini vinyetteki ana karakterin yerine koyamayanlar, vinyetlerde bahsedilen durumun gerçekleşmesinin pek olası olmadığını söylemişlerdir. Vinyetlerin gerçek hayattaki davranışı ölçmede başarılı olabilmesi için katılımcıların ana karakterle özdeşleşmesi esastır. Fakat beş vinyetten yalnızca dördüncü, ardından birinci ve üçüncü vinyetler katılımcıların kendilerini ana karakter yerine koymasını sağlayabilmiştir. Diğer vinyetlerde ise yalnızca bazı katılımcılar ana karakterle özdeşleşebilmiştir.

Araştırma Sorusu 3: Romantik Ayrılık Nedenleri Nelerdir?

Ayrılıklar söz konusu olduğunda incelenmesi gereken bir diğer konu da romantik ayrılıklara neden olan sebeplerdir. Bu nedenler, memnuniyetsizlik durumlarını tetikleyen nedenler olarak da değerlendirilebilir. Bu nedenle, bu bölüm bu tezin üçüncü araştırma sorusuna odaklanmaktadır: Romantik ayrılık nedenleri nelerdir? (AS3). Veriler 18 odak grup oturumundan toplanmıştır.

Yöntem

Örneklem ve İşlem

Bu çalışma kapsamında yürütülen 18 odak grup oturuma dair yöntem bilgileri ilk araştırma sorusu kısmında açıklanmıştır. Böylece metinde tekrardan kaçınılmıştır.

Bulgular

İnsanlar karşılaştıkları her durumda romantik ilişkilerini sonlandırma kararı vermezler. Bireylerin ne zaman ilişkilerini sürdürmeye devam etme kararı verdiğini

anlamak, bir ilişkide neyin affedilebilir olduğunu ve neyin onarılamayacağını anlamak için önemlidir. Ayrılıkların 5 temel nedenini öğrenmek için her odak grup oturumun sonunda tüm katılımcılara boş bir sayfa verildi. Katılımcılardan bu boş sayfaya romantik ilişkilerin bitmesine neden olacak 5 ayrılık nedenini yazması istendi. 18 odak grup oturumuna katılan 131 katılımcı birbirlerinden farklı ayrılık nedenleri sıralasa da, bu nedenler analizler sonucu 21 başlık altında toplanmıştır. Bu kategoriler, kategorilerin açıklamaları ve katılımcıların ayrılma nedenleri (ve İngilizce çevirileri) her bir ayrılık nedeni için birkaç örnek ile tablolaştırılmıştır (bkz. Tablo 13).

Anlamı belirlenemeyen bazı nedenler ise kodlanamayanlar kategorisi altında değerlendirilmiştir. Örneğin hali hazırda bir ilişkisi olmayan kadın bir katılımcı, listesine "yetersizlik hissiyle gelen suçluluk" yazmıştır. Ancak, cümlenin kendisi, bu yetersizlik duygusunun hangi kaynağa dayandığına dair herhangi bir bilgi sağlamamaktadır. Aynı şekilde "eski sevgililer faktörü" güvenin sarsılması (ilişkiye yönelik fiili/algılanan bir tehdit), alternatif partnerler (eski sevgililer yeniden bir araya gelmek istiyorsa) ve hem beklentilerin karşılanmaması hem de partnerin duyarsız olması (partner mevcut ve eski sevgili arasında bir kıyas yapıyorsa eğer) olarak sınıflandırılabilmektedir. Dolayısıyla ayrılık sebeplerinde, bağlamdan bağımsız herhangi bir değerlendirme girişimi yanlış olacaktır. Örneğin başka bir oturumda da bir erkek katılımcının yazdığı "ilişkinin karadelik haline gelmesi" ilişkiden keyif alamama kategorisi ile bağlantılı olabileceği kadar partnerin çok talepkar olması kategorisiyle de ilişkili olabilir. Ancak bu cümle tek başına hangi kategorinin daha uygun olduğunu anlamak için yeterince açık olmadığından kodlanamayanlar kategorisi altında değerlendirilmiştir.

Analizler katılımcıların cinsiyet ve ilişki durumuna bakılmaksızın tüm oturumlarda tekrarlanan tek nedenin güvenin sarsılması olduğunu ortaya koydu. Bireylerin ilişkisel

bağlılığı yeni deneyimlemeye başladıkları bu genç yetişkinlik döneminde bile ayrılıkların temel nedeninin güvenin sarsılmasının olması, birey kaç yaşında olursa olsun bir ilişkiyi besleyen en temel etmenin güven olduğu şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Öyle ki güven kaybı kaçınılmaz olarak ilişkiyi çözülme aşamasına götürür, ilişkileri yok eder. Her bir cinsiyet alt grubunun, ilişki durumunun ve birleştirilmiş odak grup oturumlarının en az %80'inde romantik ayrılıkların yaygın nedenleri olarak güvenin sarsılması, yaşam tarzı farklılığı, duygusal uzaklık ve partnerin duyarsız olması listelenmiştir (bkz. Tablo 15, ayrıntılı bilgi için bkz. Ek N). Bu nedenlerden yaşam tarzı uyumluluğu ve partnerin duyarlı olması, ilişki başlangıç aşamasında bireylerin nispeten daha az dikkat ettiği özellikler olabilir. Çünkü ilişki başlamadan önce fark edilirlerse, taraflardan en az birinin ilişkinin başlaması konusunda daha isteksiz davranması beklenir. Bu nedenle, bireyler bir ilişkide zaman geçirdikçe bu dört nedenin ortaya çıktığı veya fark edildiği düşünülebilir.

Kıskançlık ve dışsal nedenler, birleştirilmiş odak grup oturumlarının yanı sıra bekarlar ve çiftler oturumlarının beşte dördünde ayrılık nedeni olarak tekrarlanmıştır. Bazı odak grup oturumlarında kıskançlığın o kadar da olumsuz algılanmadığı fark edilmiştir. Bazıları kıskançlığın bir dereceye kadar kabul edilebilir olduğunu ve partnerin sevgisini gösterdiğini düşünürken, bazı katılımcılar ise kıskançlığı olumsuz olarak değerlendirmiştir. Bu sebeple genç yetişkinlik döneminde olan katılımcıların kıskançlıkla ilgili net bir görüşe sahip olmadıkları söylenebilir. Veriler üniversite öğrencilerinden toplandığı için kış ve yaz tatilleri, başka şehir veya ülkelerde staj yapmak, bir sömestr veya akademik yıl için değişim öğrencisi olmak, mezun olmak, ve bireylerin yurt dışına taşınması olası dışsal nedenler olabilir. Bazı katılımcılar uzun mesafeli ilişkiler kurduklarını ifade etseler de, ilişki kurma aşamasında partnerleriyle aynı şehirde olduklarını da vurgulamışlardır.

İlişkinin dengesiz olması, romantik bir ilişki içinde olanlar arasında daha sık sıralanan bir neden iken, çatışma, yalnızca romantik bir ilişki içinde olanlar ve birleştirilmiş odak grup oturumlarında bahsedilen başka bir ayrılık nedeni oldu. Romantik bir ilişki içinde olan bireyler, romantik bir ilişki içinde olmayanlara göre karşılaştıkları sorunları daha kolay hatırlayabilir, bu da ayrılıkların ortak nedenlerini yazmalarını daha kolaylaştırabilir. Kadınlar, bekarlar, çiftler ve birleştirilmiş oturum için ayrılık nedenleri arasında, partnerin uzaklaşması yer almaktadır. Erkek grubunda bu nedenin daha az görülmesi, ilişkilerde görece geri çekilen tarafın erkek olduğu şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Ayrıca benzer şekilde, erkeklere ait oturumlarda ilişkiyi bozan nedenlerin bulunmaması, erkeklerin romantik ilişkilerde daha fazla ilişkiyi bozan davranışları sergileyen taraf olabileceği fikrini gündeme getirmektedir.

Erkeklerin, bekarların, çiftlerin ve birleştirilmiş odak grup oturumunun aksine, sosyal sonuçlar kadın grubunda sık sıralanan nedenler arasındadır. Aile bireylerinin ve arkadaşların ilişkiyi onaylamaması sosyal sonuçların tanımında yer alsa da belirtilen yaş grubu için arkadaş faktörünün daha belirleyici olduğu söylenebilir. Türk kültüründe ailelerin genellikle evlilik kararı alınmadan önceki romantik ilişkilerden (özellikle de kız çocuklarının romantik ilişkilerinden) habersiz olduğu düşünüldüğünde, ilişkinin aile tarafından onaylanması daha az karşılaşılan bir ayrılık nedeni olabilir. Sosyal sonuçların kadınlar grubunda yer alması, kadınların arkadaşlarından onay aldıktan sonra romantik bir ilişkiye başladıkları ya da romantik ilişkilerini onaylamayan arkadaşlarını yanlarında tutmadıkları şeklinde de yorumlanabilir. Ayrılıkların bir başka nedeni de ilişkiden keyif alamamadır. Cinsiyet ve ilişki durumuna bakılmaksızın bu ayrılık nedeni tüm oturumlarda listelenmiştir (ayrıntılı bilgi için Ek O1, O2, P1 ve P2 sırasıyla kadın, erkek, bekarlar ve çiftler tablolarına bakınız).

13 tek cinsiyetli ve 5 karma cinsiyetli odak grup oturumundan veri toplanmıştır. Karma grup katılımcılarının sayısı (17 kadın ve 17 erkek) tek cinsiye oturumu katılımcılarının (57 kadın ve 40 erkek) üçte biri olmasına rağmen, yine de oturum türleri arasında bir fark olup olmadığı hakkında fikir verebilmektedir. Tablo 15, tek cinsiyetli ve karma cinsiyetli odak grup oturumlarından toplanan ayrılma nedenleri arasında bir karşılaştırma sağlamak için oluşturulmuştur. 4 yaygın nedenin (yani,güvenin sarsılması, yaşam tarzı farklılıkları, duygusal uzaklık, ve partnerin duyarsız olması) tüm alt oturumlarda listelenmesi, bu 4 nedenin ayrılıkların ana nedenleri olarak kabul edilebileceği argümanını güçlendirmektedir.

Katılımcılar ayrıca listeledikleri romantik ayrılma nedenlerini kendi ilişkileri ile ilgili olarak 1 (ilişkimi devam ettiririm) ile 5 (partnerimden kesinlikle ayrılırdım) arasında değerlendirmiştir. Dört ve üzeri puanlanan ayrılık nedenleri kesin ayrılık nedeni olarak değerlendirildi. Analiz, bireylerin romantik ilişkilerini sona erdirmek için çok daha dar bir liste oluşturduklarını ortaya koydu (bkz. Tablo 16). Her ne kadar bireyler ayrılıkların 5 ortak sebebini sıralasalar da, iş kendi ilişkilerinin geleceği ile ilgili karar vermeye geldiğinde, ortak sebepler arasında sadece güvenin sarsılması, duygusal uzaklık, yaşam tarzı farklılıkları ve partnerin duyarsız olması ayrılık nedeni olarak değerlendirildi (ayrıntılı bilgi için Ek S'ye bakınız). İlişkinin dengesiz olması ve dışsal nedenler, yalnızca bekarlar için meşru bir ayrılma nedeni olarak kalırken, kadınlarda, bekarlarda ve birleştirilmiş odak grup oturumunda partnerin uzaklaşması ayrılık nedeni olarak yerini korumuştur (ayrıntılı bilgi için Ek T1, T2, U1 ve U2'ye sırasıyla kadınlar, erkekler, bekarlar ve çiftler tablolarına bakınız).

Tablo 14 ve Tablo 16 karşılaştırıldığında, bulgular daha önce sıralanan bazı yaygın ayrılık nedenlerinin konu kendi ilişkilerini bitirmeye geldiğinde geçerli olmadığını

göstermiştir. Katılımcılar tüm oturumlarda kıskançlık ve ilişkiden keyif alamamaya önem verdiklerini belirtseler de bu nedenleri romantik ilişkilerini sonlandıracak kadar önemli görmemişlerdir. Çatışma, sosyal sonuçlar ve ilişkiyi bozan nedenler bazı oturumlarda (yani birleştirilmiş oturum, kadınlar, erkekler, bekarlar ve çiftler oturumlarından bazılarında) ayrılık nedeni olarak sıralanırken, katılımcıların romantik ilişkilerini sona erdirmeleri için önemli nedenler olarak görülmemişlerdir. İlişkinin dengesiz olması ve dışsal nedenler, tüm oturumlarda ayrılık nedeni olarak belirtilse de, yalnızca hali hazırda romantik ilişkisi olmayan katılımcıların oturumlarında romantik ilişkilerini bitirme nedeni olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Partnerin uzaklaşması tüm oturumlarda ortak bir neden olarak değerlendirilse de sadece kadınlarda, bekarlarda ve birleştirilmiş oturumda katılımcıların ilişkilerini sonlandıran bir neden olarak bahsedilmiştir. Bu nedenle, bu iki tablodaki farklılıklar (Tablo 14 ve Tablo 16), insanların ilişkilerini sürdürmek için ayrılık nedeni olarak gördükleri bazı nedenlere tolerans gösterdikleri anlamında da yorumlanabilir.

Tablo 17, tek cinsiyetli ve karma cinsiyetli odak grup oturumlarından toplanan romantik ilişkileri bitirme nedenleri arasında bir karşılaştırma sağlamak için oluşturulmuştur. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, tüm alt oturumlarda 4 yaygın nedenin (yani, güvenin sarsılması, yaşam tarzı farklılıkları, duygusal uzaklık ve partnerin duyarsız olması) sıralanması, bu 4 nedenin gerçekten de temel ayrılık nedenleri olarak algılanabileceğini düşündürmüştür.

Genel Tartışma

Bu tezin amacı, genç yetişkinlik dönemindeki romantik ayrılıkları nicel ve nitel bir çalışma ile anlamaktır. Bölüm 2, nitel çalışmanın ilk adımını sunmuş ve ilk araştırma sorusuna cevap vermeyi amaçlamıştır: Ayrılık nedir? Bulgular, romantik ayrılıkların farklı

yorumlarının olduğunu gösterse de, bireyler, cinsiyetleri ne olursa olsun, genellikle romantik ayrılıkları daha olumsuz olaylar (örneğin, "cehennem, yalnızlık, depresyon, acı, hayal kırıklığı") olarak değerlendirmiştir. Romantik ayrılıkların olumsuz değerlendirilmesi, ayrılık kararını zorlaştıran ya da bireylerin mümkün olduğunca bu kararı almaktan kaçınmasına neden olan bir özellik olarak da değerlendirilebilir. Bireyler, ilişkilerinde zaten mutsuzlarsa, romantik ayrılıkları daha olumlu algılama eğilimindeydiler (örn. …bittiğinde oh rahatladım ya artık bunlarla uğraşmıcam gibi). Diğer taraftan bazı katılımcılar, romantik ayrılıkları herkesin bir gün yaşayabileceği bir olay olarak tanımlamışlardır ve romantik ayrılığa yönelik daha anlayışlı ve kabullenici ifadelerde bulunmuşlardır (örneğin, ...bu bir süreç, ne iyi ne de kötü.).

Katılımcıların sundukları çağrışımlar beş boyut altında birleştirildi: ayrılıklarla ilgili inançlar, duygular, benliğin ve zamanın (yeniden) inşası, yas tutma ve geleceğe yönelik beklentiler. Odak grup oturumlarından ortaya çıkan ilk boyut, romantik ayrılıklarla ilgili inançlardır. Katılımcıların verdikleri cevaplar, ayrılığı bir olay olarak nasıl algıladıklarıyla yakından ilgilidir. Çağrışımlar iyi ve kötü sürekliliği içinde düşünüldüğünde, bazı katılımcılar daha tarafsız cevaplar verirken, diğerleri ayrılığı daha uç noktalarda değerlendirdi. Romantik ayrılıkları algılama biçimleri, böyle bir ayrılığa nasıl tepki verdiklerini de etkilediğinden, ayrılıkları sıradan bir olay olarak görenler ayrılık sürecinde kendilerini yıpratmayacaklarını belirtmişlerdir. Onlar için bu, geçmeleri gereken bir aşamadır. Ancak bazıları için romantik ayrılıklar üzücü, yıkıcı olaylardır.

Duygu boyutu hem olumlu hem de olumsuz duyguları içermektedir. Yukarıda belirtildiği gibi, ilişkilerinde mutlu olan insanlar daha fazla olumsuz duygular (özlem, üzüntü, boşluk, acı, hayal kırıklığı gibi) ifade ederken, mutsuz olanlarsa daha fazla olumlu duygular (örneğin rahatlama, mutluluk, rahatlama, huzurlu) ifade ettiler. Başka bir argüman,

bireylerin romantik ayrılıklarla ilgili inançlarının, hissettikleri duygularla da yakından ilişkili olduğu olabileceği yönündedir. Ayrılıkları nötr algılayanlar, ayrılıktan sonra daha az yoğun duygular (örneğin rahatlama, rahatlama, huzurlu, boşluk, hayal kırıklığı) yaşayabilir ve ifade edebilirler.

Hangi duyguyu tetiklerse tetiklesin, romantik bir ayrılık, bir zamanlar birlikte yapılan şeylerin artık yapılmayacağı anlamına gelir. Bireylerin rutinlerini değiştirmeleri veya yeni rutinler geliştirmeleri gerekir. Ayrıca partnerleriyle birlikte geçirmeyi planladıkları zamanı nasıl değerlendirecekleri de ayrılık sürecinde verilen kararlardandır. Kişiler bu süreçte yeni alışkanlıklar edinebilir veya eski alışkanlıklarına geri dönebilir. Bu nedenle romantik ayrılık kim olduklarını bularak benliklerini ve zamanını yeniden inşa ihtiyacını yaratır.

Romantik ayrılık aynı zamanda karmaşık bir yas yapısını da beraberinde getiren bir kayıp anlamına gelir (Cooley ve ark., 2010, 2014; Reimer ve Estrada, 2021). Düşünceler, davranışlar, duygular, destek sistemi, yeme-içme örüntüleri ve müzik, 18 odak grup oturumunda yas çağrışımlarının alt boyutlarıdır. Eski partnerleri ölmemiş olsa da, bireyler eski sevgilileriyle artık görüşmeyecekleri ve bir zamanlar birlikte yaptıkları şeyleri yapamayacakları için ayrılıkları bir nevi ölüm olarak algılarlar. Bazıları için romantik ayrılıklar, şefkat ve desteğe ulaşamadıkları için bir sevgilinin yanı sıra en iyi arkadaşın kaybı anlamına da gelir. İstedikleri zaman etkileşime geçemedikleri için, ayrılık sonrası bireyler eski partnerlerini sosyal medyadan takip edebilir ve kayıpları için kendilerini ağlarken bulabilirler. Romantik ayrılıklarda farklı yeme içme alışkanlıkları geliştirme, hızlı ruh hali değişimleri ve depresyon da yaygındır (Davis ve ark., 2003; McKiernan ve ark., 2018; Rhoades ve ark., 2011; Studley ve Chung, 2015). Bireyler bu süreçte ruh hallerine uygun müzik dinlemeyi tercih edebilirler. Daha önce yapılan araştırmalar, müziğin duygu

düzenleme amacıyla kullanıldığını göstermektedir (Juslin ve Sloboda, 2010; Saarikallio ve Erikkilä, 2007; Thoma ve ark., 2006). Olumsuz olaylar yaşarken hüzünlü müzik dinlemeyi seçen bireylerden toplanan veriler, hüzünlü müzik dinlemenin olumsuz duyguları doğrulamalarına, duygusal deneyimlerini düzenlemelerine, geçmiş olayları hatırlamaya ve bunlar hakkında düşünmeye yardımcı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur (Garrido ve Schubert, 2011; Sachs ve ark., 2015; Taruffi ve Koelsch, 2014). Ayrıca yakın çevreden sosyal destek almak, uyum sürecini güçlendirerek bireylerin ayrılık sürecini atlatmasına yardımcı olur (Felmee ve ark., 1990; McKiernan ve ark., 2018; Barutçu Yıldırım ve Demir, 2015).

Bireylerin gelecek için daha karanlık beklentileri olabilir. Bu, özellikle romantik ilişkilerinde mutlu olan ve asla ayrılmayacaklarını düşünen insanlar için olasıdır. Çünkü bu insanlar başka hiçbir romantik ilişkide, biten ilişkilerindeki kadar mutlu olacaklarına inanmazlar. Tekrar mutlu olma ihtimalini kaybettiklerine inanabilirler. Bu durum ise biten ilişkilerinde mutsuz olan insanlar için tam tersidir. Bu kişiler gelecekte daha iyi romantik ilişki kurabileceklerini düşünürler ve geleceğe yönelik daha olumlu beklenti içerisindedirler.

18 odak grup oturumunun bulguları, romantik bir ayrılığın karmaşık bir fenomen olduğunu göstermektedir. Çağrışımlar genellikle yas süreci ile ilgili olsa da romantik ayrılıklara bakış açısının hem yaşanan duygular (değerlik ve yoğunluk) hem de yas sürecinin süresi ile ilgili olabileceği söylenebilir. Gelecekle ilgili beklentilerin romantik ayrılıklarla ilgili inançlarla da ilişkili olması olasıdır. Romantik bir ayrılıktan sonra insanların kendilerini ve zamanlarını yeniden inşa etmesi çok olasıdır. Bu nedenle ayrılık süreci, insanın kendini yeniden tanıma süreci olarak da değerlendirilebilinir.

Bölüm 3, ikinci araştırma sorusuna yanıt bulmayı amaçlamaktadır: Tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen yanıtları etkileyen yordayıcılar nelerdir? Güvenli bağlanma,

temel psikolojik ihtiyaç tatmini, tatminsizliği ve engellemesi, ve ilişki temelli öz-saygı Bölüm 3'te araştırılan yordayıcılardı. Çalışma değişkenleri cinsiyet farklılıkları için analiz edildi. Erkekler, romantik ilişkilerinde temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının önemli ölçüde daha az karşılanmasına, daha fazla tatmin olmamasına ve daha fazla yoklarmış gibi davranılmasına rağmen, tatmin edici olmayan durumlara tepki olarak daha fazla *bağlılık* ve daha az *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışı gösterdiler. Bu durum genç erişkinlik dönemindeki erkeklerin kadınlara göre romantik ilişkilerini sürdürmeye daha istekli oldukları şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Ancak, bu durum aynı zamanda ilişkilerine daha az yatırım yapan erkeklerin romantik ilişkilerle ilgili bir araştırmaya ders kredisi karşılığında bile olsa katılmak istemeyecekleri şeklinde de yorumlanabilir. Bu nedenle, bu bulguların rastgele olmayan örnekleme yoluyla bir seçim yanlılığını göstermesi de mümkündür.

Regresyon analizlerinin sonuçları, literatürle uyumlu olarak (örn., Gaines ve ark., 2000; Goodcase ve ark., 2018; Martin ve ark., 2019; Pietromonaco ve ark., 2004; Scharfe ve Bartholomew, 1995), bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı ve kaçınma boyutlarında yüksek skor alan bireylerin daha fazla *çıkış* davranışında bulunduğunu göstermiştir. Bireyler, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları karşılanmadığında daha fazla *çıkış* davranışı göstermeyi tercih ederken, bu ihtiyaçları engellendiğinde herhangi bir *çıkış* davranışından kaçınmaktadırlar. *Konuşma* davranışları ile sadece temel ihtiyaç tatmininin pozitif yönde ilişkili, *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışı ise sadece bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma ile pozitif yönde ilişkili bulunmuştur. *Bağlılık* davranışları, bireylerin ilişki temelli öz-saygısı yüksek olduğunda ve temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları engellediğinde daha fazla görülmektedir. İncelenen bu 7 değişkenin ilişkilerin geleceğine ilişkin kararlarla yakından alakalı olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Ayrıca temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların alt boyutlarına bakıldığında her bir alt boyutun ÇKBY sonuçlarıyla aynı şekilde ilişkili olmadığı görülmektedir (bkz. Tablo 10). Bu da

farklı temel ihtiyaç tatmininin farklı tepki davranışlarıyla ilişkili olabileceği şeklinde değerlendirilebilinir. Bulgular, tatmin edilmeyen ve engellenen özerklik ihtiyacının *bağlılık* davranışı ile pozitif ilişkili olduğunu, engellenen özerklik ve ilişkisellik ihtiyaçlarının ise *konuşma* davranışı ile negatif ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlar, ilişkide özerk olmayan bireylerin problem çözmede aktif rol almaktan vazgeçtikleri ve daha pasif bir duruş sergiledikleri şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Özellikle tatmin edilmeyen üç temel psikolojik ihtiyacın daha az *konuşma* davranışını tetiklemesi ve hem karşılanmamış hem de engellenen üç temel psikolojik ihtiyacın *çıkış* ve *yokmuş gibi davranma* davranışlarıyla pozitif yönde ilişkili olması bu görüşü desteklemektedir.

Bu çalışma için iki vinyet geliştirilmiş, fakat ön çalışma bulgularında vinyetlerin ayırt edici özellikte olmadığı görüldüğü için bu vinyetler sonraki veri toplama sürecine dahil edilmemişlerdir. Odak grup oturumları sonucunda bireylerin tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verdikleri tepkiler vinyet kullanılarak ölçülecekse, vinyetlerin açık uçlu sorular gibi daha esnek bir yapıda üretilmesinin daha uygun olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca çatışma tetikleyici durumlar katılımcılara bir liste halinde sunulmalı ve katılımcılara hangi durumlardan rahatsızlık duyacakları sorulmalıdır. Böylece, bireylerin tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verdiği tepkilerin vinyet ölçümleri daha gerçekçi hale gelecektir.

Bölüm 4, üçüncü araştırma sorusuna yanıt bulmayı amaçlamaktadır: Ayrılıkların nedenleri nelerdir? Bulgular, güvenin sarsılması, yaşam tarzı farklılıkları, duygusal uzaklık ve partner duyarsızlığının tüm oturumların %80'inde tekrarlanan nedenler olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Kıskançlık, bekarlar ve çiftler için bir ayrılık nedeni olarak görülmüştür. Eşitsizlikten sadece çiftlerin oturumlarında bahsedilirken, kadınlar, bekarlar, çiftler oturumlarında ayrılık nedeni olarak partnerin uzaklaşmasından bahsedilmiştir. Dış nedenler, bekarlar ve çiftler için geçerli ayrılık nedenleri iken, sadece çiftlerin seanslarında

zevk alamamadan bahsedilmiştir. Ancak söz konusu kendi romantik ilişkilerinin sona erdirilmesi olduğunda, yukarıda belirtilen nedenlerin bazıları katılımcıların romantik ilişkilerini bitirmesi için geçerli nedenler olarak algılanmamıştır. Bu nedenle, tüm oturumlarda yalnızca güvenin sarsılması, duygusal uzaklık ve partnerin duyarsızlığı ayrılık nedeni olarak bulunmuştur. Yaşam tarzı farklılığı, erkekler, bekarlar ve çiftler seanslarında romantik ilişkilerini sona erdirmek için bir nedendir. Bekarlar, partnerin uzaklaşması ve dışsal sebepleri kendi ilişkilerinin bitmesi için geçerli bir ayrılık nedeni olarak listelerine eklemişlerdir. Bu bulgular, bireylerin bazı sorunları romantik ayrılık nedeni olarak algılamalarına rağmen, bu sorunların varlığının romantik ilişkilerinden vazgeçmek için yeterli olmayacağını ve romantik ilişkilerini bitirmek istemeyebileceklerini göstermiştir.

Bölüm 3 bulguları ile Bölüm 4 bulgularının birlikte değerlendirilmesi, romantik ayrılıklara daha bütünsel bir bakış açısıyla yaklaşmada yardımcı olacaktır. Yukarıda da bahsedildiği gibi bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı, bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma, temel psikolojik ihtiyaç tatminsizliği ve temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların baskılanması, *çıkış* davranışları ile ilişkili bulunmuştur. Odak grup oturumlarında yirmi bir ayrılık nedeni ortaya çıkmıştır (bkz. Tablo 18). Bunlar arasında güvenin sarsılması, tartışma, ilişkinin dengesiz olması, kıskançlık, partnerin duyarsız olması, fiziksel mesafe ve partnerin çok fazla talepkar olmasının bağlanmaya ilişkin kaygı ile ilişkili olduğu söylenebilir. Kendiyle ilgili daha olumsuz zihinsel modellere sahip olan kaygılı bağlanan bireyler, romantik ilişkilerine partnerlerinden daha fazla yatırım yaparlar (Simpson ve Rholes, 2017). Bu, romantik ilişkilerinde "ilişkinin dengesiz olması" ve "partnerin duyarsız olması" sorunlarını yaratabilir.

Partnerleri ne kadar yatırım yaparsa yapsın, kaygılı bağlanan bireyler, onları romantik ilişkilerinde ilgisiz olarak algılar, partnerlerine güvenmez ve daha fazla durumu

tehdit edici olarak yorumlarlar (Campbell ve ark., 2005; Davis ve ark., 2004; Mikulincer ve Shaver, 2012). Daha fazla kıskançlık gösterirler (Mikulincer ve Shaver, 2012; Rodriguez ve ark., 2015), terk edilme korkusu yaşarlar (Powers ve ark., 2006; Wei ve ark., 2007) ve daha sık tartışma yaratırlar (McClure ve ark., 2013; Main ve ark., 2014). Partnerlerinin niyetiyle ilgili inançları "güvenin sarsılması"na, yüksek düzeyde "tartışmaya" ve ayrıca "kıskançlığa" neden olabilir. Romantik ilişkilerinde yakınlık isterler (Mikulincer ve Shaver, 2012, 2016; Spielmann ve ark., 2013), bu da partnerleri tarafından "fazla talepkar" olarak algılanmalarına neden olabilir. Hatta ilişkilerinin nasıl gittiğini anlayabilmek için cinselliği kullanabilirler (Davis ve ark., 2004; Ren ve ark., 2017). Bu nedenle romantik ilişkilerinde "fiziksel mesafe" (kötü, düşük cinsel ilişki, yeterli fiziksel sevginin olmaması) sorunu varsa bunu ilişkilerinin bittiğine yönelik bir işaret olarak yorumlayabilirler.

21 ayrılık nedeninden bağlılıktan kaçınma, duygusal uzaklık ve partnerin uzaklaşması da bağlanmaya ilişkin kaçınma ile ilişkili olabilir. Kaçınmacı bağlanan bireylerin romantik partnerlerini de içeren diğerleri hakkında daha olumsuz zihinsel modelleri vardır, partnerlerine güvenmezler, bağımlı olmaktan kaçınırlar, bağlanma ihtiyaçlarını bastırırlar ve romantik ilişkilerinde yakınlığı sınırlarlar (Besharat ve ark., 2014; Mikulincer ve Shaver, 2012; Wei ve ark., 2007). Desteğe ihtiyaç duyduklarında bile partnerine güvenemez, olumsuz duygularını bastırır ve kendini daha az açarlar (Mikulincer ve Nachshon, 1991; Mikulincer ve Shaver, 2007). Ancak davranışları "duygusal uzaklık" ve "bağlılıktan kaçınma" olarak yorumlanabilir. Duygu ve düşüncelerini ifade etme konusundaki isteksizlikleri (Bartholomew, 1990; Fraley ve Shaver, 1997; Spielmann, Maxwell ve ark., 2013; Overall ve ark., 2013), partnerleri tarafından "partnerin uzaklaşması" olarak değerlendirilebilir.

21 ayrılık nedeninden duygusal mesafe, genel bir hayal kırıklığı, partnerin uzaklaşması ve diğer fırsatların peşinde koşma da temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlarla ilgili olabilir. Bölüm 3'te bahsedildiği gibi, özerklik ihtiyacı, kendi iradesiyle ve özgün olmakla, seçim ve özgürlük duygusuna sahip olmakla ilgilidir (Deci ve Ryan, 2000; Ryan ve Deci, 2017). Yeterlik, ustalık ve meydan okuma duygusunu deneyimlemek olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Ryan ve Deci, 2017). İlişkisellik, kabul, bağlılık ve sıcaklık duygularıyla ilgilidir (Knee ve ark., 2013; Ryan ve Deci, 2017). Temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları tatmin edilmediğinde, bireyler sorunun ne olduğunu tam olarak anlayamadıkları "genel bir hayal kırıklığı" yaşayabilir ve "başka fırsatların peşine düşmek" isteyebilirler. Ayrıca partnerlerini "duygusal olarak uzak" ve "uzaklaşmış" olarak hissedebilirler. Bununla birlikte, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçları engellenmiş olan bireyler yine de "genel bir hayal kırıklığı" yaşayabilirler, ancak partnerlerini "duygusal olarak uzak" ve/veya "uzaklaşmış" olarak görseler bile aktif olarak "başka fırsatların peşine düşmek" istemeyebilirler. Bu iki kategori arasındaki fark, kişinin baskı nedeniyle kendini artık özerk ve yeterli hissetmemesi ve kendi ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasında aktif rol almamasıdır. Bu nedenle romantik ayrılıklarda bireylerin karar verme mekanizmaları araştırılırken temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlarının karşılanıp karşılanmadığına ve engellenip engellenmediğine bakılmalıdır.

Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları ve Gelecek Çalışmalara Öneriler

Bu çalışmada ele alınması gereken bazı sınırlılıklar vardır. Bu çalışmanın en önemli sınırlılığı, bağlılığın romantik ayrılıklar üzerindeki önemi literatürde gösterilmiş olmasına rağmen bu çalışmada yer almamasıdır (Etcheverry ve Le, 2005; Finkel ve ark., 2002; Finkel ve Campbell, 2001; Le ve Agnew, 2003; Le ve ark., 2010; Menzies-Toman ve Lydon, 2005;

Merolla ve Harman, 2018; Rusbult ve ark., 1991). Gelecekteki çalışmalar araştırma deseninee bağlılığı katmalıdır.

İkinci sınırlılık, verilerin öz-bildirim ölçütleri kullanılarak toplanmış olmasıdır. Öz bildirim ölçütlerinin ideal olarak partnerlerden toplanan veriler ve/veya gözlemlerle karşılaştırılarak kullanıl. Bu nedenle, diğer derecelendirme ve/veya aktör ortak bağımlılık modelinin kullanılmasının sosyal istenirlik etkisini ortadan kaldırması beklenmektedir.

Mevcut bulgular sadece kesitsel verilere dayanmaktadır. Bu tez nitel ve nicel yöntemleri birleştirmesine, bağlanma yönelimleri, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlar, ilişki temelli öz-saygı ve ilişki sorunlarına verilen tepkiler arasındaki bağlantıları kurmasına rağmen, sonuçlardan bu yapılar arasındaki nedensellik çıkarılamaz. Romantik ayrılık sürecini anlamak için boylamsal araştırmalarla nedensellik bağı kurmak gerekir. Çiftlerin ilişkide nasıl farklı yönlere gittiklerini, hangi olayların onları ayrılık kararı almaya götürdüğünü ve ayrılma aşamasından nasıl geçtiklerini gözlemlemeye izin verdiği için, çiftlerin her ikisinden de toplanan verilerle boylamsal tasarımların birlikte kullanılması ileriki çalışmalar için faydalı olacaktır.

Nicel analiz sonuçlarının genellenebilirliği, kullanılan örnekleme yöntemi nedeniyle potansiyel olarak sınırlıdır. Veriler sadece ODTÜ öğrencilerinden toplandığından, genç yetişkin örneklemlerinde rastgelelik sağlanmamış ve temsil eksikliği yaratılmıştır. Nitel veriler için genellenebilirlik iddialarının olmadığını vurgulamak önemlidir.

Çalışmanın Katkıları ve Uygulamaları

Romantik ayrılıklar, romantik ilişki literatüründe nispeten daha az ilgi görmüştür. Bu nedenle bu tez, önce genç yetişkinlerin romantik ayrılıkları nasıl algıladıklarını, ardından

tatmin edici olmayan durumlarda alınan kararlarda bireysel ve ilişkisel yordayıcıların rolünü inceleyerek ve son olarak da romantik ayrılıkların nedenlerini araştırarak literatüre önemli bir katkı sağlamaktadır. Nicel ve nitel verilerin birlikte kullanılarak sunulması bu çalışmanın özgün yanlarından biridir. Bu nedenle, bu tez, romantik ayrılıklara dair bilgilerimizi derinleştirmeyi ve genişletmeyi mümkün kılıyor.

Temel psikolojik ihtiyaçlar ve bunların bireysel iyilik halindeki rolü, farklı alanlarda kapsamlı bir şekilde incelenmiştir. Bununla birlikte, temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmaması ve engellemesi, Öz-Belirleme Kuramı'nın (ÖBK) hala nispeten az çalışılmış bileşenleridir. Bu tez, sadece temel psikolojik ihtiyaçların karşılanmasını değil, aynı zamanda karşılanmamasını ve engellemesini de romantik ayrılık bağlamında inceleyerek ÖBK literatürüne katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, her üç bileşenin de (karşılanması, karşılanmaması ve engellemesi) tatmin edici olmayan durumlara verilen tepkiler üzerinde benzersiz bir açıklayıcı güce sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Güvenli ve tatmin edici çift ve aile ilişkileri kurmak, fiziksel ve psikolojik esenlik (Kansky ve Allen, 2018; Oishi ve ark., 2007; Özdemir ve Demir, 2019) için önemlidir. Genç yetişkinlik, ilişki bağlılığının ve çatışma yönetimi stratejilerinin ilk kez gözlemlendiği bir dönemdir. Mevcut literatürde genç yetişkinlik dönemindeki romantik ilişkilerin bireylerin iyi oluşları, davranışları ve sonrasındaki romantik ilişkileri üzerinde önemli etkileri olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Fincham ve Cui, 2011; Shulman ve Connolly, 2013; Xia ve ark., 2018). Bu tez, terapistler tarafından danışanların sıkıntılı ilişkilerine yardım etmek, bu ilişkileri tedavi etmek ve iyileştirmek, ve partnerler/eşler arasında daha güvenli bağlar oluşturmak için kullanılabilir. Ayrıca, danışanların geçmiş ilişkilerinin mevcut ilişkileri üzerindeki etkisini anlamalarına yardımcı olabilir.

Bu tezin kapsamının oluşturulduğu dönemde, literatürde romantik ayrılığın nedenlerine yönelik derinlemesine bir araştırma bulunmamaktaydı. Bu da bireyleri romantik ilişkilerde ayrılma kararı almaya iten nedenleri ortaya çıkarmayı bu araştırmanın amaçlarından biri olmasını sağlamıştır. Tez hazırlık sürecinde ABD ve Kanada'da romantik ayrılıkların nedenleri üzerine derinlemesine yayınlar yapılmıştır. Ancak yazarın bildiği kadarıyla bu tez, Türkiye'deki romantik ayrılıkların nedenlerine ilişkin ilk derinlemesine çalışmadır. Bu nedenle, bu tez Türkiye'deki genç yetişkinlikte romantik ayrılık ve romantik ilişkiler literatüre de bir katkı sağlamaktadır.

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

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