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Factors Related with Marital Adjustment

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Abstract

Problem Statement: Marital adjustment is effected from multiple factors. Finding the factors that effect marital adjustment may be helpful to understand the problems which should be worked through the marital counseling.

Purpose of the Study: The goal of this study is to determine the factors related with marital adjustment among married individuals living in Nicosia.

Method: The sample of this study is formed from 309 married individuals working at public and private workplaces in Nicosia. To collect data "Demographic Information Form (DIF)", "Marital Adjustment Scale (MAS)" developed by Locke and Wallance (1959), "Marital Problem-Solving Scale (MPSS)" developed by Baugh, Avery and Sheets-Haworth (1982), "Empathic Tendency Scale (ETS)" developed by Dökmen (1989) and "Communication Skills Evaluation Scale (CSES)" developed by Korkut (1999) were applied. The data was analyzed with SPSS computer program; frequency, percentages, multiple regression analysis, chi-square analysis and Student's t-test were used.

Findings and Results: According to the scores of MAS, the group was divided into two subgroups as having good marital adjustment and poor marital adjustment. The good marital adjustment group was found to have significantly higher MPSS, ETS and CSES scores ($p< 0.000$). They had more children ($p=0.006$) and better relations with the participant's and his/her partner's family of origin ($p< 0.000$). Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the factors that predict MAS score. MPSS

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score, age of the spouse, age of the participant and having good relations with the participant's family of origin were found to be predictive.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The findings suggest that during marital counseling developing problem solving skills may be very helpful. The relationship with family of origin also seems to be a very important factor for marital adjustment in our culture. Special emphasize should be given to problem solving skills and relation with family of origin in marital counseling and psychotherapy.

Keywords: Marital adjustment, marital satisfaction, marital problem solving, empathy, communication

Introduction

As a social being it is not only unavoidable but also a need for a man to interact with others. Probably one's spouse is the most important figure in one's communication with his environment as he lives an emotional, social and sexual relation with and has a legal bond. Increasingly rapid change in life has become a challenge not only for the individual but also for the couple. One of the results of this adaptation problem is an increase in divorce rates which is outstanding not only in western countries and Turkey but also in TRNC. The problem of adaptation to changing living conditions also affects marital harmony in a negative way. It is believed that researches determining the factors affecting marital harmony and how these factors can be developed may help to decrease the problems in the marriage.

Adler (2003) suggests that the instinct leading man to form relation with other humans is the oldest instinct man has. Mankind had improved as a result of man's approach to his kin with feelings of sharing. Family is the life style that sharing carries an important role. Marriage is a relation between two or more people that is accepted by law and/or accepted by community; that gives rights and responsibilities to the sides and generally involves sexuality (Budak, 2003). The main element in the family formed with legal and consuetudinal bonds is the relation between the couple. The goal of the couple in the marriage is to satisfy some biological, social and psychological needs and drives. From biological perspective satisfaction of sexual drives, from social perspective answering social needs by feeling safe, protection and cooperation, from psychological perspective answering the needs of to love and to be loved are the goals (Özgüven, 2000).

Marriage and related family concept of which principles and rules are determined today started in Egypt in about 2000 BC. Marriage institution which has a history of about 4000 years provides the permanence of culture and traditions; provides nurture and education of new generations; and has been supported by religious institutions and governments (Özgüven, 2000). Even high divorce rates have not taken people away from the idea of marriage, and even people against marriage institution live within a partnership. 75% of divorced people get married again within 3 years (Örsel & Özbay, 2011).

At the first studies about family and marital relations, the concepts of happiness, satisfaction in marriage and marital success were used together with concept of marital adjustment. But they were used in a different sense at further studies (Kastro, 1998). Among these variables marital happiness involves feelings about different aspects of one's marriage and relation (Yılmaz, 2001). Marital satisfaction is a contentment feeling stemming from the perception of equality, mental and physical closeness between the partners (Gökmen,2001). Marital adjustment defined as the success and functionality of the partners in marriage is accepted as a broader concept that also involves the concepts of marital satisfaction and happiness. (Ersanlı & Kalkan, 2008).

Adjustment between the partners has been the leading subject that attracts attention of investigators in the area of family and marital counseling. The importance given to studies about this subject is related with the relation of marital happiness and life satisfaction and happiness of married individuals; and the possibility of marital problems and maladjustment to effect psychological and physical well-being of married individuals in a negative way. While marital adjustment provides continuity of the marriage, marital maladjustment and marital conflicts may cause people to burn out themselves and their partners and may cause physical health problems (Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Problems experienced in marriage not only cause health problems but also causes difficulty in child rearing, development of problematic attachment between children and parents, and conflicts between siblings and divorce (Arıkan, 1996). In this circumstance divorce should be the last solution and a better choice can be solving marital problems and developing marital relation. Divorce rates increase rapidly in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) as it is in over the world and Turkey. 7861 people got married and 3506 people (44.6%) got divorced in TRNC between 2005 and 2010. This ratio increased to 52% in 2010 with 1354 people getting married and 706 people getting divorced (TRNC Statistical Annual, 2010).

Studies show that some socio demographic variables effect marital adjustment (South & Lloyd, 1995; Demiray, 2006; Şener & Terzioğlu, 2008; Bowman, 1990; Vangelisti & Banski, 1993; Jose & Alfons, 2007). Family adjustment is not only affected by the demographic variables but also it is affected by interpersonal communication, empathy and problem solving abilities.

For marital adjustment the couple should form healthy communication, show empathic understanding, accept their differences and solve the problems they experience in their marriage. Lack of empathic understanding plays an important role in the development of marital problems (Özgüven, 2000). Literature about marriage shows that empathic ability is an important feature of marital relation. Empathic tendency reflects how the individual's evaluation of a particular feeling of his partner is similar with the partner's evaluation of the same feeling. Empathic tendency is the ability to understand the feelings of one's partner in a right way and it is the main indicator of emotional bond between partners. As the emotional bond increases, family adjustment develops (Papp et al., 2010). As the empathic tendency is the basis of trust in the marriage, individuals should develop an empathic understanding for their partners' personality, feelings and behaviors. As empathy is understanding and sharing the other's feelings with all dimensions, as empathic tendency between the

partners increases, marital relation will strengthen and mature (Özgüven, 2000). Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça (2002) mention that empathic ability of the partners is a variable that increases marital adjustment.

There is an important ratio of similarity between communication between partners in marriage and interpersonal communication. The harmony in marriage is related with the level of communication skills of the partners (Sardoğan & Karahan, 2005). Communication in marriage should involve more than a dialogue. It starts by listening to others' thoughts and feelings and becoming his closest friend and confidant, and demands one's expressing himself without fear (Rosen-Grandon et al., 2004). When partners convey their feelings and thoughts in a wrong or insufficient way, this may result with misunderstandings and sulks. On the other side, healthy communication makes exchange of feelings easier, bring the partners closer and increase their trust with each other (Özgüven, 2000). As sharing and contentment about communication between the partners increase, marital adjustment increases (Şener & Terzioğlu, 2008; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Marital problem solving ability is how the individuals cope up with the problems they encounter in marital relation and finding effective solutions to these problems (Güven, 2005). Effective problem solving abilities increase psychological adjustment level of married individuals, decrease depression levels, as the conflicts are solved people experience positive feelings instead of negative ones and marital satisfaction increases (Tülek, 2011).

Marital adjustment is an important subject in marital literature. Although there is a long history of studies in this subject in foreign countries and in Turkey, there are limited studies in TRNC. The data obtained from marital adjustment studies may be helpful for researchers and psychotherapists working on family, marriage and dual relations.

The first goal of this study is to compare groups with good and poor marital adjustment according to socio demographic variables, problem solving, empathy, and communication skills. The second goal is to investigate if socio demographic variables (gender, age, marital duration, education level, income, number of children, having a good relation with the family of the partners), problem solving in marriage, empathy and communication skills predict marital adjustment or not.

Method

Research Design

This current research is a survey study which is a quantitative research design. Survey studies are also called correlation studies and relation between variables are investigated by statistical techniques (Kuş, 2009).

Research Sample

Accidental sampling was used as a practical way to reach married individuals. As it is a nonrandom sampling method, the results cannot be generalized (Kuş, 2009). It is not a non bias sampling technique; it is enough that the participants have a specific common characteristic (Balcı, 2001). The questionnaire was applied to 337 volunteers

working at public and private workplaces in Nicosia. Uncompleted survey forms were not taken into the study and thus the number of married individuals taken into the study was 309. The participants were required to be married and living with their partner at the same house. There were 203 female (65.7%) and 106 male (34.3%) participants. The mean age of the group was 40.07∓9.23 (21-63), the mean of marital duration was 14.27∓9.62 (1-38). The distribution of other demographic characteristics of the participants is shown at Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Variables		***Participants*** ***n (%)***
Gender	Female	203 (66)
	Male	106 (34)
Children		
	Present	258 (83)
Education	Absent	51 (17)
	Primary	13 (4)
	Secondary	9 (3)
Income (monthly, YTL)	High school	70 (23)
	University and above	217(70)
	1300 and below	12 (4)
	1300-5000	148 (48)
	5000-10000	129 (42)
	10000 and above	20 (6)

Research Instrument and Procedure

The survey form was prepared as a self-report questionnaire. It was formed from five parts. *Demographic Information Form-DIF* prepared by the researchers investigated variables like gender, age, education level, income level of the family, marital duration and how the participants got married.

Marital Adjustment Scale-MAS was developed by Locke and Wallace (1959). It involves total of 15 questions; one question about general adjustment, eight questions about income of the family, expression of emotions, friends, harmony in issues like sexuality and philosophy of life and 6 questions evaluating conflict resolution, attachment and communication. The score that can be taken from the scale is between 1 and 60, high score shows good marital adjustment and low score show poor marital adjustment. The cut-off point to differentiate individuals with well-adjusted and distressed marriages was found 43.5 (Tutarel-Kışlak, 1999). The Turkish reliability-validity study of the scale show that internal consistency reliability coefficient is .90, split halves test reliability .84 and test-retest reliability .57 (Tutarel-Kışlak, 1999).

Marital Problem-Solving Scale-MPSS is 9-item likert type scale developed by Baugh, Avery and Sheets-Haworth in 1982. Adaptation study of the scale to Turkish culture was made by Hünler (2002). Although the original form was 1-9 likert type, it was changed into 1-5 likert type for easy answering. The range of score that can be obtained from the scale is 9-45. High scores show that the individual perceives himself successful about problem solving abilities within the marriage. Factor analysis shows that all items fall into one factor. Alpha correlation coefficient is .91, item-item total correlation is between .63-.73 (Hünler, 2002).

Empathic Tendency Scale-ETS was developed by Dökmen (1988) to evaluate empathic tendency of people in daily life. It has 20 items and it is a likert type scale. High scores show increased empathic tendency. The scale was applied to a group of 70 students twice within three weeks interval and reliability coefficient was found to be .86. To evaluate validity of the scale, the relation between ETS and intraception subscale of Edwards Personal Preference Schedule was investigated and found to be .68 (Dökmen, 1988).

Communication Skills Evaluation Scale-CSES was developed by Korkut (1996) for high school students and later reliability and validity studies were made for university students and adults (Korkut, 1999). It measures how individuals evaluate their own communication skills. The items of the scale involve statements about behaviors, approaches, thoughts and feelings related with positive communication skills. Test-retest reliability study conducted among university students reveal that reliability coefficient is .78 ($p < .001$) and internal consistency value- alpha coefficient is .86. Criterion related scales were used to evaluate validity of CSES. Validity coefficient was found .54 when compared with Interpersonal Style Inventory adapted to Turkish by Öztan. The scale is formed from 25 items, 1-5 likert type, the range of score is 25-125. High scores mean that the respondent evaluate his own communication skills in a positive way (Korkut 1999).

Data Collection

The data of the research was collected during August-September 2012 by the first writer. The questionnaire was given within an envelope and taken back in closed envelope. As the partners of the participants were not required to answer the questions, the questionnaires were filled at the work place. Answering the questionnaire took about 20-25 minutes.

Data Analyses

After data collection, the answers were conveyed to computer. Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) was used. Frequency analysis, multiple regression analysis, chi-square analysis, and t-test were used.

Results

The relation between marital adjustment and demographic variables

According to the cut-off point of MAS, the group was divided into two subgroups as having good marital adjustment and poor marital adjustment. The comparison of these two groups according to the quantitative variables of age, marital

duration, the number of marriage, number of child and sibling is investigated with Student's t-test and the results are shown at Table 2. The only variable having significant difference between the groups was number of children. The group who have good adjustment had significantly higher number of children (p=.016).

Table 2

The Comparison of Quantitative Demographic Variables of the Groups With Good and Poor Marital Adjustment According to MAS

	Good adjustment	***Poor adjustment***	***T df P***
Age	39.78∓8.81	40.22∓9.46	-0.405 307 0.686
Duration of marriage	13.40∓8.96	14.75∓9.96	-1.171 307 0.242
Number of marriage	1.07∓0.26	1.05∓0.21	1.044 307 0.297
Number of children	1.60∓0.51	1.79∓0.66	-2.425 256 0.016*
Number of siblings	4.01∓2.28	3.59∓2.02	1.665 307 0.097

*p≤0.05 **p<0.001

The comparison of qualitative demographic variables of the two groups with good and poor marital adjustment was investigated with chi-square analysis and no statistical significant difference was found in gender, education level of the participant, education level of the partner, income level, having a child or not, how the marriage was made (P<.05). Having good relations with one's family of origin and having good relations with the partner's family of origin were significantly higher among the group with good marital adjustment (P<0.001). As expected, family problems were reported to be experienced less in the group with good marital adjustment (P<.001).

Table 3

The Comparison of Qualitative Demographic Variables of the Groups With Good and Poor Marital Adjustment According to MAS

Variables	*Good adjustment n (%)*	*Poor adjustment n (%)*	*P*
Gender			0.097
Female	65 (59.6)	138 (69.0)	
Male	44 (40.4)	62 (31.0)	
Education			
Primary	3 (2.8)	7 (3.5)	0.108
Secondary	6 (5.5)	7 (3.5)	
High school	34 (31.2)	55 (27.5)	
University and above	66 (60.6)	131 (65.5)	
Education of the partner			
Primary	3 (2.8)	7 (3.5)	0.705
Secondary	6 (5.5)	7 (3.5)	
High school	34 (31.2)	55 (27.5)	
University and above	66 (60.6)	131 (65.5)	
Partner job			
Present	93 (85.3)	164 (82.0)	0.456
Absent	16 (14.7)	36 (18.0)	
Income			
1300 and below	5 (4.6)	7 (3.5)	0.170
1300-5000	58 (53.2)	90 (45.0)	
5000-10000	43 (39.4)	86 (43.0)	
10000 and above	3 (2.8)	17 (5.5)	
Children			
Present	95 (87.2)	163 (81.5)	0.201
Absent	14 (12.8)	37 (18.5)	
Type of marriage			
Arranged marriage	16 (14.7)	22 (11.0)	0.513
Friendship	72 (66.1)	144 (72.0)	
Arranged-friendship	21 (19.3)	34 (17.0)	
Relation with the partner's family			
Very good	32 (29.4)	100 (50.0)	0.000
Good	63 (57.8)	95 (47.5)	
Bad	9 (8.3)	1 (0.5)	
Very bad	5 (4.6)	4 (2.0)	

Table 3 continue…

Variables	*Good adjustment n (%)*	*Poor adjustment n (%)*	*P*
Relation with the participant's	34 (31.2)	109 (54.5)	0.000**
family	67 (61.5)	89 (44.5)	
Very good	5 (4.6)	2 (1.0)	
Good	3 (1.0)	0 (0)	
Bad			
Very bad			
	2 (1.8)	0 (0)	0.000**
Family problems	10 (9.2)	2 (1.0)	
Always	66 (60.6)	103 (51.5)	
Often	31 (28.4)	95 (30.7)	
Rarely			
Almost never			

*p≤0.05; **p<0.001

The relation between MAS score and MPSS, ETS and CSES scores

When compared with Student's t-test, the group with good marital adjustment was found to have significantly higher MPSS, ETS and CSES scores than the group with poor marital adjustment (p<0.001).

Table 4

The Comparison of MPSS, ETS And CSES Mean Scores of the Groups With Good and Poor Marital Adjustment According to MAS

	Good adjustment	*Poor adjustment*	*t* *p*
MPSS mean score	38.40∓4.58 (n=200)	31.59∓6.54 (n=109)	-9.643 0.000**
ETS mean score	74.01∓7.80 (n=200)	68.06∓7.54 (n=109)	-6.542 0.000**
CSES mean score	103.28∓11.18 (n=200)	98.06∓10.75 (n=109)	-3.968 0.000**

*p>=0.05 **p<0.001

Factors that predict marital adjustment

Multiple regression analysis was made to determine the factors that predict marital adjustment. MAS score was used as the dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis was first made with the scores of MPSS, ETS and CSES as predictive variables (Table 5a).

Table 5a

Factors That Predict Marital Adjustment

	B	*Standart error B*	*β*	*T*	*P*	*Bivariate r*	*Partial r*
Constant	6.819	3.397	-	2.007	0.046	-	-
MPSS	0.704	0.059	0.574	11.995	0.000	0.650	0.567
ETS	0.109	0.049	0.117	2.249	0.025	0.394	0.128
CSES	0.052	0.034	0.077	1.523	0.129	0.342	0.087

R=0.667, R^2=0.445, F=81.240, P=0.000

As MAS is taken the dependent variable and the zero-order and partial correlations with the predictive variables are assessed with multiple regression analysis, according to standardized regression coefficient (beta) relative order of effect of the predictive variables on MAS score was as MPSS, ETS and CSES. As significance of regression coefficients are assessed with t-test results, MPSS (beta=0.574, t=11.995, p=0.000), ETS (beta=0.117, t=2.249, p=0.025) were found to be predictive on MAS score. CSES score did not have a significant effect.

The second multiple regression analysis was made with MAS score as the dependent variable and besides MPSS, ETS and CSES scores, socio demographic variables also taken as predictive variables (Table 5b).

Table 5b

Factors That Predict Marital Adjustment

	B	***Standart error B***	***β***	***T***	***P***	***Bivariate r***	***Partial r***
Constant	16.246	6.077	-	2.673	0.008		
MPSS	0.682	0.070	0.567	9.674	0.000	0.634	0.529
ETS	0.070	0.055	0.078	1.267	0.206	0.402	0.081
CSES	0.051	0.037	0.077	1.367	0.173	0.333	0.088
Age	-0.313	0.121	-0.340	-2.576	0.011	0.064	-0.164
Age of partner	0.263	0.129	0.295	2.032	0.043	0.092	0.130
Marital duration	-0.099	0.091	-0.117	-1.083	0.283	0.118	-0.070
No of children	0.917	0.650	0.075	1.411	0.159	0.134	0.091
Marriage type	-1.015	0.639	-0.075	-1.588	0.114	0.018	-0.102
Relation with one's family	-2.257	0.821	-0.176	-2.750	0.006	-0.380	-0.174
with partner's family	-0.094	0.699	-0.009	-0.134	0.894	-0.286	-0.009
Income	0.450	0.639	0.039	0.705	0.481	0.109	0.045
Partner's work	0.269	1.098	0.013	0.245	0.807	0.008	0.016
Education	-0.020	0.559	-0.002	-0.035	0.972	0.014	-0.002
No of marriage	0.088	1.742	0.003	0.050	0.960	-0.156	0.003
Gender	0.199	0.967	0.013	0.206	0.837	-0.136	0.013

R=0.699, R^2=0.488, F=15.321, P=0.000

As MAS is taken as the dependent variable and the zero-order and partial correlations with the predictive variables are assessed with multiple regression analysis, according to standardized regression coefficient (beta) relative order of effect of the predictive variables on MAS score was as MPSS score, age, partner's age, and rela-

tion with one's family. As significance of regression coefficients are assessed with t-test results, MPSS (beta=0.567, t=9.674, p=0.000), age (beta=-0.340, t=-2.576, p=0.011), partner's age (beta=0.295, t=2.032, p=0.043), relation with one's family (beta=-0.176, t=-2.750, p=0.006) were found to be predictive on MAS score. ETS and CSES score, marital duration, number of children, style of marriage, relation with the partner's family, income level, work of the partner, education level, number of marriages, and gender did not have a significant effect.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study the participants who have good marital adjustment and poor marital adjustment were compared according to variables such as gender, age, marital duration, number of marriage, marriage style, income level, education level, number of children, number of siblings, relation with the family of origin of the participant and his partner. Among these variables, it was found that participants with good adjustment had more children and better relations with the participant's and his/her partner's family of origin. There are some more studies that show no relation between marital adjustment and gender, age, education level and the style of marriage (Erdoğan, 2007; Jose & Alfons, 2007; Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça, 2002; Gündoğdu-Özgül, 2007). But there are also some studies in the literature presenting opposite results. Şendil & Korkut (2008) showed that marital adjustment decreases as education level and income level decreases and the number of children increases and also showed that couples who have arranged marriage have lower marital adjustment than couples who married after a relationship. Demiray (2006) found a significant relation between marital adjustment and partner's age and marriage duration. Şener & Terzioğlu (2002) found that marital adjustment increases as education level, income level and age at marriage (till 35) increases and marital adjustment decreases as marital duration (till 21) increases.

The group with good marital adjustment had significantly better relations with the participant's and his/her partner's family of origin. In TRNC the family structure is in a transitory form from large family to nuclear family. Being a small island country, the distances are short and interaction within the family is intense. The recent experience of war may also be another factor that strengthens family bonds. Demiray (2006) found a positive relation between marital adjustment and family visits, Gündoğdu-Özgül (2007) showed a positive relation between family support and marital satisfaction and couple adjustment. Generally the findings of this study are supported with the findings of the literature but new studies with larger samples may give more information.

In this study, the group with good marital adjustment was found to have significantly better problem solving abilities, empathic tendency and communication skills. The literature gives parallel evidence. It is mentioned in the literature that psychological adjustment level of married individuals increases with effective problem solving skills (Tülek, 2011), marital adjustment develops as empathic tendency increases (Papp et al., 2010; Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça, 2002), and marital adjustment increases as communication between the partners increases (Şener & Terzioğlu, 2008; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2011).

In this study problem solving skills were found to be the strongest predictor of marital adjustment. Other predictive variables were the age of the participant, partner's age and relationship of the partner with the participant's family. Marital adjustment increases as the age of the participant decreases and the age of the partner increases. Other variables were not predictive for marital adjustment. Ilfeld (1980) shows that coping up with family problems is the strongest predictor of marital stress, Güven & Sevim (2007) show that problem solving skills in the marriage is a better predictor for marital adjustment than cognitive biases and age and gender have no predictive effect. Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça (2002) found that age, gender, marital duration, number of children and education level are not predictive for marital adjustment and empathic tendency is predictive.

The findings of this study suggest that while working with couples in marital counseling and psychotherapy, we should emphasize on developing problem solving skills. Besides problem solving skills, the relationship with family of origin seems to be a very important factor for marital adjustment in our culture. Special emphasize should be given on these two factors during marital counseling and psychotherapy.

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Evlilik Uyumuyla İlişkili Faktörler

Atıf:

Bayraktaroğlu, H. and Çakıcı, E. (2013). Factors related with marital adjustment. *Egitim Arastirmalari-Eurasian Journal of Educational Research,* 53/A, 297-312.

Özet

Problem Durumu: Aile ve evlilik ilişkilerinin niteliği hakkında yapılan ilk çalışmalarda evlilikteki mutluluk, doyum ve evlilik başarısı kavramları evlilik uyum kavramı ile birlikte kullanılmışlardır. Ancak daha sonra yapılan araştırmalarda birbirinden ayrı kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Bu değişkenlerden evlilikteki mutluluk, bireyin evliliği ve ilişkisinin belirli yönleri hakkındaki duygularını içerir. Evlilik doyumu, eşler arası eşitlik algısı, düşünsel ve bedensel yakınlık algısından kaynaklanan bir hoşnutluk duygusudur. Evlilik uyumu ise, eşlerin evlilikteki başarı ve işlevselliği olarak tanımlandığından evlilik doyumu ve mutluluğu kavramlarını da içeren daha geniş bir kavram olduğu görülmektedir.

Evlilikte uyum evliliğin devamlılığını sağlarken, tam tersi olan evlilikte uyumsuzluk veya evlilikte çatışma eşlerin psikolojik olarak kendilerini ve birbirlerini yıpratmalarına, fiziksel sağlık sorunu yaşamalarına neden olabilmektedir. Yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde bazı sosyo demografik değişkenlerin evlilik uyumunu etkilediği görülmektedir. Evlilikte uyumu demografik değişkenlerin etkilemesinin yanı sıra kişilerarası iletişim, empati ve problem çözme beceri düzeylerinin etkileyebileceği düşünülmektedir.

Evlilik uyumu evlilik literatürünün önemli konularındandır. Bu konularda yurt dışında ve Türkiye'de yapılmış pek çok araştırma varken, KKTC'de çalışmalar henüz sınırlı sayıdadır.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmada öncelikle, evliliğinde uyumlu ve uyumsuz grupların sosyodemografik değişkenler, problem çözme, empati ve iletişim puanları arasındaki farkları belirlemek hedeflenmiştir. Bunların yanısıra sosyodemografik değişkenler (cinsiyet, yaş, evlilik süresi, eğitim düzeyi, gelir düzeyi, çocuk sayısı, eşlerin aileleriyle geçim gibi), evlilikte problem çözme, empati ve iletişim puanlarının evlilik uyumu üzerindeki yordayıcı etkisini incelemek amaçlanmıştır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Bu çalışma bir korelasyon çalışmasıdır. Örneklem oluşturulurken, evli bireylere ulaşabilme ve uygulama kolaylığı açısından olasılıksız örneklem türlerinden gelişigüzel örneklem kullanılmıştır. Ölçekler, Lefkoşa'nın çeşitli iş yerlerinde çalışan ve gönüllü olan 337 kişiye uygulanmıştır, araştırmaya dahil edilen evli birey sayısı 309 olmuştur. Araştırma grubunda 203 kadın (% 65.7), 106 erkek (% 34.3) bulunmaktadır. Grubun yaş ortalaması 40.07∓9.23 (21-63), evlilik süresi ortalaması ise 14.27∓9.62 (1-38). Araştırmada verilerin toplanmasında araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan Kişisel Bilgi Formu (KBF), Locke ve Wallace tarafından geliştirilmiş Evlilikte Uyum Ölçeği (EUÖ), Baugh, Avery ve Sheets-Haworth tarafından geliştirilmiş Evlilikte Problem Çözme Ölçeği (EPÇÖ), Dökmen tarafından geliştirilmiş Empatik Eğilim Ölçeği (EEÖ) ve Korkut tarafından geliştirilmiş İletişim Becerileri Değerlendirme Ölçeği (İBDÖ) kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri Ağustos-Eylül 2012 tarihleri arasında toplanmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Evlilik uyumu olan ve olmayan iki grubun nicel değerleri Student's t-testi ile karşılaştırıldığında gruplar arasında yaş, evlilik süresi, evlilik sayısı, kardeş sayısı açısından anlamlı fark bulunmamıştır (P>0.05). Evlilik uyumu yüksek olan grupta çocuk sayısı anlamlı olarak daha yüksektir (P=0.016). Evlilik uyumu olan ve olmayan iki grubun nitel değişkenleri ki-kare analizi ile karşılaştırıldığında cinsiyet, eğitim düzeyi, eşin eğitim düzeyi, eşin çalışma durumu, gelir düzeyi, çocuk sahibi olup olmama, nasıl evlenildiği açısından gruplar arasında anlamlı fark bulunmamıştır (P<0.05). Evlilik uyumu yüksek olan grupta eşinin ailesiyle ve kendi ailesiyle anlaşma düzeyi evlilik uyumu olmayan gruba göre anlamlı olarak daha yüksektir (P<0.001). Beklenildiği gibi aile sorunları da evlilik uyumu olan grupta anlamlı olarak daha düşük sıklıkta yaşanmaktadır (P<0.001).

Katılımcıları EUO toplam puanına göre evliliğinde uyumlu ve uyumsuz olarak iki gruba ayırıp, EPCÖ, EEÖ ve İBDÖ toplam puan ortalamaları Student's t-testi ile karşılaştırıldığında, uyumlu olan grubun EPCÖ, EEÖ ve İBDÖ toplam puan ortalamaları istatistiksel olarak ileri derecede anlamlı yüksek bulunmuştur (p<0.001).

EUÖ toplam puan ortalaması bağımlı değişken olarak alınıp yordayıcı değişken olarak diğer ölçek puanları ele alındığında değişkenler arasındaki ikili ve kısmi korelasyonlar çoklu regresyon analizi ile incelendiğinde, standardize edilmiş regresyon katsayısına göre (beta) yordayıcı değişkenlerin evlilik uyumu üzerinde göreli önem sırası EPCÖ toplam, EEÖ toplam ve İBDÖ toplamdır. Regresyon katsayılarının anlamlılığa ilişkin t testi sonuçları incelendiğinde ise EPCÖ toplam (beta=0.574, t=11.995, p=0.000), EEÖ toplam (beta=0.117, t=2.249, p=0.025) evlilik uyumu üzerinde bir yordayıcı olduğu görülmektedir. İBDÖ toplam değişkeni önemli etkiye sahip değildir.

EUÖ toplam puan ortalaması bağımlı değişken olarak alınıp yordayıcı değişken olarak diğer ölçek puanlarının yanı sıra sosyo demografik değişkenler de alındığında,

değişkenler arasındaki ikili ve kısmi korelasyonlar çoklu regresyon analizi ile incelendiğinde, standardize edilmiş regresyon katsayısına göre (beta) yordayıcı değişkenlerin evlilik uyumu üzerinde göreli önem sırası EPCÖ toplam, kendi yaşı, eşin yaşı ve kendi ailesiyle geçimidir. Regresyon katsayılarının anlamlılığa ilişkin t testi sonuçları incelendiğinde ise EPCÖ toplam (beta=0.567, t=9.674, p=0.000), kendi yaşı (beta=-0.340, t=-2.576, p=0.011), eşin yaşı ((beta=0.295, t=2.032, p=0.043), kendi ailesiyle geçimin (beta=-0.176, t=-2.750, p=0.006) evlilik uyumu üzerinde bir yordayıcı olduğu görülmektedir. EEÖ toplam, İBDÖ toplam, evlilik süresi, çocuk sayısı, nasıl evlenildiği, eş ailesiyle geçim, gelir düzeyi, eşin çalışması, eğitim düzeyi, kaçıncı evlilik olduğu ve cinsiyet değişkenleri önemli etkiye sahip değildir.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Öneriler: Araştırma kapsamında evlilik uyumu yüksek çiftlerde çocuk sayısının daha fazla olduğu ve hem katılımcının hem de eşinin çekirdek ailesi ile ilişkilerinin anlamlı düzeyde daha iyi olduğu belirlenmiştir. Araştırmada ailelerle anlaşmanın evlilik uyumunda olumlu yönde etkisinin bulunması kendi kültürümüzde yapılan çalışmalarla uyumludur. Literatürde aile ziyaretleri ile evlilik uyumu arasında pozitif yönde ilişki saptanmıştır, farklı bir çalışmada aile desteği ile evlilik doyumu ve çift uyumu arasında ilişki bulmuştur. Aile yapımızın geniş aile ile çekirdek aile arasında olan geçiş aile yapısında olması, küçük bir ada ülkesi oluşumuz evlilik uyumu üzerinde aile ilişkilerinin etkisini önemli hale getiriyor olabilir. Yakın tarihimizde yaşanan savaşın da aile bağlarını güçlendirdiği düşünülebilir. Daha geniş örneklemler üzerinde yapılacak yeni araştırmalar evlilik uyumu üzerinde etkili faktörlerle ilgili daha detaylı bilgi edinmemizi sağlayabilir.

Araştırmada, evlilik uyumu yüksek olan grupta problem çözme, empati ve iletişim toplam puan ortalamaları ileri derecede anlamlı yüksek bulunmuştur. Bu bulgular konuyla ilgili literatürle paralellik göstermektedir. Son olarak araştırmada evlilikte uyumu yordayan değişkenlerin neler olduğuna bakılmış ve araştırma kapsamına alınan değişkenler içerisinde evlilikte problem çözme becerisinin evlilik uyumunu yordamada en güçlü yordayıcı olduğu görülmüştür. Evlilikte problem çözme becerisini takip eden diğer yordayıcılar sırasıyla katılımcının kendi yaşı, eşinin yaşı ve kendi ailesiyle geçimidir. Evlilik uyumu katılımcının yaşı düştükçe ve katılımcının eşinin yaşı arttıkça yükselmektedir. Empati toplam, iletişim toplam, evlilik süresi, çocuk sayısı, nasıl evlenildiği, eş ailesiyle geçim, gelir düzeyi, eşin çalışması, eğitim düzeyi, kaçıncı evlilik olduğu ve cinsiyet değişkenlerinin evlilik uyumunu yordamada önemli etkiye sahip olmadıkları saptanmıştır. Evlilik danışmanlığı ve terapisine başvuran çiftlerle üzerinde çalışılabilecek birçok konu bulunmaktadır. Ancak tümü üzerinde çalışmak mümkün değildir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre evlilik danışmanlık ve terapi sürecinde çiftlere yardım ederken problem çözme becerileri üzerinde durulması gerektiği anlaşılmaktadır. Bunun yanında kültürümüze özgü bir faktör olarak çiftin köken aileleriyle geçiminin geliştirilmesi yönünde uygulanacak danışmanlığın evlilik uyumuna olumlu yansımalar sağlayacağı anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Evlilikte uyum, evlilikte doyum, evlilikte problem çözme, empati, iletişim