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*Research Article*

## Commitment of Married Couples in Marriage and Dyadic Adjustment Prediction of Commitment Styles\*

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the commitment and attachment styles which are likely to affect couples' adjustment in marriage relationships. The study group is made up of 500 couples ( $N=1000$ ). The data are collected using "Commitment Scale," "Dyadic Adjustment Scale," and "Experiences in Close Relationships Scale." According to the results of the study, when the sub-dimensions of the commitment scale and attachment styles sub-dimensions, and the sub-dimensions of marriage adjustment are considered, a significant relationship is found between the social pressure sub-dimension of the commitment scale and affectional expression, dyadic satisfaction, and dyadic cohesion. When the extent to which the sub-dimensions of the commitment scale and the sub-dimensions of the attachment styles of married individuals who predicted the cohesion sub-dimension of the marriage adjustment scale was investigated, it is discovered that the dedicational and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of the commitment scale, anxiety sub-dimension of the attachment styles scale and concern for partner welfare sub-dimension were significant predictors of the dyadic cohesion sub-dimension, which is one of the sub-dimensions of the dyadic adjustment. The data that are obtained are discussed in the light of the relevant literature.

### Key Words

Attachment styles • Commitment • Couples • Dyadic adjustment • Marriage

\*This study was produced from the first author's doctoral dissertation, which she graduated in 2015.

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"Attachment" refers to the emotional bond of a person (or animal) to another specific individual. That's why, attachment could be said to be discriminatory and specific. The first bond is probably created with the mother (Sümer & Güngör, 1999), but this leaves its place to a group of other specific person in a short time. Attachment tends to be permanent, whether it happens once with a mother or with another person. Attachments connect the gaps in space and time, and attachment behaviour may increase or decrease depending on situational factors, but bindings themselves are permanent, even under the influence of adverse conditions (Ainsworth, 1969; Burger, 2006).

Attachment theory provides a critical developmental framework for understanding how individuals get on with close relations firstly as children and then as adults. The internalized experience of this early relationship of the child who is in need of establishing a protective bond with the main caregiver, usually the mother, develops as a cognitive-emotional template that continues to provide information about future relationships. This way, such effects become observable throughout a lifetime (Bifulco & Thomas, 2013, p. 1-2).

Adjustment in marriage must be defined in the context of modern marriage. If marriage has become a social relationship rather than personal, then it must be defined in terms of personalities, their conflicts, and the degree of adjustment that is taking place (Eddy, Heyman, & Weiss, 1991). At its certain stages, marriage adjustment can be measured by compromise (adjustment), which is a way of life that minimizes the conflict and encourages adjustment. Most marriages, perhaps the majority, stay at the level of compromise (Vuchunic, 1987). The emphasis here is on participation in mutual communication, mutual stimulation and joint activities. In that case, a harmonious marriage could be defined as a marriage in which the attitudes and actions of each of the partners produce a convenient environment for the personality functioning of each of the partners, particularly in the area of primary relations (Burgess & Cottrell 1939). According to Locke and Wallace (1959), marriage adjustment is the adjustment of wife and husband to each other within a certain period of time. Spanier and Cole (1976) define marriage adjustment as the process of successful marriage.

Commitment is a concept that has different meanings in different fields. When we make a general scanning, we will come across different meanings in terms of commitment. We are focusing here on relational commitment as the subject of our study. Relational commitment is used to describe the likelihood of maintaining a relationship (Arriaga & Agnew, 2001). Thompson-Hayes and Webb (2004) described marriage as the desire of couples to remain in their marriages mutually, functionally, or partly interactively. Rusbult (1983) defined commitment as a long-term adjustment, including intention to maintain the relationship and a sense of psychological commitment. Along with the ones (Johnson, 1973; Stanley & Markman, 1992) who defined commitment as the intention of maintaining the relationship for a long period, there are also those who conceptualized commitment as a choice to abandon other options (Stanley et al., 2005).

Stanley and Markman (1992) considered commitment as including two related structures: personal dedication and constraint commitment. Personal dedication refers to an individual's desire to maintain or improve the quality of the relationship for the common good of the participants. This situation shows itself not only through a desire to keep up with the relationship, but also to develop it, to make concessions for it, to invest in it, to link personal aims to this, to look after not only personal welfare, but the welfare of the partner (Stanley & Markman, 1992).

On the other hand, constraint commitment refers to the forces that force individuals to continue in their relationships, regardless of their individual commitment. Limitations may arise as internal or external pressure, and they support the termination of the commitment of relationship by making it economically, socially, personally or psychologically more costly. Studies indicate that the concept of commitment is valid in keeping with commitment and limitation (Stanley & Markman, 1992). The dimensions associated with personal dedication (Personal Dedication) are obtained from a number of sources related to research and clinical experience (see also Beach & Broderick, 1983; Rusbult, 1980). Relationship agenda is the willingness of a person to maintain the relationship over time. Primacy of relationship refers to the priority level of the relationship within a person's activity hierarchy. Couple identity refers to how much an individual regards the relationship as a team rather than two different individuals who want to maximize individual gain. Satisfaction with sacrifice is the sense of satisfaction that people feel when they do things in general or only for the benefit of their partners. Alternative monitoring is a dimension examined by Leik and Leik (1977), Cook and Emerson (1978). Leik and Leik (1977) and Cook and Emerson (1978) are examined the alternative monitoring dimension. Although these theorists addressed alternatives in a broad context, Stanley and Markman (1992) focused more on the level of follow-up of possible alternative partners of the response owners. The more individuals feel attraction to other potential partners or connect with them, the more their personal commitment to their current partners decrease. Meta-commitment is the level of commitment to one's promises. This is a value that one can bring to a relationship, rather than being tied to a specific aspect of the relationship (as cited in Stanley & Markman 1992). Many dimensions to constraint commitment are taken directly from the work of Johnson (1982). Structural investments, the first sub-dimension of the constraint commitment, are investments that are intricately intertwined, worked together, especially with property and money investments. Due to the desire not to lose the investment, limitations increase as the level of investment increases (Lund, 1985). Social pressure refers to the pressure which others, especially friends and family, mount on couples to maintain the relationship. Termination procedures (Johnson, 1982) refer to the difficulty of taking steps to terminate a relationship. Unattractiveness of alternatives (Johnson, 1982) is how much unhappy one will be regarding wide range of possible life changes after someone's relationship ends (e.g. house change, change in economic situation). Conversely, availability of partners focuses on the perceived presence of other appropriate partners when the current relationship is over. If a person wants to have a relationship, but he/she perceives that there is no one other than the current partner, the person is forced to stay with this partner. Morality of divorce means the ethical acceptability of the divorce (as cited in Stanley & Markman, 1992).

Along with researches on marital adjustment and attachment styles (Banse, 2004; Cobb, Davila & Bradbury, 2001; Fuenfhausen & Cashwell, 2013; Jones, Welton, Oliver, & Thoburn 2011; Ng, Loy, MohdZain, & Cheong, 2013), study in which commitment in marriage, the variables related to the prediction of marriage adjustment of attachment styles were not found in the Turkish sample. The reason for this is that the Revised Commitment Inventory, by Owen, Rhoades, Stanley and Markman (2011), was not applied in Turkish society except for adaptation work (Girgin-Büyükbayraktar, Özteke, & Kesici, 2015). This study is important in terms of disclosure of relationships between commitment and marital adjustment and attachment styles.

Marriage is a structure built by individuals who are connected to each other for various reasons. In order to maintain this structure, the attachment structure in the marriage must be functional. In order to provide this functionality, couples need to have confidence in their relationships, that is, they should not experience anxiety

in their relationships or get away from the relationship by running away from the problem. In other words, they should prefer secure attachment instead of anxious or avoidant attachment style. When bonding and secure bonding is achieved in the marriage, the harmony of the couples increases and their partnership becomes happy. The purpose of this study is the predictive amount of commitment and attachment styles that predict marital adjustment, and that attachment and attachment styles are thought to be important in increasing marital adjustment of married individuals. When this goal is achieved, the increasing divorce in the society, domestic violence and non-communication within the family will be prevented to some extent.

### **Objectives**

1. To determine whether the commitment in marriage and attachment styles of married individuals predict the consensus between couples, which is from the sub-dimensions of marital adjustment scale.
2. To determine whether the commitment in marriage and attachment styles of married individuals predict emotional self-expression of couples, which is from the sub-dimensions of marital adjustment scale.
3. To determine whether the commitment in marriage and attachment styles of married individuals predict commitment between couples, which is from the sub-dimensions of marital adjustment scale.
4. To determine whether the commitment in marriage and attachment styles of married individuals predict commitment between couples, which is from the sub-dimensions of marital adjustment scale.

### **Method**

This section dwells emphasize on the research model, study group, data collection tools and analysis of data.

#### **Research Model**

General scanning model is used in this study and individual or relational scans are performed by general scanning models. General scanning model is a research model that aims to describe a past or present situation as it is and tries to define the subject, event or object in its own conditions (Karasar, 2008). Correlational screening model is “studies conducted to determine the relationships between two or more variables” (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2014). The purpose of choosing this research model is that we aimed to determine the relationships between variables in the study.

#### **Study Group**

The study group of this research consists of married individuals who reside in the province of Konya. Before conducting the research, they were informed about it about the research. Among the couples who wanted to participate in the study voluntarily, those who gave consent to participate in the study were included. A total of 500 couple consisting of 500 women and 500 men residing in Selçuklu, Karatay and Meram provinces of Turkey-Konya, participated in the research between 2013 and 2015.

#### **Data Collection Tools**

In order to reach the personal information of the married individuals, "Personal Information Form" is used, to measure their commitment in marriage, "Revised commitment inventory" is used, to measure attachment styles "Experiences Inventory in Close Relationships" is used and to measure marital adjustment, "Dyadic Adjustment Scale" is used. Introductory information on these data collection tools used in the research is given below.

*Personal Information Form.* The Personal Information Form containing information on age, gender, year of marriage, marital status and number of children of married individuals, was prepared by the researcher with the aim of determining the personal characteristics of married individuals. These married individuals were not asked questions containing their identity information.

*Revised Commitment Inventory (RCI).* Revised Commitment Scale (RCS), "Revised Commitment Inventory (RCI)" with its original name, was developed by Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, and Markman (2011) with the aim of measuring commitment in close relationships, and it was adapted to the Turkish sample by Girgin-Büyükbayraktar, Özteke and Kesici (2015). As a result of confirmatory factor analysis, the adaptive value was calculated for the seven-factor and two-factor models as in the original scale (Owen et al., 2011).

When the Cronbach  $\alpha$  internal consistency coefficient of the Turkish form of the scale was examined, the alpha value in the consideration of partner's well-being sub-dimension was .65 for women and .43 for men. In the financial investments sub-dimension, the alpha value for women is .62 while it is .61 for men. While the alpha value for women in the social pressure subscale is .64, it is .66 for men. In the financial alternatives sub-dimension, the alpha value for women is .77 while it is .65 for men. In the termination sub-dimension, the alpha value for women is .68 while it is .70 for men. In the devotion sub-dimension, the alpha value for women is .80 while it is .78 for men. In the limitation dimension, the alpha value for women is .81 and .71 for men. Generally, the alpha values according to the sub-dimensions vary between .54 and .79, while the Cronbach  $\alpha$  value for the whole scale is .78.

For criterion-related validity, the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the commitment scale and the scales of marital adjustment, relationship assessment, future time orientation in romantic relationships, forgiveness, and dyad adjustment was examined. Thinking about partner's well-being sub-dimension is related to time orientation scale (FTORR) and forgiveness scale in romantic relationships. Financial alternatives subscale relationship assessment and FTORR, termination processes subscale relation assessment, FTORR and forgiveness scales, social pressure subscale with marriage adjustment, relationship assessment and FTORR, material investments subscale with FTORR and new partner finding subscale with marriage adjustment, FTORR and forgiveness scales. Test-retest reliability it was found to be .86 for the whole scale. .89 for the dedication dimension, .82 for social pressure, .86 for termination processes, .84 for finding new partners, .86 for thinking about partner well-being, .87 for financial alternatives, and test-retest reliability of .88 for financial investments has been found.

The scale consists of 25 items in total. Items to be scored in reverse are 17,2,7,13,16,10,12,14,21,24,25. The sub-dimensions of the scale are Social Pressure (8,17), Financial Alternatives (2,7,13), Termination (3,15), Thinking of the partner's well-being (CPW) (4, 16), Availability (9,10,12), Investments (11,14) and Dedication (18,19,20,21,22,24,25).

*Experiences Inventory in Close Relationships (EICR).* The Experiences Inventory in Close Relationships, developed by Brennan et al. (1998), is designed to measure anxiety and avoidance in close relationships, two dimensions of attachment. Brennan et al.(1998) first applied factor analysis to approximately 60 scales, which they thought measured the attachment in close relations of adults. As a result of this analysis, two dimensions that can be defined by avoidance and anxiety in close relations were obtained. Therefore, based on these two dimensions, a 36-item Experiences Inventory in Close Relationships (EICR) was developed. Principal

components (factor) analysis was performed on the 36 items via varimax rotation by [Sümer \(2006\)](#) in the Turkish sample in order to examine the factor structure of the EICR. 38% of the total variance was explained as a result of the two-factor solution. The first factor corresponding to the avoidance dimension proposed by [Brennan and his colleagues \(1998\)](#) explained 22% of the total variance, and the second factor corresponding to the anxiety dimension explained 16% of it. In addition, it was observed that both dimensions have a high reliability coefficient (86 for anxiety, 90 for avoidance dimension). It was suggested that the attachment variables constructed according to EICR explained the highest level of variance in both categorical (.17) and dimensional analysis (.24). The results of factor analysis show that two dimensions representing the anxiety and avoidance dimensions of EICR were observed on the Turkish sample, as well. Besides, except an item (item 13) in the dimension of anxiety, all the items have a higher load than the predicted dimension and two dimensions are represented independently of each other ([Sümer, 2006](#)).

*Dyadic Adjustment Scale- (DAS)*. Developed by [Spanier in 1976](#), Dyadic Adjustment Scale is a 32-item scale used to measure how couples perceive their own bilateral relations. There are four sub-dimensions of the scale; 10-item spousal satisfaction subscale; 5-item spousal commitment subscale; 13-item spousal consensus subscale, and the last is 4-item emotional expression subscale. Total measurement scores reflect the relationship/marital adjustment and satisfaction level of the individuals.

In the study of validity and reliability conducted by [Fıfılođlu and Demir](#) for Turkish sample of this scale developed by [Spanier \(1976\)](#), point average was found to be 104.5 (SD = 18.6) as 103.7 (SD=18.8) in males and 105.5 (S.D. = 18.4) in females. Internal consistency reliability result in the Turkish sample was found to be 0.92 close to the original result. In addition, the reliability results of the subscales vary slightly from the original ones and are between 0.75 and 0.83.

### **Collection of Data**

In order to collect the data, the hours at which the scales would be applied with voluntary married individuals are decided and the scale battery that includes "Personal Information Form", "Revised Commitment Scale", "Experiences Inventory in Close Relationships" and "Dyadic Adjustment Scale" are applied by the researcher at the time previously informed consent agreed upon. Two criteria are taken into account in the application. Volunteerism is first of these criteria. The second criterion is that the couples are asked not to see each other's answers because "Revised Commitment Scale" is applied to each spouse separately.

Scale batteries are handed out to married individuals in sealed envelopes and collected in sealed envelopes. Before the application started, the researcher read the guidelines on scales and gave information about the application. The application lasted approximately 60-75 minutes and no problems were encountered during the application.

### **Analysis of Data**

SPSS 21.00 package program is used for the analysis of data in the study. Stepwise technique of multiple regression analysis is applied to demonstrate how much of the variance of married individuals related to dyadic adjustment is predicted by attachment and attachment styles of married individuals.

## Findings

The findings as a result of statistical analysis of data obtained in accordance with the purpose and the sub-problem of the study are presented in this section.

Table 1

*The Results of Regression Analysis Regarding to the Prediction of Spousal Consensus Subscale of Marital Adjustment Done by the Sub-Dimensions of Commitment Scale and Sub-Dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale of Married Individuals*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> (Adj)	Standard Error	F	P
A	.235	.055	.054	5.173	57.780*	.000
B	.273	.075	.073	5.121	39.902*	.000
C	.301	.090	.088	5.080	32.727*	.000
D	.310	.096	.092	5.067	26.178*	.000
E	.316	.100	.095	5.058	21.912*	.000
F	.324	.105	.99	5.047	19.222*	.000

A Predictor: Commitment.

B Predictor: Commitment, anxiety

C Predictor: Commitment, anxiety, finding a new partner

D Predictor: Commitment, anxiety, finding a new partner, termination processes

E Predictor: Commitment, anxiety, finding a new partner, termination processes, considering partner's welfare

F Predictor: Commitment, anxiety, finding a new partner, terminating processes, considering partner's welfare, social pressure

Dependent Variable: Consensus

\* $p < .01$  \*\*

As shown in Table 1, the dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner, termination processes, considering partner's welfare, social pressure sub-dimensions of commitment scale are found to be significant predictor of consensus from dyadic adjustment sub-dimensions ( $p < 0.01$ ). The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale explains 5.4% of the total variance of the consensus. The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale and the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, together, explain 7.3% of the total variance relating to the consensus.

The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale and the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale, together, explain 8.8% of the total variance relating to the consensus. The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale and termination processes, together, account for 9.2% of the total variance for the consensus. The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale, termination processes and considering partner's welfare, together, account for 9.5% of the total variance of the consensus. The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale,

termination processes, considering partner's welfare and the social pressure sub-dimension, together, account for 9.9% of the total variance of the consensus.

Table 2

*The results of Regression Analysis Regarding to the Prediction of Marital Adjustment Scale's Spousal Satisfaction Sub-Dimension by the Sub-Dimensions of Commitment Scale and the Sub-Dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale of Married Individuals*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> (Adj)	Standard Error	F	P
<b>A</b>	.458	.210	.209	4.762	263.240*	.000
<b>B</b>	.473	.224	.222	4.721	143.023*	.000
<b>C</b>	.480	.230	.228	4.704	98.854*	.000

A Predictor: Dedication.

B Predictor: Dedication, considering partner's welfare

C Predictor: Dedication, considering partner's welfare, finding a new partner

Dependent Variable: spousal satisfaction

\*\* $p < .01$

As shown in Table 2, the commitment, considering partner's welfare and finding a new partner sub-dimensions of commitment scale are found to be significant predictors of spousal satisfaction from the sub-dimensions of dyadic adjustment ( $p < .01$ ). The dedicational sub-dimension of commitment scale accounts for 20.9% of the total variance relating to spousal satisfaction. The dedicational and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale, together, explain 22.2% of the total variance relating to spousal satisfaction. The dedicational, considering partner's welfare and finding a new partner sub-dimensions of commitment scale account for 22.8% of the total variance for spousal satisfaction.

Table 3

*The Results of Regression Analysis Regarding to the Prediction of the Sub-Dimension of Emotional Self-Expression of Marital Adjustment Scale by the Sub-Dimensions of Commitment Scale and the Sub-Dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale of Married Individuals*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> (Adj)	Standard Error	F	P
<b>A</b>	.170	.029	.028	.776	29.636*	.000
<b>B</b>	.194	.038	.036	.773	19.440*	.000
<b>C</b>	.209	.044	.041	.771	15.058*	.000

A Predictor: Dedication.

B Predictor: Dedication, considering partner's welfare

C Predictor: Dedication, considering partner's welfare, anxiety

Dependent Variable: Emotional self-expression

\*\* $p < .01$

As shown in Table 3, the dedication, considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale, and the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale are found to be significant predictors of the emotional self-expression sub-dimension of the dyadic adjustment scale from the sub-dimensions of dyadic adjustment ( $p < .01$ ).

The dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale describes 2.8% of the total variance for the sub-dimension of emotional self-expression of marital adjustment scale. Along with the dedication of commitment scale and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimension, they explain 3.6% of the total variance relating to the emotional expression sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale. Along with the dedication and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimension of commitment scale, they explain 4.1% of the total variance relating to the emotional expression sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale.

Table 4

*The Results of Regression Analysis Regarding to the Prediction of the Commitment Sub-Dimension of Marital Adjustment Scale by the Sub-Dimensions of Commitment Scale and the Sub-Dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale of Married Individuals*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> (Adj)	Standard Error	F	P
<b>A</b>	.312	.097	.096	4.965	106.997	.000
<b>B</b>	.325	.106	.104	4.944	58.713	.000
<b>C</b>	.335	.112	.109	4.929	41.639	.000
<b>D</b>	.340	.116	.112	4.921	32.454	

A Predictor: Dedication.

B Predictor: Dedication, financial alternatives

C Predictor Dedication, financial alternatives, anxiety

D Predictor Dedication, financial alternatives, anxiety, considering partner's welfare

Dependent Variable: Commitment

\*\* $p < .01$

As seen in Table 4, the dedication and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of the commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimension of commitment scale are found to be significant predictors of the commitment sub-dimension of the dyadic adjustment scale from the sub-dimensions of dyadic adjustment ( $p < 0,01$ ). The Dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale describes 9.6% of the total variance for the sub-dimension of emotional self-expression of marital adjustment scale. Along with the dedication and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale, they explain 10.4% of the total variance relating to the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale. Along with the dedication and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale and anxiety sub-dimension of the attachment styles scale, they explain 10.9% of the total variance relating to the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale. Along with the dedication and the financial alternatives sub-dimensions of commitment scale and anxiety sub-dimension of the attachment styles scale, and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale, they explain 11.2% of the total variance relating to the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale.

## Discussion

The findings that belong to the sub-problems developed to determine the purpose of the research are discussed and interpreted in this chapter. Discussion and interpretation of findings related to the research are made in accordance with the order of examination of the sub-problems.

### **Investigation on Married Individuals' Sub-dimensions of Commitment Scale and Sub-dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale's Prediction of Consensus Sub-dimension of Marital Adjustment Scale**

The dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, finding a new partner, termination processes, considering partner's welfare, social pressure sub-dimension of commitment scale are found to be significant predictors of the consensus from the sub-dimensions of dyadic adjustment show that both commitments in marriage and attachment styles are significant in dyadic adjustment of couples.

Dedication of married couples to each other, that is, self-sacrifice to each other predicts that consensus between couples, because couples come to terms on important matters in their marriage relations. The consensus culture between couples is concerned with resolving conflicts. For this reason, couples need to dedicate necessary self-sacrifice, that is themselves, to resolve the conflicts between themselves, and for each couple not to be the loser but to be the winner, to resolve the conflict. Rhoades et al. (2010) found in their research that more commitment and limitation, which is felt less, are associated with possibility of staying together supports research findings. Another finding supporting research findings is Rhoades et al.(2009)'s result that people living together before engagement have a lower marital satisfaction, as well as commitment and trust, they have more negative communication and greater likelihood of divorce compared to those who live together only after being engaged or who do not live together before marriage. Considering the significant (considerable) effect of positive and negative emotional changes on marital satisfaction and stability (see also Gottman & Levenson, 2000), this result shows that dedication is important for consensus in marriage, and that if individuals want to live together, their level of dedication must be high. Otherwise there may be conflicts, not consensus, because they may have difficulties solving important problems between them.

The result of the dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale and the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale together predict the consensus can be interpreted as follow: when married individuals fulfil their responsibilities to demonstrate the necessary self-sacrifice to solve important problems, a consensus and compromise can be seen between them. But in one of these conditions of consensus, couples may need not to worry about concerns of not finding approval for their ideas, that their relations are sustainable; instead of satisfying others, it may be necessary for them to narrow down the psychological distance between them to solve important problems (Selcuk et al., 2005). Consensus must be reached regarding the adjustment between the couples. Couples who have anxious attachment may find it difficult to reconcile. The result that the constraint from Bahadır (2006)'s strategies of anxiety dimension conflict resolution of attachment directly predicts avoidance, compliance and co-operation at a significant level, the result that the level of anxiety does not significantly predict the reconciliation strategy supports the research findings.

The result that the attachment sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, and the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale together predict the consensus show that self-sacrifice, namely dedication, for the consensus between the couples, not anxious attachment, secure attachment, and in situations couples cannot provide consensus on important issues, the possibility of finding a new partner can be effective. This result shows that the possibility of finding a new partner can force couples to compromise, while reducing their commitment in marriage. Because the existence of a third person in the marriage process may mean divorce, couples who have made investment in marriage will be compensated for

the investment they made to the relationship without closing the doors in the solution of conflicts, that is, by not being obstinate with each other but resolving the conflict in a compromising manner. Otherwise, because they will not be able to receive the investment they have made in the relationship and they will avoid further relationship, this situation increase the likelihood of finding a new partner (Rusbult et al., 1998).

Consequently, the dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, together with the finding a new partner and the termination process sub-dimensions of commitment scale predict the consensus; being satisfied with the self-sacrifice in marriage, the difficulty in the possibility of finding a new partner, the complexity and difficulties involved in terminating the marriage relationship can be considered among the factors that will make it easier for couples to build consensus on their relations.

Furthermore the dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale, together with the sub-dimensions of termination processes and considering partner's welfare predict the consensus; the difficulty of terminating marriage relations and overcoming difficult days in marriage processes can be explained by the establishment of the commitment anchor such as having children (Dallos & Draper, 2012; Kesici, Mert, Ilgün, & Girgin-Büyükbayraktar, 2015).

Also, the dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, the finding a new partner sub-dimension of commitment scale, together with the termination processes, the considering partner's welfare and the social pressure sub-dimensions predict the consensus; as couples walk toward a common compromise or destination, an important variable contributing to the process of strengthening their commitment to marriage and not an anxious attachment but a secure attachment can be explained by the fact that there is social pressure, because both family and close friends and the society insist on not terminating the relation, not having an idea of separation, considering partner's welfare and maintaining marital relationship. This insistence also increases the commitment to marriage. Terminating the relationship, the idea of separation regulates the relationship between performing commitment and separation behaviours, it is associated with moving more suddenly and it demonstrates that beyond commitment, only it provides a unique explanatory power over separation behaviour, and it shows that there is one step between commitment and staying/separation in close relationships which are parallel with the findings of the research (VanderDrift et al., 2009). In his result Bayrakcı (2014) says that self-esteem is a significant predictor of the consensus which supports the finding of the research. In his result Amanvermez (2007) found parallel with the dimensions of attachment for close associations, the anxiety and avoidance dimensions are in question for attachment to the group, and the length of the relationship with the group from the collective self and demographic variables that has the most predictive power for group attachment; gender and lover demographic variables have the most predictive power for lover attachment supports the finding of the research, because the collective self and the length of the relationship variables are significant in terms of commitment. The result of Özer and Güngör-Cihan (2012) reveal that females with low marital adjustment have less attribution of causality, males with high marital adjustment have more causal attribution; the responsibility loading style and the experimental openness personality traits are higher in males low marriage adjustment and lower in females with high marital adjustment supports the finding of the research. Because for the commitment in marriage, along with causality and responsibility loadings; it

reveals how important openness to experience personality traits is for dyadic adjustment and also shows how important the results of the research are.

#### **Investigation on Married Individuals' Sub-dimensions of Commitment Scale and Sub-dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale's Prediction of Dyadic Satisfaction Sub-dimension of Marital Adjustment Scale**

The result that the dedication, considering partner's welfare and finding a new partner sub-dimensions of commitment scale are found to be significant predictor for dyadic satisfaction shows that commitment in marriage is a significant predictor of dyadic satisfaction.

The result that the dedication sub-dimension of the commitment scale predicts dyadic satisfaction relates with the situation that emerges by evaluating the positive and negative aspects of feelings, thoughts and behaviours in couples' relations. The result of [Atçeken \(2014\)](#) reveal that married individuals' problem solving skills in marriage, together with the motivation from the sub-dimensions of relationship loads of married individuals, and avoiding from the sub-dimensions of attachment styles predict financial assistance from the sub-dimensions of spousal support and information utility support research findings. Because married couples are motivated to solve problems in marriage and display their commitment by providing financial and information support to each other, and with this conclusion, their solved problems are reflected to them as satisfaction. Rusbult et al.'s view that couples' commitment will increase at a rate they get high satisfaction in the relationship supports our findings.

The result that the commitment scale together with the sub-dimensions of dedication and considering partner's welfare predict dyadic satisfaction is an indication of the belief of being satisfied from the self-sacrifice they make and ensuring partners with better conditions by raising the quality of life together. [Turan \(2015\)](#)'s result that the social interest support of married individuals, the meaningfulness dimension of sense of family cohesion, financial assistance and information utility, and manageability sub-dimension of family cohesion are found to be significant predictors of problem solving skills in marriage support the finding of the research. Because if couples have a sense of family cohesion, if they give each other spousal support seeing potential problems as understandable, meaningful and manageable, problems can be solved. Solved problems and the sense of putting meaning to problems and making them understandable can make the dedication and self-sacrifice better, and these operations can make the partner feel better.

The result that the commitment scale together with the dimensions of dedication, considering partner's welfare and finding a new partner predict the dyadic satisfaction is a sign of that couples dedication and considering partner's welfare and not finding a new partner will increase the commitment in the marriage. Because if couples want to terminate their marriage relationship but do not think they can find a new partner, they will remain faithful to the process of marriage and the commitment in marriage will be high. The couples who were more dedicated to their partners reported that they were in search of fewer alternatives ([Stanley & Markman, 1992](#)), and this leads them to effectively reduce attractive alternatives ([Johnson & Rusbult, 1989](#)). For as much as, [Bayrakçı \(2014\)](#)'s result that the self-esteem and the family environment predict dyadic satisfaction supports the finding of the research. This is because the sense of finding a new partner is an indication of self-respect. High self-esteem can bring about self-confidence, and self-confidence can bring about finding a new partner. [Feeney \(1999\)](#)'s result that individuals' family relations have a significant effect on their romantic relations supports the finding of the research. [Larson \(1988\)](#)'s finding that individuals with non

functional family rules have less satisfaction in their relationships supports the finding of the research. Because, if functionality is lost, partners can be harmed in the relationship they are therefore tempted to search for a more functional family environment. On the other hand, couples with low self esteem may find it difficult to find a new partner. For this reason, the couples' commitment may increase. [Murphy and O'Leary \(1989\)](#)'s result that there is a significant relationship between low self-esteem and low marriage satisfaction support the findings of the research. [Büyükşahin \(2006\)](#)'s result that the variables that best predict relationship satisfaction level among investment model variables are feeling safe in the relation and the trust to the spouse is parallel to the findings of the research. [Akbalık-Doğan and Büyükşahin-Sunal \(2011\)](#)'s result that the relation satisfaction predicts the positive illusion in marriage positively supports the findings of the research.

### **Investigation on Married Individuals' Sub-dimensions of Commitment Scale and Sub-dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale's Prediction of Emotional Self-Expression Sub-dimension of Marital Adjustment Scale**

The result that the dedication and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of commitment scale, and the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale predict the expressing emotions from the dyadic adjustment sub-dimensions shows that being self-sacrificing in expressing the feelings of couples, being self-satisfied with the self-sacrifice, trying to raise the quality of life of the partner, having an anxiety of disapproval, having an anxiety of separation, and having an anxiety of satisfying the partner affect them to express their feelings/emotions.

The dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale's prediction of expressing the feelings of couples may mean that being satisfied and being willing to turn their love into behaviour from the subjects that couples compromise on how they show their love ([Fıfılođlu & Demir 2000](#)). Family environment is also effective in expressing the feelings of couples. Likewise, [Satir \(1988\)](#)'s opinion of that the individuals, who are grown in a family which features humour, tolerance, joy, happiness and a peaceful environment, and made up by parents with high self-confidence, will show their interest, love and compassion without hesitation, without fear, and thanks to this communication environment made up by educatory families, in a family environment where the rules are open, flexible, and individuals are not judged for their differences, supports the findings of the research.

The prediction of expressing emotions by the marriage adjustment scale along with the dedication and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of the commitment scale; in the case of a communication establishment in which there are no races and competition in order to increase the quality of marital life for couples, no confusion, no latent expectations, and in which they can show their love to each other, and in which they provide the myths that emerged in the communication in the marriage, couples may express their feelings ([Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002](#); [Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2006](#); [Schrodt, 2009](#)). The result [Rhoades et al. \(2009\)](#) found in the study they did that negative dyadic communication is associated with the low level adjustment to the relation, trust and commitment supports the findings of the research.

The dedication and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of the commitment scale and together with the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale prediction on the expressing emotions of couples, the dedication to revealing the love of couples, the quality of life of partners, and the anxieties of disapproval of couples, separation and dissatisfaction of partners force them to turn their love into behaviour. [Bayrakcı \(2014\)](#)'s prediction of self-esteem and family environment on the emotional expression of couples supports the findings

of the research, because the height of self-respect and the availability of the family environment affect emotional expressions of couples. In the study in which Bahadır (2006) examined the relationship between attachment and conflict resolution strategies in romantic relationships; the significant prediction of anxiety level on the reconciliation strategy, and the direct significant prediction of both the anxiety and avoidance dimensions of attachment on the anticipation of negative emotional state regulation support the results of the research, because the anxious individual is alert and can have difficulties to express his/her feelings clearly. Morris et al. (2007)'s statement that individuals learn their emotional regulations, and how to control their emotions by taking a model of their immediate surroundings; and their view that emotional atmosphere in the family, parenting style, the relationship of parents to each other are important in expressing feelings supports the findings of the research. Dattilio (2005)'s view that family schemas shape both family dynamics and interaction patterns related to communication in the family and how family members control and express their emotions is a remarkable explanation in terms of specifying the importance of early incompatible schemas and family myths in expressing the feelings of couples. Sümer (2006)'s finding that those who are attached safely perceive satisfaction at a higher level in their relationships supports the results of the research.

#### **Investigation on Married Individuals' Sub-dimensions of Commitment Scale and Sub-dimensions of Attachment Styles Scale's Prediction of Commitment Sub-dimension of Marital Adjustment Scale**

The result that the dedication and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of commitment scale, the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimension of commitment scale predict the commitment of couples is an indication of the consistency of the research within itself. Because, dedication, financial alternatives and considering partner's welfare sub-dimensions of the commitment scale in marriage predict the commitment sub-dimension of dyadic adjustment. Adding the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale to this result is an expression of how meaningful the research results are.

The result that the dedication sub-dimension of commitment scale predicts the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale can be explained with how much couples dedicate themselves to marriage and their constant investment in marriage. It is a sign of a delicate balance between commitment and family cohesion that Olson (1993)'s view of family commitment as an emotional bond developed by couples and family members against each other, and family cohesion as leadership, role relationships, and the amount of change in the relationship rules. There is a need for the spirit of dedication that this balance can occur between couples and in the family environment. For as much as, Olson (1993)'s view of family function as family commitment, closeness, family cohesion, flexibility capacity, adaptation to difficulties and changes in both family and environment is important in terms of supporting the findings of this research because it means self-sacrificing for family functioning.

As a result of the result that together with the dedication and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of commitment scale, marital adjustment scale predicts commitment; it is interesting to consider financial alternatives in commitment for increasing both the dedication and the quality of life of the family, because married couples make investments in marriage to increase their commitment. But this investment is not only emotional, but also an investment that has financial dimensions as well. The result that the satisfaction related to a relationship is in a clear relationship with alternatives, investments and commitment to this relationship in a

meta-analysis study of Rusbult's Commitment Investment Model supports the findings of the research (Le & Agnew, 2003).

The result that together with the dedication and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of commitment scale and the anxiety sub-dimension of the attachment styles scale predict the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale may be due to the reasons such as self-sacrifice for the commitment in increasing marital adjustment, worrying about financial investments that will increase the quality of life of the partner, and not satisfying the partner. The result that anxious attachment styles have a significant effect on marital satisfaction supports the findings (Green, 2012). In addition, the study done by Lippitt (2005) supports the findings.

The result that together with the dedication and financial alternatives sub-dimensions of commitment scale, and the anxiety sub-dimension of attachment styles scale, and the considering partner's welfare sub-dimension of commitment scale predict the commitment sub-dimension of marital adjustment scale may mean both self-sacrifice and financial gain for commitment in marriage, and besides considering partner's welfare mutually, being concerned about gaining the approval and trust of the partner, and giving more attention to the partner as a result of this concern. Self-sacrifice attitudes between couples mediate commitment and relationship adjustment (Stanley et al., 2006; Whitton et al., 2008). Büyükşahin (2006)'s found that the variables that best predict relationship satisfaction level among investment model variables are feeling safe in the relation and the trust to the spouse supports our research. The result of Bayrakcı (2014) that self-esteem is an important predictor of commitment from the sub-dimensions of dyadic adjustment also supports the finding of the research. Because couples with a high self-perception know their weak and strong sides, there is a commitment between them, not a dependency. The result of the study in which Turan (2015) found that the social interest support, the meaningfulness dimension of sense of family unity, financial aid and information support, and manageability sub-dimension of family unity are significant predictors of problem solving skills in marriage support the findings of the research, because if couples are to stand up to difficulties, they can stand up to them with a sense of unity and spousal support. This mutual effort can increase the commitment between them.

### **Ethics Approval**

We declare that the research was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. There is no conflict of interest in the research.

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