



## THE PREDICTIVE ROLE OF EARLY MALADAPTIVE SCHEMAS IN THE EVALUATION OF PRE-MARITAL ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS\*

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the predictive role of the early maladaptive schemas on the pre-marital romantic relationship evaluation process among Turkish university students. The study group of this research, which was conducted as a quantitative research and in which correlational design was used, consists of 122 university students who were in a romantic relationship and who declared that they were willing to marry or were not sure in this regard. Students who were in a romantic relationship and did not consider marrying their current partner were not included in the study. The Turkish Young Schema Questionnaire-Short Form-3 and Premarital Relationship Assessment Scale were used to collect the data. The results of the t-test analysis indicated that premarital romantic relationship assessment dimensions did not differ to gender and emotional deprivation, failure, social isolation/alienation, enmeshment/dependency, and defectiveness maladaptive schemas differed to gender. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that emotional deprivation schema predicted religious values assessment dimension negatively, emotional deprivation and defectiveness schemas predicted communication assessment dimension negatively, vulnerability to harm schema predicted friendships assessment dimension negatively, defectiveness schema predicted family relationships assessment dimension negatively, emotional inhibition and insufficient self-control/entitlement schemas predicted sexual cohesion assessment dimension for emotional inhibition negatively and for insufficient self-control/entitlement positively, defectiveness and vulnerability to harm and illness schemas predicted overall premarital evaluation score negatively. Results were discussed in the light of traditional gender roles, meanings attributed to marriage and relevant literature.

### Key Words

*Early Maladaptive Schemas, Pre-Marital Relationship, University Students*

## ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNDE EVLİLİK ÖNCESİ ROMANTİK İLİŞKİLERİN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİNDE ERKEN DÖNEM UYUM BOZUCU ŞEMALARIN YORDAYICI ROLÜ

### ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türk üniversite öğrencilerinde sahip olunan erken dönem uyum bozucu şemaların, evlilik öncesi romantik ilişkileri değerlendirme sürecindeki yordayıcı rolünün belirlenmesidir. Nicel araştırma olarak yürütülen ve ilişkisel desenin kullanıldığı bu araştırmanın çalışma grubunu bir romantik ilişki içerisinde olan ve partneriyle evlenmeyi düşündüğünü veya bu konuda kararsız olduğunu beyan eden 122 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Bir romantik ilişkisi olan ve mevcut partneriyle evlenmeyi düşünmeyen öğrenciler çalışmaya alınmamıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında Young Şema Ölçeği-Kısa Form-3 Türkçe formu ve Evlilik Öncesi İlişkileri Değerlendirme Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Yürütülen t-testi bulguları, evlilik öncesi romantik ilişkileri değerlendirme boyutlarının cinsiyete göre farklılaşmadığını, duygusal yoksunluk, başarısızlık, sosyal izolasyon, bağımlılık ve kusurluluk uyum bozucu şemalarının cinsiyete göre farklılaştığını göstermiştir. Yapılan çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi bulguları, duygusal yoksunluk uyum bozucu şemasının dini değerler değerlendirme boyutunu olumsuz yönde, duygusal yoksunluk ve kusurluluk uyum bozucu şemalarının iletişim değerlendirme boyutunu olumsuz yönde, dayanıksızlık uyum bozucu şemasının arkadaşlar değerlendirme boyutunu olumsuz yönde, kusurluluk uyum bozucu şemasının aile ilişkileri değerlendirme boyutunu olumsuz yönde, duygusal yoksunluk ve yetersiz öz-denetim/büyükleme için uyum bozucu şemalarının cinsel uyum değerlendirme boyutunu duygusal yoksunluk için olumsuz yönde, yetersiz öz-denetim/büyükleme için olumlu yönde, kusurluluk ve dayanıksızlık uyum bozucu şemalarının genel ilişki değerlendirme puanını olumsuz yönde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Bulgular geleneksel cinsiyet rolleri, evliliğe yüklenen anlamlar ve ilgili alan yazın kapsamında tartışılmıştır.

### Anahtar Kelimeler

*Erken Dönem Uyum Bozucu Şemalar, Evlilik Öncesi İlişkiler, Üniversite Öğrencileri*

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## Introduction

Marriage can be described as a universal institution and may differentiate pursuant to the cultural values of the one. Marriage provides for the continuity of the descendants, in which the two individuals form an agreement for a permanent union and the individuals undertake various responsibilities towards each other (Ozabaci & Erkan, 2014). Marriage has a significant role in the one's life to help to fulfill their life purposes like sexuality, productivity, belonging and having offsprings throughout their life-time (Nazli, 2014).

Healthy marriages are often explained as marriages where spouses acquaint themselves with each other in many ways, meet reciprocally with their psychological, social, emotional and sexual needs, meet in common activities and interests, and marry in the context of material and spiritual values. Unhealthy marriages are defined as marriages where spouses do not adequately recognize each other's characteristics and are therefore not generally satisfied with reciprocal needs and expectations (Saxton, 1982; Yalcin & Hamamci, 2012). Having an unhealthy marriage relationship can have negative consequences for the psychological health of partners. In order to ensure healthy marriages at this point, it is necessary for the individuals to be able to evaluate their partner in a healthy way and make healthy decisions during the premarital evaluation process. There are some cognitive factors affecting the premarital evaluation process, and the early maladaptive schemas are one of them.

The negative experiences that people face in their early childhood have an unhealthy effect on the close relationships they established during adulthood (Tezel, Kislak & Boysan, 2015). Young, Klosko and Weishaar (2003) have described the effect of early negative life experiences on an individual with the concept of early maladaptive schemas. Early maladaptive schemas are defined as permanent and persistent cognitive themes that direct emotional and cognitive reactions of individuals, which result in individuals associating with individuals who are objects of attachment in infancy and childhood, and that enable individuals to make sense of themselves and the outside world (Young et al., 2003). The maladaptive schemas of the individuals and the schema fields formed by these schemas shape the perception of the emotions, behaviors and environmental stimuli in close relationships. According to this approach, dysfunctional cognitive patterns of individuals formed in childhood cause problems in close relationships in future (Arntz & Jacob, 2013). Early maladaptive schemas are caused by negative interactions on the basis of unmet care, love and interest needs, neglect and abuse experiences, traumatic situations and generally on the basis of insecure attachment in early life (Jind, 2000). These schemas can be triggered in cases where similar emotions are experienced in the following years and can affect emotions and behaviors (Young et al., 2003).

Five schema domains and the maladaptive schemas that are categorized under these domains are described as follows: *impaired autonomy* (enmeshment/dependency, abandonment, failure, negativity/pessimism, vulnerability to harm and illness), *disconnection* (emotional deprivation, emotional inhibition, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness), *unrelenting standards* (unrelenting standards, approval seeking), *impaired limits* (insufficient self-control/entitlement) and *other directness* (self-sacrifice, punitiveness) (Young et al., 2003).

Interpersonal processes are one of the important dimensions affecting couple adjustment and couples' evaluations of each other. Interpersonal processes refer to mutual behavioral, emotional and cognitive interactions between the couple. Couples' attitudes towards conflict resolution and problem solving are the points where relationship adjustment researchers focus (Bradbury, Fincham & Beach, 2000). Margolin and Wampold (1981) stated that non-functional expectations in close relationships are associated with higher negative responsiveness. In this situation, couples' maladaptive attitudes towards each other's feelings and behaviors play an important role. Early maladaptive schemas are seen as an important source of non-functional strategies and attitudes in couple interactions (Hayes & Parsonnet, 2016).

Dumitrescu and Rusu (2012) investigated the relationship between early maladaptive schemas and couple adjustment on 182 university students and they found that

emotional deprivation, abandonment, social isolation, defectiveness, dependency, vulnerability to harm and illness, approval seeking and pessimism schemas negatively predict couple adjustment.

Sahin's (2015) research, which was conducted on 100 individuals (age range 20 to 40) who had romantic relationships, found positive correlations between relationship stability and schemas of entitlement, approval seeking and punitiveness.

Yigit and Celik (2016) conducted a study on 188 married and 246 in-relationship individuals and the findings showed that for participants having a romantic relationship, relationship satisfaction was significantly and negatively predicted by disconnection schema domain. For married participants, disconnection schema domain and length of relationship significantly and negatively predicted relationship satisfaction.

Zeinali and Amirsardari (2018) conducted a research on 357 undergraduate students and they found that overvigilance/inhibition and other-directness schema domains were significant predictors of infidelity proness.

It is thought that maladaptive schemas possessed at the cognitive and emotional level, such as many factors on marriage, one of the life tasks of the adulthood period, are also effective. In this study, it is examined how the early maladaptive schemas affect the premarital decision-making process. The study's research questions are as follows;

- 1.How do the pre-marital romantic relationship assessment dimensions differ according to gender in university students?
- 2.How do the early maladaptive schemas differ according to gender in university students?
- 3.Do early maladaptive schemas in university students predict pre-marital romantic relationship assessment dimensions?

## **Method**

### **Design**

In this research conducted as quantitative research, correlational design is used from quantitative research designs. It explains whether there is an association between two or more cases in the relational aspect (Yildirim & Simsek, 2005).

### **Study Group**

The study group of the research consists of a total of 122 university students in a romantic relationship from two different universities. Both university are state universities, one of them is in Central Anatolia and the other one is in South of Turkey. The mean age of the study group was 21.67 (Sd=1.57) and the mean duration of romantic relationship was 2.1 years (Sd=1.75).

The convenient sampling technique was used to form the study group. Individuals who responded "yes" and "not sure" to the question "Do you think of marrying your current partner?" in the demographic information section of the scales given to the participants were included in the study. Individuals who responded "no" were not included in the study. Demographic information of the study group is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Demographic information**

Demographic Variables		N	%
Gender	Male	39	32
	Female	83	68
	Sum	122	100
Department	Psychological counseling and guidance	67	55
	Pharmacy	26	21
	Conservatory	4	3
	Pre-school teaching	13	11
	Primary school teaching	10	8
	NA	2	2
	Sum	122	100
Grade	1. grade	5	4
	2. grade	6	5
	3. grade	48	39
	4. grade	49	40
	5. grade	9	8
	NA	5	4
	Sum	122	100
Do you think of marrying your current partner?	Yes	89	73
	Not sure	33	27
	Sum	122	100

### Data Collection Tools

The demographic information form formed by the researchers was used to measure demographic information of participants. In this form, participants are asked about age, gender, department, relationship status, duration of the relationship and whether or not they think about getting married to the current partner.

*Premarital Relations Assessment Scale (PRAS)*: Scale was developed by Kalkan and Kaya (2007) was used in evaluating premarital relationships. The scale consisting of 34 items is rated as a five-point Likert (1-Never agree, 5-Completely agree) and consists of five sub-factors: religious values, communication, friendships, family relationships and sexual cohesion. The high score on each subscale and the sum of the scales indicates the positive evaluation of the relevant dimension. In the scale development study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency score for the whole scale was 0.86, which was between 0.68 and 0.77 for the sub-factors. The test-retest reliability coefficient was calculated at three weeks intervals and this value was found to be 0.72. These values are sufficient for the reliability of the PRAS. In the present study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency score was 0.80 for the whole scale and for the sub-factors it was between 0.61 and 0.72.

*Turkish Young Schema Questionnaire-Short Form 3 (TYSQ-S3)*: Scale was developed by Young et al. (1991, 2003) and adapted to Turkish by Soygut, Karaosmanoglu and Cakir (2009) was used to measure early maladaptive schemas. The adapted scale consists of 90 items and is rated on the six Likert (1-Completely wrong for me, 6-Completely true for me). YSQ-SF3 measures 14 maladaptive schemas and 5 schema domains which maladaptive schemas form. Five schema domains and the maladaptive schemas that are categorized under these domains are described as follows: impaired autonomy (enmeshment/dependency, abandonment, failure, negativity/pessimism, vulnerability to harm and illness), disconnection (emotional deprivation, emotional inhibition, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness), unrelenting standards (unrelenting standards, approval seeking), impaired limits (insufficient self-control/entitlement) and other directness (self-sacrifice, punitiveness). The adaptation study was conducted on 1071 university students and the internal consistency coefficient of Cronbach Alpha for maladaptive schemas ranged from 0.63

to 0.80; for schema domains, between 0.53 and 0.81. Test-retest reliability on 150 university students at three-week intervals was 0.66 to 0.82 for maladaptive schemas; for the schema domains, the test-retest reliability coefficients between 0.66 and 0.83 have been reached. In the present study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient for maladaptive schemas ranged from 0.64 to 0.85.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection tools used in the study were combined with the demographic information form and presented to participants. Participants were briefed about the general purpose of the study before scales were presented. In the analysis of the data, frequency analysis, correlation analysis, t-test and multiple linear regression analysis (forward technique) techniques were used.

### Results

Before the regression analysis, multiple correlation analysis was conducted to determine whether there were significant relationships between the variables. The correlations between PRAS and YSQ-SF3 were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. The correlations between PRAS and YSQ-SF3**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1-Religious values	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2-Communication	.21*	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3-Friendships	.11	.52**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4-Family relationships	.39**	.52**	.44**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-Sexual cohesion	-.02	.18*	.14*	.03	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6-Overall pre-marital evaluation	.59**	.74**	.69**	.80**	.32**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7-Emotional deprivation	-.19*	-.53**	-.28**	-.26**	-.08	-.42**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8-Failure	-.18*	-.50**	-.29**	-.39**	-.16	-.47**	.47**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9-Negativity/pessimism	-.09	-.26**	-.30**	-.30**	-.12	-.34**	.32**	.61**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10-Social isolation/alienation	-.14	-.43**	-.34**	-.33**	-.06	-.41**	.57**	.68**	.67**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11-Emotional inhibition	-.12	-.45**	-.22*	-.20*	-.21*	-.36**	.51**	.55**	.43**	.60**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12-Approval seeking	-.01	-.02	-.23**	-.18*	-.12	-.18	.03	.32**	.46**	.24**	.08	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13-Enmeshment/dependency	-.18*	-.50**	-.25**	-.32**	-.17	-.43**	.50**	.69**	.56**	.65**	.45**	.26**	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14-Insufficient self-control/entitlement	.01	-.19*	-.16	-.18	.09	-.15	.18	.25**	.21*	.27**	.36**	.32**	.14	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-Self-sacrifice	.04	-.06	-.06	-.01	-.06	-.03	.19*	.27**	.39**	.35**	.22*	.28**	.28**	.22*	1	-	-	-	-	-
16-Abandonment	-.15	-.42**	-.33**	-.30**	-.12	-.41**	.58**	.67**	.60**	.64**	.48**	.36**	.65**	.23*	.23*	1	-	-	-	-
17-Punitiveness	-.06	-.17	-.24**	-.14	-.15	-.23*	.13	.44**	.56**	.39**	.32**	.63**	.38**	.37**	.41**	.37**	1	-	-	-
18-Defectiveness	-.16	-.59**	-.35**	-.42**	-.16	-.52**	.64**	.72**	.55**	.72**	.64**	.12	.70**	.24**	.13	.70**	.27**	1	-	-
19-Vulnerability to harm and illness	-.13	-.37**	-.43**	-.33**	-.18*	-.45**	.32**	.56**	.67**	.63**	.41**	.46**	.51**	.29**	.18	.62**	.53**	.56**	1	-
20-Unrelenting standards	-.08	-.23**	-.27**	-.22*	-.05	-.27**	.19*	.21*	.35**	.30**	.31**	.35**	.21*	.36**	.16	.33**	.34**	.26**	.33**	1

(\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

Considering overall pre-marital evaluation score, defectiveness, failure and vulnerability to harm and illness schemas were found to be highly negatively correlated. Significant many other correlations were observed among most of the variables of the study.

### PRAS T-test Results

T-test analysis was conducted on the pre-marital romantic relationship assessment dimensions to analyze the first research question of the study. According to the t-test results, there was no significant difference in the measured dimensions according to the gender. In all subscales except for the sexual cohesion subscale, and in the general score, female students had higher scores and male students only had higher scores in sexual cohesion subscale. PRAS t-test results are given in Table 3.

**Table 3. PRAS T-test results (N=122)**

Subscales	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
Religious values	Male	39	4.07	0.66	-1.02	0.520
	Female	83	4.20	0.70		
Communication	Male	39	4.24	0.61	-2.42	0.080
	Female	83	4.50	0.47		
Friendships	Male	39	4.07	0.59	-0.98	0.970
	Female	83	4.18	0.57		
Family relationships	Male	39	4.14	0.75	-0.78	0.410
	Female	83	4.25	0.67		
Sexual cohesion	Male	39	4.46	0.35	1.11	0.180
	Female	83	4.37	0.46		
Overall pre-marital evaluation	Male	39	4.19	0.41	-1.40	0.670
	Female	83	4.30	0.36		

(\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

### YSQ-SF3 T-test Results

T-test analysis was conducted on the maladaptive schemas to analyze the second research question of the study. T-test results showed that there was a significant difference in subscales of emotional deprivation, failure, social isolation/alienation, enmeshment/dependency, and defectiveness according to gender. The scores of male students were found to be higher in all maladaptive schemas which differed significantly according to gender. YSQ-SF3 t-test Results are given in Table 4.

**Table 4. YSQ-SF3 T-test results (N=122)**

Subscales	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
Emotional deprivation	Male	39	1.92	.92	3.46	0.000***
	Female	83	1.43	.63		
Failure	Male	39	2.07	.98	2.23	0.000***
	Female	83	1.75	.62		
Negativity/pessimism	Male	39	2.44	1.33	0.68	0.070
	Female	83	2.29	1.04		
Social isolation/alienation	Male	39	2.46	1.21	2.51	0.000***
	Female	83	2.00	.78		
Emotional inhibition	Male	39	2.48	1.20	2.19	0.200
	Female	83	2.04	.97		
Approval seeking	Male	39	3.01	.91	-1.92	0.150
	Female	83	3.39	1.07		
Enmeshment/dependency	Male	39	1.90	.92	2.59	0.000***
	Female	83	1.56	.55		
Insufficient self-control/entitlement	Male	39	3.79	.93	0.53	0.610
	Female	83	3.69	.89		
Self-sacrifice	Male	39	2.75	.84	-1.18	0.240
	Female	83	2.96	.97		
Abandonment	Male	39	1.87	.93	1.51	0.060
	Female	83	1.64	.72		
Punitiveness	Male	39	3.48	.84	1.49	0.530
	Female	83	3.21	.96		
Defectiveness	Male	39	2.00	1.01	4.61	0.000***
	Female	83	1.37	.51		
Vulnerability to harm and illness	Male	39	2.42	1.09	1.38	0.230
	Female	83	2.16	.95		
Unrelenting standards	Male	39	2.78	1.36	0.68	0.690
	Female	83	2.61	1.31		

(\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

## Regression Analysis Findings Related to the Prediction of Pre-marital Relationship Dimensions by Maladaptive Schemas

Regression analysis findings related to the prediction of pre-marital relationship dimensions by maladaptive schemas are given in Table 5. Emotional deprivation schema predicts religious values pre-marital evaluation dimension negatively ( $B=-.17$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This schema alone explains 4% of the total variance. Defectiveness ( $B=-.30$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and emotional deprivation ( $B=-.17$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) maladaptive schemas predict communication negatively. These two schemas explain %39 of the total variance. Vulnerability to harm and illness schema predicts friendships negatively ( $B=-.25$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). This schema alone explains 18% of the total variance. Defectiveness schema predicts family relationships negatively ( $B=-.38$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). This schema alone explains 17% of the total variance. Insufficient self-control/entitlement schema predicts sexual cohesion positively ( $B= .09$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), emotional inhibition predicts negatively ( $B=-.11$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). These two schemas explain %8 of the total variance. Defectiveness ( $B=-.20$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and vulnerability to harm and illness ( $B=-.09$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) schemas predict overall pre-marital evaluation negatively. These two schemas explain %31 of the total variance.

**Table 5. Regression analysis findings related to the prediction of pre-marital relationship dimension by maladaptive schemas**

Religious values	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	4.43	0.14		31.43	0.000***
Emotional deprivation	-.17	0.08	-.19	-2.15	0.030*
n=122, R=.19, R <sup>2</sup> =.04, F=4.62, p<0.05					
Communication	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	5.15	0.09		54.62	0.000***
Defectiveness	-.30	0.07	-.43	-4.63	0.000***
Emotional deprivation	-.17	0.06	-.25	-2.68	0.000***
n=122, R=.62, R <sup>2</sup> =.39, F=37.58, p<0.001					
Friendships	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	4.71	0.12		40.02	0.000***
Vulnerability to harm and illness	-.25	0.05	-.43	-5.21	0.000***
n=122, R=.43, R <sup>2</sup> =.18, F=27.13, p<0.001					
Family relationships	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	4.81	0.13		36.26	0.000***
Defectiveness	-.38	0.08	-.42	-4.99	0.000***
n=122, R=.42, R <sup>2</sup> =.17, F=24.95, p<0.001					
Sexual cohesion	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	4.31	0.16		26.69	0.000***
Emotional inhibition	-.11	0.04	-.28	-2.97	0.000***
Insufficient self-control/entitlement	.09	0.05	.19	1.99	0.050*
n=122, R=.28, R <sup>2</sup> =.08, F=4.90, p<0.05					
Overall pre-marital evaluation	B	SH	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	4.77	0.08		62.35	0.000***
Defectiveness	-.20	0.05	-.39	-4.27	0.000***
Vulnerability to harm and illness	-.09	0.04	-.23	-2.47	0.020*
n=122, R=.55, R <sup>2</sup> =.31, F=26.26, p<0.05					

(\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

## Discussion

This study is conducted to determine the effects of early maladaptive schemas on the pre-marital romantic relationship evaluation process among Turkish university students. The results reveal that maladaptive schemas of emotional deprivation,

defectiveness, vulnerability to harm, emotional inhibition and insufficient self-control predict the various dimensions of the process of evaluating pre-marital relationships.

When considering the PRAS t-test findings, no subscale showed any significant difference according to gender except for sexual cohesion, female students evaluate more positive their relationships and their points were found higher than male students. It indicates that Turkish female students have more positive view over their romantic relationships than male students. This can be explained with traditional gender roles. The culture in which the individual lives affect how she/he thinks, feels and behaves and the culture socially constructs his/her personality (Powell & Greenkouse, 2010). Turkish culture promotes marriage and sees it as one of the most important developmental tasks in transition to adulthood. Pre-marital dating relationships are discouraged especially for female young individuals. This social pressure directs females to put more emphasis on forming a marriage regardless of relationship satisfaction. Ayan (2014) and Alptekin (2014) explained that female students have more positive attitudes towards benevolent sexism which means a patronizing attitude that treats women as needing men's help, protection, and provision. In Turkey, male university students are more sexually active than females and male students acknowledge premarital sexual experience as normal (Pinar et al., 2009). This social allowance allows them to feel stronger in the field of sexuality and to explore this area more.

YSQ-SF3 t-test findings indicates that emotional deprivation, failure, social isolation/alienation, enmeshment/dependency, and defectiveness maladaptive schemas significantly differ depending on the gender. Except for the social isolation/alienation schema, male students' schema points were found to be higher. There are studies reporting that male students have more maladaptive schemas (Colakoglu, 2012; Ozbas, Sayin & Cosar, 2012; Saygili, 2014). Social isolation/alienation schema is related to fear of being excluded from a group or community and feeling isolated (Young et al., 2003). It points out the lack of self-confidence to construct healthy interpersonal relationships. Over protective parenting styles in Turkey female students had been exposure may diminish their inner motivation to be a part of a social group.

Emotional deprivation schema predicts religious values dimension negatively. Emotional deprivation means one's belief that his/her emotional expectations will not be satisfied enough by others (Young et al., 2003). Religious values dimension explains the situation that one's religious and spiritual values are respected and cared by his/her partner. The lack of respect and care may trigger emotional deprivation schema and this can confirm the schema's mechanism. Similarly, Kebritchi and Mohammadkhani (2016) found that emotional deprivation schema has negative correlation with religious orientation among young married couples.

Defectiveness and emotional deprivation schemas predicts communication negatively. Defectiveness is the feeling of being irritating, bad, unwanted, worthless, and useless in important matters. Both defectiveness and emotional deprivation schemas belong to the disconnection schema domain (Young et al., 2003). These schemas are strong structures that inhibit communication process. The schema of defectiveness may withdraw the individual from the communication process to avoid any possible negative evaluation.

Vulnerability to harm and illness schema is found to be a stronger negative predictor of friendships dimension which explains partners' evaluations and adjustments of each other's friends. This schema is an exaggerated fear of being exposure to a catastrophe and not being protected from it. This catastrophe may be medical, emotional, social, or external (Young et al., 2003). This schema can force a person to stay away from his or her partner's circle of friends to stick his or her own circle or just to the partner. While restricting social circle, this schema may strengthen mutual commitment (Mohammadi & Soleymani, 2017).

Emotional inhibition schema predicts sexual cohesion negatively while insufficient self-control/entitlement predicts positively. In Kebritchi's and Mohammadkhani's (2016) study, both schemas showed negative correlation with sexual relationship.

Gomes and Nobre (2012) found that failure and enmeshment/dependency maladaptive schemas are negatively related to sexual functioning. Emotional deprivation schema may prevent the individual from explaining his / her sexual demands, desires and dissatisfactions to the partner. On the other hand, insufficient self-control/entitlement schema may act as a mechanism of satisfying sexual demands and desires unilaterally in Turkish culture.

Lastly, considering overall pre-marital evaluation, defectiveness and vulnerability to harm and illness schemas both predict negatively. Vulnerability to harm and illness schema may cause the individual to have the feeling and thought that the marriage may be a dangerous and harmful situation and therefore the individual may develop negative feelings towards his/her partner. Individuals with strong defectiveness schema on the other hand may have the idea that their partners see them inferior and not capable of continuing the relationship in order to surrender the schema. This surrender may produce negative feelings and emotions both towards the partner and the relationship.

### **Limitations**

In this study, the equality of the number of gender has not been reached at the planned level. This was an important limitation of the study. Another limitation was that most participants are from department of psychological counseling and guidance which means participants have higher level of self awareness and psychological cognition. In the further studies which will be conducted on similar issues, it is recommended that more participants be taken into the study and that gender distribution is taken into consideration and also participant from different fields and departments will represent more comparable data.

### **Conflict of Interest**

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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