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Research Article

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The Precursor Relationship between Married Individuals’ Values, Attachment and Appearance Anxiety

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate the precursor relationship between values, attachment styles, and appearance anxiety of married individuals. Structural equation modeling analysis has been carried out in order to test the relationship among values, attachment, and social appearance anxiety variables in the research. Structural equation modeling analysis has been carried out with AMOS 19 program. In the research, the “Personal Information Form” to collect the necessary data, the “Values Scale” to determine the values of married individuals, “Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory-I” to determine the attachment styles of married individuals, and “Social Appearance Anxiety” scales to determine appearance anxiety were used. Percentage and frequency calculations of the collected data have been created with the SPSS 18 package program. According to the analysis results obtained from the study, it has been seen that there is a meaningful negative relationship when the precursor relationships between values and appearance anxiety are examined. In other words, it has been concluded that as the values of individuals increase, their appearance concerns will decrease. Additionally, when the precursor relationships between attachment styles of married individuals and appearance anxiety are examined, it has been determined that there is a positive linear relationship. Accordingly, it has been determined that individuals' attachment styles will positively affect their appearance anxiety.

Key Words

Values • Attachment styles • Social appearance anxiety

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The family is an institution that is accepted as an indispensable and common value by societies with roots in the past, ensures the continuity of generations and supports the socialization process of people (Popenoe, 1982). Satir (2016) defines the family as a miniature of the world. We only need to study the family to understand the world; issues such as power, intimacy, autonomy, trust and communication skills are the basis of our way of life on Earth. Marriage has an important effect on the constitution of the family, which is one of the cornerstones of society (Çelik and İnanç, 2009). Marriage is a more special term than family. Marriage is a "contract" that involves two people of the opposite sex living together, sharing their experiences, having a child and raising her while family is referred to a group or association. It is, socially, a form of legal relationship in which the "state" has control, rights and authority provides a certain status to the children to be born, and binds them as husband and wife (Özgüven, 2017).

Marriage, which has existed throughout human history, has preserved its basic structure until today and has never lost its feature of being an important turning point of human life (Ondaş, 2007). Marriage is a social order with emotional, behavioral and biological dimensions although it is defined in different ways from society to society, from culture to culture (Kışlak, 1999). Just as the rights and responsibilities of individuals in marriage are determined by social rules, traditions and beliefs, they are protected by laws (Özgüven, 2017). Transferring the values of the society we live in to future generations starts with the family established with marriage. For this reason, it is very important that marriage is built on solid basis (Çatal, 2019). Each member of the family has positive and negative values that they contribute to the family. What values the individual has is important here (Satir, 2016).

“The basic principle of the family home is peace.” (Nirun, 1994). Spouses must love and respect, care and value each other as human beings and spouses in order to ensure peace (Çagatay, 1991). Married individuals who share each other's feelings and thoughts with their spouses make each other happier and can lead a more harmonious family life (Yıldırım, 1992). Marriage is the human's biological requirement. In male-female relationships, the man gives love and wants sex; the woman gives sexuality, asks for love and affection. Due to their psychological nature, women keep sexuality in the background because they attach more importance to being valued and meeting their emotional needs (Tarhan, 2019). In addition to the expectations of women and men from marriage, their marriage values also differ. In other words, individuals form the degree and quality of their relationship with their spouses according to the values they have. When marriage is evaluated as 'sharing life', it is thought that the similar or common values that shape the lives of the spouses who are the partners of this sharing will have an impact on the satisfaction they will get from marriage (Çatal, 2019).

The science of psychology aims to find the root causes of human behavior (Cüceloğlu, 2016). From this point of view, the importance of the term of value in psychology is understood not whether it is based on objective elements, but whether it is a guiding factor in human behavior (Güngör, 2010). Values, which have fundamental importance in explaining and describing human behaviors, are closely related to the behaviors and attitudes of individuals as well as their emotions and thoughts (Dilmaç, 2007). Values carry the characteristics that make humans human and direct one's behavior with beliefs just as they contain the basic features that distinguish human beings from other living creatures (Ulusoy and Dilmaç, 2018).

Value is a desirable behavior of people, a goal that guides them in arranging their priorities in a person or a group's life, and may vary from situation to situation (Lönnqvist et al., 2009). Values of the individual are personal values such as love, respect, honesty, fairness, open-mindedness, commitment, and being able to control, which emerges in interpersonal relationships (Kuçuradi, 1995).

Values have importance in establishing and maintaining relationships based on love, respect, trust and self-sacrifice with the close or distant environment in which people live at any age, reorganizing them when their mental health deteriorates, and meeting the society and the individual at a healthy common point. It unites individuals around common feelings and reinforces social peace (Safi, 2018). At the same time, when we know the values of individuals, communities and different cultures, we can predict their attitudes and behaviors to a large extent (Başaran, 1992).

The marriage of two adults with the intend of creating a family brings together their values and expectations. People's value judgments change over time to suit their coexistence (Minuchin and Fishman, 1996). According to attachment theory, people's emotional support, care needs and sexual satisfaction needs are met by social relationships. We have specific signals in our social environment to meet these needs, and individuals who respond to or exhibit these cues are attractive to us. The most basic need, "felt security," is controlled by attachment, and in finding answer this life-long need, a potential partner's signals must be similar to ours (Hazan and Shaver, 1994).

Attachment is the strong emotional bond that individuals develop for others they assume important and special (Çelik, 2004). The desire to form emotional bonds provides an effective attachment system for infants' development and is essential for their survival. The attachment system enables the child to establish a strong physical closeness with the caretaker, thus it creates an opportunity to explore the environment while being protected from potential dangers (Sümer and Güngör, 1999). Bowlby (1969) states that attachment is a process from the cradle to the grave, and the mental models formed at an early age continue to operate without much change in adulthood (see, Erben and Çalışkan, 2015).

When the nature of romantic relationships is taken into account, every romantic relationship is an attachment process, and the choices of partner and marriage decision are affected by attachment styles. Since attachment is related to the expectations and beliefs of the individual from himself and the other person, it will affect both the marriage and the choice of spouse, which is the premarital stage (Solmuş, 2010). Attachment styles that develop to caregivers in the first years of human life and attachment styles established in adulthood in a romantic relationship are similar to each other (Gündoğan, 2015).

Hazan and Shaver (1987), who studied adult attachment styles, applied the classification made by Ainsworth et al. (1978) to adults and suggested that "secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant" styles are also seen in romantic relationships (Günaydın et al., 2005). Many studies have been conducted on adult attachment styles under the leadership of this study. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed the quadruple attachment model by addressing the basic propositions of attachment theory, mental models (self and others), and anxiety and avoidance dimensions in attachment with Brennan et al. (1998). There is a relationship between the anxiety dimension and the self-model;

and between the avoidance dimension and the others model. Secure attachment and anxious attachment styles are low; Fearful attachment and preoccupied attachment represent high levels of anxiety (Sümer, 2006).

Vertue (2003) on the studies of Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) and Brennan et al. (1998) on the effects of our attachment behaviors on the anxiety and avoidance dimensions of individuals, argues that different approaches explaining social anxiety do not provide information about the development of social anxiety and that attachment theory can offer an explanation for social anxiety by bringing together social anxiety theories in a coherent way. Social anxiety is based on a wide variety of causes. While feeling anxiety, fear and discomfort in social environments, the person deliberately avoids those environments and is afraid of being negatively evaluated by others (Erkan, 2002).

According to Bowlby (2018), the basis of adult anxiety is based on childhood experiences and attachment processes are important in understanding anxiety. In this context, it is thought that social appearance anxiety, which is a type of social anxiety, may be related to attachment. According to Erikson's (1968) psychosocial development theory, in the developmental period called isolation versus intimacy, the appearance anxiety of individuals may affect their lives and mental health more negatively (see, Rosenthal et al., 1981). According to Erikson (1963, 1965, 1983), the developmental task of individuals at this stage includes finding oneself in another person and devotion to someone; that is, marriage issues and marriage take an important place in the individual's life in this period. The individual who completes his development task in a positive way performs a healthy attachment process by trusting himself and other individuals. S/he gives them love - takes love from them (Senemoğlu, 2013). At this stage of development, physical attractiveness, which plays a decisive role in establishing intimacy with other individuals, is important for individuals. Therefore, if individuals have appearance anxiety, they may experience problems during their developmental period (Makas and Çelik, 2018).

Social appearance anxiety is the fear of being negatively evaluated because of one's appearance (Hart et al., 2008). Appearance anxiety is evaluated as a result of negative body images of individuals about their own body and appearance (Doğan, 2010). Individual's development of personality; features such as increased self-confidence, being a social person, being mentally, physically and psychologically healthy are the products of the individual's body image (Öksüz, 2012). Socio-cultural attitudes and values can also affect one's body image, and one's body image may be incompatible with its real structure (Kundakçı, 2005).

Marriage is a structure that includes various dynamics and it has an important place in the lives of individuals to reach both physiological and psychological satisfaction. When the studies in the literature are examined, although studies on the values, attachment styles and social appearance anxiety of married individuals are separately found, it has not been found that these three psychological concepts are examined together. Accordingly, it is thought that this research will fill this gap in the literature and will be important for future studies.

Method

Research Model

In the study, it is aimed to determine the precursor relationship between values, attachment and appearance anxiety in married individuals. The relational survey model, which is a sub-type of the general survey model, will be used for the research. Correlational model is a model used to determine the existence or degree of covariance between two or more variables (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014).

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 355 adults, 265 females and 90 males. The age range of the study group is between 21 and 64 years old.

Data Collection Tools

Personel Information Tool

In the form developed by the researcher, the demographic characteristics of the participant, including gender, age, place of residence, income status information, duration of marriage, degree of intimacy with their spouses, the number of children they have, the status of family approval of marriage, and the status of living in their house other than spouse and children has been studied.

Scale of Values

The scale has been developed by Dilmaç et al. (2014), and it has 10 Likert-type (0: Not important at all, 9: Very important), 39 value expressions and 9 sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimensions of the scale have been determined as;

- a. Social Values
- b. Career Values
- c. Intellectual Values
- d. Spirit
- e. Materialistic Values
- f. Human Dignity
- g. Romantic Values
- h. Freedom
- i. Generosity

The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 0, and the highest score is 9. The higher score student gets from the scale, the more importance person attaches to values, and it shows that this is indispensable in her life.

When the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency and reliability parameters of the scale are calculated, according to each sub-dimension; it has been calculated as 90 for “Social Values”, 80 for “Career Values”, 78 for “Intellectual Values”, 81 for “Spirituality”, 78 for “Materialistic Values”, 61 for “Human Dignity”, “Romantic Values” 66 for “Freedom” and 63 for “Generosity”. As a result, in the light of these data, it has been concluded that the Values Scale is a valid and reliable measurement tool with its first psychometric findings (Dilmaç et al., 2014).

Inventory of Experiences in Close Relationships -I (ECRI-I)

Attachment styles have been tested with the Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory-I in the study. ECRI-I, which has been developed by Brennan and his friends (1998) aims to measure anxiety and avoidance, which are sub-dimensions of attachment in close relationships. The scale consists of 36 items in total, and the anxiety dimension is measured with 18 items and the avoidance dimension with 18 items. In this scale, participants rated the extent to which each item describes themselves on a seven-point scale (1 = does not describe me at all, 7 = completely describes me). ECRI-I has been used in various researches and postgraduate theses. The factor structure of the scale has been tested by Sümer (2006); two dimensions have been obtained as anxious and avoidant attachment. As a result of the study, it has been found that both dimensions have high reliability parameters (.86 for anxiety and .90 for avoidance).

Social Appearance Anxiety Scale

Social Appearance Anxiety Scale (SAAS) has been used in the study to determine the appearance anxiety levels of married individuals. The Social Appearance Anxiety Scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of 16 items. First item of the scale was coded in reverse. High scores from SAAS indicate that appearance anxiety is high. It is a scale developed by Hart et al. (2008) to measure an individual's emotional, cognitive and behavioral concerns about his or her appearance. The validity and reliability study of the Turkish adaptation of the scale was carried out by Doğan (2010). 340 university students (143 girls, 197 boys) participated in the study. The Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale Short Form (FNES) was used to test the criterion validity. Explanatory and confirmatory factor analysis was performed to reveal the factor structure of SAAS. Factor analysis results revealed that the scale had a one-dimensional structure. It has been found out that The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency parameter for SAAS is .93, the test-retest reliability parameter is 0.85, and the reliability parameter calculated by the test-half method is 0.88. It has been concluded that the item-total correlation parameters of Turkish version of the scale ranged from 0.32 to 0.82. A correlation of 0.60 has been found between SAAS and FNES. Analyzes have showed that SAAS has sufficient validity and reliability values on Turkish university students (Doğan, 2010).

Data Collection and Analysis

In the data collection of the study, the "Personal Information Form" created by the researcher to obtain the demographic information of the married individuals in the sample group, the "Values Scale" to determine the values they have, "Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory-I to determine attachment styles, and "Social Appearance Anxiety Inventory" were used to detect appearance concerns. It is aimed to reveal the precursor relationships between the values of married individuals and their attachment and appearance anxiety. For this purpose, the analysis

has been carried out using the "Structural Equation Modeling" AMOS 19 Program. The main purpose of structural equation modeling is to test the proposed hypothesis and reveal the relationship between latent variables (Sümer, 2000).

Results

The final model ($X^2 = 205.89$, $df = 85$, $p < .01$) includes two exogenous data (values and attachment styles) and one endogenous (social appearance anxiety) data. All of the paths shown in the model have been found to be statistically meaningful. When the goodness of fit values in Table 4.1 are examined, it has been seen that the model is compatible at an acceptable level. All relationships in the model have high values and are statistically meaningful ($p < .05$).

Table 1

Statistical Values Regarding the Fit of Structural Equation Model

<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Successful fit</i>	<i>Acceptable Fit</i>	<i>Fit values of the model</i>
(X^2/sd)	≤ 3	$\leq 4-5$	2.42
RMSEA	≤ 0.05	0.06-0.08	.06
SRMR	≤ 0.05	0.06-0.08	.06
NFI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	.92
CFI	≥ 0.97	≥ 0.95	.95
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	.93
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	.90
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	.94

When the fit values in Table 4.1 are examined, it has been found that $X^2/sd = 2.42$, $RMSEA = .06$, $SRMR = .06$, $NFI = .92$, $CFI = .95$, $GFI = .93$, $AGFI = .90$ and $TLI = .94$. According to these values, it is understood that the model has an acceptable level of goodness of fit values (Bollen, 1989; Browne and Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2010; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; Tanaka and Huba, 1985). The tested single factor model is shown in Figure 4.1. All paths shown in the model are meaningful at the $p < .05$ level.

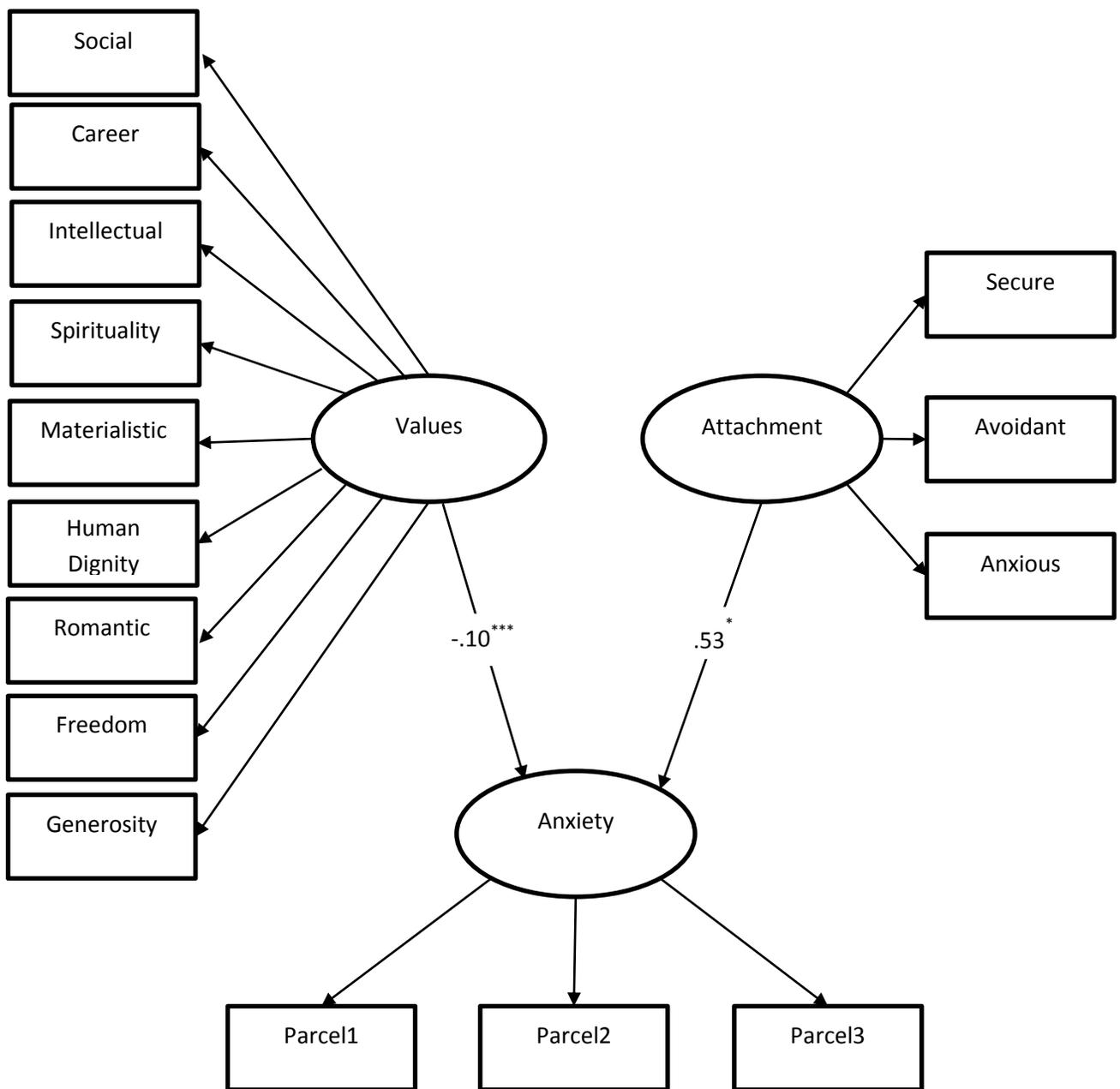


Figure 1: Path analysis of the model. *** $p < .001$, * $p < .0$

Table 2

Model for Precursor Relationships between Values, Attachment Styles, and Appearance Anxiety

Precursor Variable	Dependent Variable	Total Effect ^a	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Standard Error	Critical Value
Value	Appearance Anxiety	-.10	-.10	0	.23	-1.98***
Attachment	Appearance Anxiety	.53	.53	0	.04	8.76*

^aTotal effect = Direct effect + Indirect effect, *** $p < .001$, * $p < 0.05$.

In the model, it has been seen that individuals' attachment styles were a variable affecting their appearance anxiety ($t = 8.76$, $p < 0.05$). The correlation parameter value for this variable is $\beta = 0.53$. When the precursor relationships between individuals' attachment styles and appearance anxiety are examined, it has been determined that there is a positive linear relationship. Accordingly, it is understood that individuals' attachment styles will positively affect their appearance anxiety.

Discussion

In this section, the results obtained in consequence of examining the precursor relationships between values, attachment and appearance anxiety of married individuals who constitute the study group of the research are discussed. When other studies in the field are examined, it has been observed that there are limited studies in terms of subject and data collection tools. In this context, the research questions to be answered in order to achieve the main purpose of the research are discussed within the framework of the literature with the results obtained from analyzes. In the research, a three-variable model was created with married individuals. When the findings are examined, there are two exogenous, values (social, career, intellectual, spirituality, materialism, human dignity, romantic, freedom, generosity) and attachment styles (anxiety and avoidance) and an endogenous (appearance anxiety) data from the ways shown in the model obtained. Each of them has high values and has been found to be meaningful. According to these values obtained from the study model, it is understood that the model has an acceptable level of goodness of fit values.

In the study, when the precursor relationship between the values of married individuals and appearance anxiety is considered, a negative meaningful relationship has been found. In other words, to put it differently, it has been concluded that as the values of individuals increase, their appearance anxiety will decrease. When similar studies are examined in the literature, the concept of appearance anxiety is a new concept, but the researches are quite limited. At the same time, no studies have been found about the concepts of values and social appearance anxiety with married individuals. [Seki and Dilmaç \(2015\)](#) have found that there is a negative relationship between social appearance anxiety in adolescents and the human values scale sub-dimensions of responsibility, friendship/friendship, respect, honesty, and tolerance. [Seki and Dilmaç \(2015\)](#) showed similarity with their study,

although the results of our study were applied to different age groups and groups in different roles. Likewise, [Yücesoy \(2019\)](#) has found a negative linear relationship between values and social appearance anxiety in her study with university students on values, social appearance anxiety and irrational beliefs. In other words, it has been determined that as the values of individuals increase, their social appearance anxiety will decrease. The study of [Yücesoy \(2019\)](#) and the results of our study support each other, and it is seen that values are an effective variable in predicting social appearance anxiety. [Hart et al. \(1989\)](#) considered social appearance anxiety as a kind of social anxiety and defined it as anxiety arising from the evaluation of the physical appearance of individuals by others. In this context, when literature studies are reviewed, [Baş and Dilmaç \(2019\)](#) have found that social anxiety decreased as the values of individuals increased in their study with adolescents. [Mert \(2019\)](#) examined the effect of values and perfectionism on predicting social anxiety in her study with university students and found that the most important variable in predicting social anxiety was values. He found a negative linear relationship between values and social anxiety, which supports other studies. When the results of the studies in the literature in which value and social appearance anxiety are examined together, it is understood that values and social appearance anxiety are two interrelated concepts and that the values possessed affect social appearance anxiety. In the light of all these findings and the results obtained from the study, the existence of human values is in the direction that individuals will reduce to compare themselves with each other and to evaluate themselves accordingly. The results of the study are consistent with the idea that individuals will experience less anxiety when they are in a positive mood and can look at the other person in a tolerant way. Thus, it can be said that the findings obtained from the study we conducted with married individuals and the literature studies support each other.

In the study, when the precursor relationship between attachment styles and appearance anxiety of married individuals is considered, it has been seen that attachment styles affect appearance anxiety and have a positive linear relationship. When similar studies in the literature are examined, the limited number of studies and the absence of studies in married individuals make our study unique. Considering the studies on attachment and social appearance anxiety variables; [Aktaş \(2020\)](#), in his study with adolescents, has found that there is a moderately meaningful and negative relationship between the mean score of attachment to the mother and the mean score of appearance anxiety. When the findings we obtained are evaluated, a positive relationship has been observed between attachment styles and appearance anxiety in our study. However, [Aktaş \(2020\)](#) has found a negative relationship between attachment styles and appearance anxiety. The reason for the difference in the results of these two studies is that one of them is based on the mother and father attachment score, and the high score obtained from the used inventory represents secure attachment. That is, as the attachment style is secure, social appearance anxiety will decrease. However, our study is based on the anxious and avoidant attachment style, and as the scores obtained from these attachment styles decrease, social appearance anxiety will also decrease. The difference in the results obtained here may be due to the study with different groups. However, [Sümer and Şendağ \(2009\)](#) determined that being securely attached to parents is effective in a positive perception of physical appearance's formation of in middle childhood. The study of [Sümer and Şendağ \(2009\)](#) is similar to our research, although it has been applied to different age groups. As a result of the one-way analysis of variance between social appearance anxiety and attachment styles, [Temel \(2018\)](#) has found that social appearance anxiety differed meaningfully according to attachment styles. It has been found that the social

appearance anxiety of the securely attached participants was meaningfully higher than the fearful and indifferently attached participants. The lack of similarity between [Temel \(2018\)](#)'s study and the results of our research can be explained by the conclusion that different results can be obtained in the studies of the relationship between attachment styles and social appearance anxiety, and that more studies should be conducted on these two variables in the field. Since appearance anxiety is considered as a sub-type of social anxiety, studies on social anxiety and attachment in the literature have also been examined. In his study on the relationship between social anxiety and attachment styles, [Karaşar \(2014\)](#) has found a negative relationship between secure attachment and social avoidance, a positive relationship between fearful attachment and social avoidance, a positive relationship between fearful attachment and social anxiety, and a positive relationship between preoccupied attachment and social anxiety. According to the research findings of [Dilmaç et al. \(2009\)](#), trait anxiety scores of individuals with preoccupied and fearful attachment have been found to be significantly higher than individuals with secure attachment style. In addition, the trait anxiety mean scores of the fearfully attached students were found to be meaningfully higher than the indifferently attached students. [Zörer \(2015\)](#) has concluded that participants with obsessive, fearful and dismissive attachment have higher social anxiety scores than participants with secure attachment. He has also found that the obsessive-attached participants have higher social anxiety scores than the dismissive-attached participants. When the social anxiety studies and the findings we obtained are evaluated, the similarity of the results supports our study. In many of the studies in the literature, a significant relationship has been found between individuals' attachment styles and appearance anxiety, and it has been concluded that individuals' attachment styles predict their social appearance anxiety. As a result, there is a significant relationship between individuals' attachment and social appearance anxiety, and it can be said that the fact that our study was conducted with married individuals would make an important contribution to the field.

Ethic

This study 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. Informed consent was obtained from all students.

Author Contributions

All of the authors contributed equally in the article.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in the research.

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