

How the attachment styles associated with Student Alienation: The Mediation Role of Emotional Well-being

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Abstract

The present study examined emotional well-being as a mediator between parental attachment (mother and father) and student alienation. A total of 227 high school students from the city of Ankara completed the self-report measures of parental attachment, positive and negative affect, and alienation. Using structural equation modeling, a model was examined in which emotional well-being mediated the link between parental attachment and alienation feeling of students. Results from structural equation modeling analyses indicated that emotional well-being fully mediated the relationship between attachment to parents (both mother and father) and student alienation. These findings suggested that parental attachment has an effect to reduce feeling of alienation by promoting high level of emotional well-being.

Keywords: Attachment, parents, emotional well-being, adolescents, student alienation

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Introduction

Attachment Theory points out the importance of the relation between parents and children, and emphasises the importance of attachment relationship which starts and develops from pre-attachment stage the physical and emotional development of children (Bowlby, 1969). The basic needs of children such as being loved, feeling safe against dangers, and being fed are met with this relationship.

During the first years of the child's basic need is to establish a trustworthy relationship with the caregivers, mostly mother. In this stage the child tends to form and run a close attachment relationship with his or her mother to survive biologically. Bowlby (1973) states that keeping the mother emotionally close with certain behaviors such as crying, smiling, and following the child forms the attachment. Considering the healthy development of the child, the tenderness of the mother towards the child provides a great deal of contribution to the child's perception of himself and his environment. According to Bowlby (1988), it depends mainly on the quality of the relationship between the mother and the child whether the child develops a secure or insecure attachment. Child's perceiving himself as a precious being and his environment as an appreciating secure environment is directly related to whether or not his needs are met properly. This child starts to form the basic security or secure attachment feeling and reflects this security feeling he has developed towards his environment as well. Insecure attachment, on the other hand, develops in early years of childhood as a result of stretched or coercive relations between the child and the parents. In insecure attachments, there are cases in which physical and/or emotional needs of the child are not met properly and timely. The children who have developed insecure attachment towards their parents cannot discover their environment and have difficulty in developing the feelings of being independent and competent (Bowlby, 1988; Lopez & Brennan, 2000).

Though traditional attachment theory emphasises the importance of the attachment pattern between the mother and the child in early childhood, contemporary attachment theorists and researchers state that attachment is a process that continues throughout the lifespan. In other words, the attachment relationship that maintains its effect on the individual's mental health in transition to the adolescence and adulthood is considered to be a life script that prolongs lifelong (Bartholomew, 1993). Today many researchers studying the role of attachment assert that the models developed by the child for himself and others according to the mother's responses to him or her in early childhood constitute a model for the relations with close contacts in his or her adolescence and adulthood (Allen et al. 2002; Ducharme, Doyle and Markiewicz, 2002).

During adolescence, two important and different dimensions are important for the adolescents in their lives, but it's hard to separate from each other, the relationship between family and school life that appear in the evaluation, can be associated with adolescent mental health and well-being. It can be thought that secure attachment can smooth the way the adolescents adapt the school life and environment, and that insecure attachment can cause adolescents bump into a number of difficulties in their education and school lives. In this study, considering the perceived positive or negative affects as a mediator variable, direct or indirect effect of attachment to mother and father on high school students' alienation feelings to school environment was examined. In other words, the main aim of this study was to find out the relation between adolescents' attachment to their parents and subjective well-being and the interaction of this relation with school alienation.

Subjective Well-Being and Attachment

It is clear that today many positive personality traits, beside psychopathology based concepts (depression, anxiety, personality disorders, etc.), such as self-respect, self-realization, self-acceptance are described and studied widely (Laible, Carlo, and Roesch, 2004; Shogren et al. 2006). However, it is clearly seen that, as a new approach, positive psychology needs high-level conceptual structure to describe existing positive personality traits. Recently, subjective well-being is one of the most

emphasised conceptual structures in the literature. Diener, Lucas and Oishi (2002) stated that this variable, which can also be described as happiness, can be dealt with the help of two basic structures. The first one is emotional well-being which comprises of positive affect and negative affect, and the second one is life satisfaction which contains the individual's thoughts about his life and represents the cognitive side of the well-being. The researches showed that subjective well-being has close relation with coping (Matheny et al., 2002), stress (Cotton, Dollard, and Jonge, 2002), self-acceptance (Chamberlain and Haaga, 2001), personality (Hills and Argyle, 2001), adaptive behavior in school (Kaplan and Maehr, 1999), and self-esteem (Cheng and Furnam, 2003).

The main indicators of positive mental health and the positive personality traits are determined in early childhood has led some researchers to examine the relation between attachment and healthy development and well-being. Along with this view, the number of studies on the relation between attachment and well-being in adolescents has increased notably. In close examination of these studies, it strikes that attachment style of adolescents (secure-insecure) has close relation with some variables, such as identity development, competence, self-esteem, adjustment, depression and loneliness levels. For instance, in his study with early adolescents, Coleman (2003) examined the relation between social competence expectations of students and their attachment levels to their parents and peer relations. His study showed that, besides that the participating early adolescents had high scores of attachment levels to their parents and best friends, attachment to father was influential on attachment to peers with respect to competence expectations. In his study on the effects of attachment to parents in adolescents on the social and emotional loneliness, Löker (1999) examined a group of 383 individuals aged 12 to 28. It was found out that, there was a positive and high level of relation between attachment levels to parents and peers and their perceived physical attractiveness degree. In addition, the study also showed that there was a negative correlation between physical symptoms, social loneliness and emotional loneliness levels variables and attachment levels of individuals to their parents and peers. In examination of the style of attachments and results of the study, it was seen that the adolescents with secure attachment could express their feelings more easily, and they experienced less conflicts in their relations with their parents and peers (Ducharme, Doyle and Markiewicz, 2002). Furthermore, adolescent who perceived the support from parents in adolescence achieved the identity development positively (Allen, et al, 1994). On the other hand, adolescents with insecure attachment were reported to be reluctant for self-disclosure and establishing intimacy (Allen et al. 2002), with low self-esteem (Laible, Carlo and Roesch, 2004).

As a result, it is striking that the relation between attachment and subjective emotional well-being is studied quite frequently in recent researches. In this study, the subjective emotional well-being in the relationship between attachment and alienation is taken as a mediating variable.

Attachment and Student Alienation

The adolescents in a rapid growth may feel indifferent, remote, and sometimes a "stranger" against their families, environment, school activities, and peer groups. The unfavorable cases that adolescents may experience may be listed as not being attached to school and schooling environment (Shochet, Symth& Homel, 2007), being uninterested towards teaching and teaching activities (Case, 2008), terminating education process (Marcus & Sanders-Reio, 2001), and leaving school (Finn, 1989). Another remarkable unfavorable case is about the difficulties students experience in expressing themselves, problems in adapting schooling environment, and being unable to focus on educational activities (Oerlemans and Jenkins, 1998). As a result of this, besides being unable to feel belonging to school, diverging from school activities, and feeling weak, they may feel indifferent to, far away from, and angry with people and their environment (Staples, 2000). Bronfenbrenner (1974) calls this state of disconnection from other students and educational activities "alienation".

With a close examination of the literature on student alienation from education, it can be seen that various factors may cause this alienation. Describing four dimensions of "schooling alienation" Mau (1992) underlines the cases in which students experience alienation about these four dimensions. The first dimension, powerlessness, is about student's overvaluing some targets and not expecting to

reach them. Mau (1992) states that the students may experience powerless when they want to pass with merit but have low grades. The second dimension is meaningless. Students experience meaninglessness, when they cannot relate the school activities to their future aspirations. In other words, it is the feeling students experience when school curriculum and subject syllabuses do not prepare them for the future jobs (Mau 1992; Oerlemans and Jenkins, 1998). The third dimension is normlessness. Brickman and Bulman describe the state that students reject the school rules and regulations established for them (from Mau,1992). The students who cannot cope with academic activities, and feel fringy and out of educational process are usually unable to behave and participate in the school rules and regulations. The fourth and the last dimension is social estrangement. Seaman describes this state as lack of integration with friends network or minimum participation to an organization (from Mau, 1992).

Considered with attachment theory, these unfavorable cases in education students may experience are described as not a fear from school but a fear for being deprived of the people they love or a fear for being away from or losing the environment they put faith in (Bowlby, 1973; 261). In a close examination of the literature on the relation between student behaviors and attachment to education environments, many studies can be encountered on the relation between the fear of being away from the people and environment where basic reliance is experienced, and school alienation. For instance, Avazier, Sagi, Resnick and Gini (2002) studied the relation between attachment pattern in early childhood and children's latter school and educational activities. The research findings showed that while attachment to father didn't have any effect, attachment to mother was an important factor on the child's academic skills and emotional awareness. Another study (Granot & Maysel 2001) examined 113 4th and 5th grade students for the relation between secure attachment and schooling process. The findings showed a meaningful correlation between attachment to mother and school activities, emotional development and adaptation to school. The researchers pointed out the importance of attachment on the school activities and adaptation process. Besides, in their research on attachment in adolescence and attachment of adolescents to school and its environment, Shochet, Symthand Homel (2007) found out that the relation between adolescents' attachment and their perception of school environment is not in one direction. However, it is commented that adolescents' type of attachment determines how they perceive school environment, and this has an important influence on their attachment to school.

Some researches in recent years (Wilkinson, 2004) criticized the holistic perception of attachment to parents instead of taking them into consideration separately as attachment to mother and attachment to father. Researches claimed that one dimensional view of the matter made it impossible to compare the different effects of the sources, because mothers and fathers had different roles in the lives of adolescents, and though fathers spent less time with children in infancy and childhood than mothers, they provided a great deal of contribution in the development of adolescents (Lieberman, Doyle and Markiewicz, 1999; Kocayörük and Sümer, 2009). Thus this study, taking emotional well-being perceptions of adolescents as mediating variable searched the direct and indirect effects of adolescent's attachment to parents on their subjective well-being and alienation to school and suggested a model for this research (Fig. 1). In other words, the main target in this study was to find out the relation between adolescents' attachment to their parents and their subjective well-being, and the interaction of this relation with alienation to school.

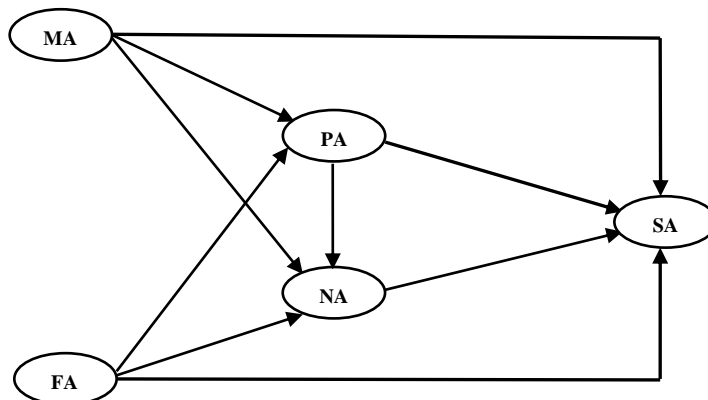


Figure 1. Theoretical Model for Attachment Emotional well-being and student alienation
Note: MA=Mother Attachment, FA= Father Attachment, PA=Positive Affect, NA= Negative Affect, SA= Student Alienation

Method

Participants

Three hundred and fifteen 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (M age=16.02; SD =1.07) studying in two different kind of schools (Anatolian High School and Classical High School) in two different counties of Ankara (Cankaya and Mamak) participated in the survey. Eighty-eight of them were excluded from the assessment because they did not answer any or most of the sub-items in the survey, and consequently, this study was completed with 227 participant students. Participants were approximately equally split by gender (126 females, 101 males).

Instrument

The Student Alienation Scale (SAS): The SAS was developed by Mau (1992) and was a 24-item self-report scale (e.g., “I feel that I am wasting my time in school”) designed to assess adolescent feelings of alienation in the school context with the following subscales: powerlessness, meaningfulness, normlessness, and social estrangement. Items of SAS were answered on a five-point scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. The measure has been used in many studies including one with children ($N = 2,056$) from three intermediate grades (7-9) and three high school grades (10-12). The SAS was adapted for the Turkish context by Sanberk (2003) with 17 items. After validity and reliability studies, Sanberk reported that the short form of SAS with four subscales (meaningfulness, powerlessness, normlessness, social estrangement) had adequate reliability for both total score ($\alpha = .79$) and subscales ($\alpha = .72$, $\alpha = .45$, $\alpha = .73$, $\alpha = .77$, respectively). The test re-test correlation was reported as .77 and reliability coefficients (α) for the scale were .78 and .51, .74, .76 and .68, respectively, for the subscales. In the present study, Cronbach alpha internal consistency was founded to be .71 for the total scale and .56 for meaningfulness, .67 for powerlessness, .64 for normlessness, and .69 for social estrangement. High scores pointed out the existence of school alienation. Thus it could be possible to determine whether or not students had any accumulation of school alienation considering the scores students get.

Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) was developed by Armsden & Greenberg, (1987) to measure the adolescents’ attachment to their parents and peers. IPPA is suitable to measure the experiences on attachment with 24 items and 3 subdimensions as well as getting the total score of attachment by merging these dimensions. With a brief examination of the literature in the world on attachment, it can be easily found out that IPPA is used very often for measures in researches on adolescent attachment. The results of Kocayoruk’s (2010) adapted study on middle-aged adolescents (aged 14-18) showed that, by skipping some items, this measuring tool is suitable to be used for Turkish culture in a concise form with 18 items.

Positive and Negative Affect Scales (PANAS): Developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen, (1988), PANAS consists of 10 positive and 10 negative affect statements which are to be rated between 0 (never) and 5 (always), and was translated into Turkish by Gencoz (2000). The points got from each item between 10 and 50 will eventually show how dense the person feels the affection.

Analysis

The measurement model used in this study and whether the structural model had a reasonable goodness of fit were assessed by Goodness of Fit Statistics. According to Hu and Bentler (1999) goodness of fit statistics allowed to determine whether a model was supported acceptably by the data as a whole. Widely used fit statistics is χ^2 and for a model to be accepted reasonable, the χ^2 should not prove to be meaningful. However, since the χ^2 value was sensitive to the sample size, many alternative goodness of fit statistics had been developed, and most common ones were Goodness Of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness Of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Aproximation (RMSEA) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) (Simsek, 2006). Among them, GFI, AGFI, and CFI are acceptable when over 0.9, and were considered to have high value of goodness of fit when over 0.95. It was acceptable for RMSEA to be below 0.06 and for SRMR to be below 0.08, however, it was a sign of having high value of goodness of fit for both to be below 0.05. In this study, as well, the assessment for the model was carried out considering GFI, AGFI, CFI, RMSEA and SRMR values obtained using LISREL 8.45 program.

Procedure

The necessary permissions and arrangements to apply the measurement tools were completed beforehand, and the measurement tools (RSES, IPPA ve PANAS) were applied in classrooms by the researchers. The application took 20 minutes and the students were assured for confidentiality of the replies.

Results

Measurement Model

Anderson and Gerbing, (1988) suggested the measurement model to be investigated for whether it produced reasonable fit values by “confirmatory factor analysis” before the structural model was tested. The view suggested by Anderson and Gerbing on the investigation of the measurement model for reasonable fit values before testing the structural model was quite common, and this study, as well, was analysed with measurement model LISREL 8.51 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993) program and Maximum Likelihood (ML) method.

The formation of the measurement model was carried out by identifying parcels for each implicit variable parallel to number of items. Parcelling method anticipates each item to be grouped according to item total correlation, and the total points gathered from these groups to be used as observed variable in the model (Kishton & Widaman, 1994; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). In doing so, all the observed variables would be able to represent the implicit variable in maximum level. According to this view, considering each of the implicit variables in the model, 13 observed variables were identified as 3 for each father attachment, mother attachment and student alienation, and 2 for each positive affect and negative affect (Table 1).

Table 1. Average Standart Variation and Correlation Values of Observed Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<i>Mother Affective</i>																
1 Communication	4.2	.62	-													
2 Trust	4.1	.67	.77	-												
3 Alienation	4.3	.63	.79	.80	-											
<i>Father Affective</i>																
4 Communication	3.9	.73	.52	.41	.43	-										
5 Trust	3.8	.77	.47	.44	.47	.82	-									
6 Alienation	3.7	.84	.53	.42	.44	.86	.78	-								
<i>Affective Well-Being</i>																
7 PA1	4.2	.78	.27	.25	.27	.31	.34	.31	-							
8 PA2	4	.79	.36	.37	.38	.32	.35	.33	.56	-						
9 NA1	3.6	.95	-.38	-.34	-.29	-.34	-.27	-.33	-.36	.28	-					
10 NA2	2.6	.98	-.36	-.32	-.27	-.32	-.28	-.30	-.34	-.32	.75	-				
<i>Alienation</i>																
11 Meaninglessness	2.5	.79	-.13	-.21	-.15	-.19	-.15	-.18	-.20	-.23	.18	.21	-			
12 Normlessness	2.7	.98	-.23	-.28	-.21	-.24	-.20	-.22	-.23	-.28	.25	.28	.74	-		
13 Powerlessness	2.5	.87	-.27	-.28	-.26	-.34	-.32	-.36	-.30	-.25	.30	.33	.63	.69	-	
14 Social Estrangement	3.7	.86	-.04	-.07	-.07	-.06	-.01	-.04	-.10	-.11	.19	.17	.31	.43	.30	-

Note: N=227. High scores in Mother Attachment (MA 1, 2, 3) and Father Attachment (FA 1, 2, 3) show the high scores in attachment. High scores in Positive Affection (PA 1, 2, 3) show the assessment of life with positive affection, and high scores in Negative Affection (NA 1, 2, 3) show the assessment of life with negative affection. High scores in Student Alienation (SA 1, 2, 3) show the high level of alienation students experience. Mother Attachment 1, 2, 3 and Father attachment 1, 2, 3 represent the each three parcels in Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) under the subdivisions of mother and father. Positive Affection 1, 2, 3 and Negative Affection 1, 2, 3 represent the each two parcels provided from Positive and Negative Affection Scale (PANAS). Student Alienation 1, 2, 3 represent the three parcels provided from Student Alienation Scale (SAS). Among the correlation values in the diagram, the ones equal to and higher than .15 are reasonable between the confidence interval of $p < .05$, the ones equal to and higher than .17 are reasonable between the confidence interval of $p < .01$, and the ones equal to and higher than .21 are reasonable between the confidence interval of $p < .001$.

Through the analysis, it was found out that the goodness of fit values were a kind of proof for measurement model to accord well with this case. $\chi^2(55, N=227) = 103.02, p < .001$; CFI: .98; RMSEA: .062 and SRMR: .026, GFI: .93 and AGFI: .89 (Fig 2).

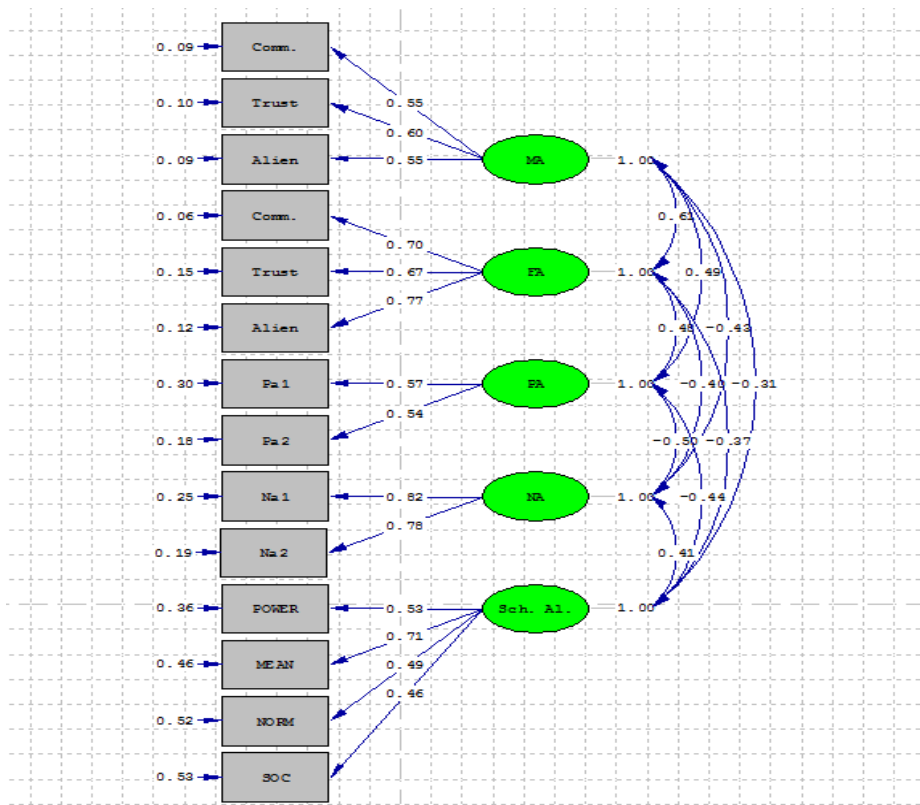


Figure 2. Standardised analysis values for measurement model.

Structural Model

After the measurement model produced high scores in goodness of fit, structural model was tested with ML method using LISREL 8.51 program (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2003). The result of the analysis asserted high level of goodness of fit for the structural model; $[\chi^2 (56, N=227)= 113.12, p<.001, GFI=.93, AGFI= .88, CFI= .97, RMSEA= .067, SRMR= .037]$. Through examination of the results, it could be seen that the influence of attachment to mother and attachment to father on student alienation is carried out by completely positive and negative affect. In other words, checking the effects of the variable in this model where subjective well-being (positive and negative affect) was determined as mediator variable, it could be understood that the path from attachment to father and mother to student alienation variable was not reasonable (Figure 3). It was clearly found out that the influence of attachment variable on alienation is completely mediated by positive and negative affect variable, in other words, positive and negative affect acts as a full mediation between attachment and alieanation variables.

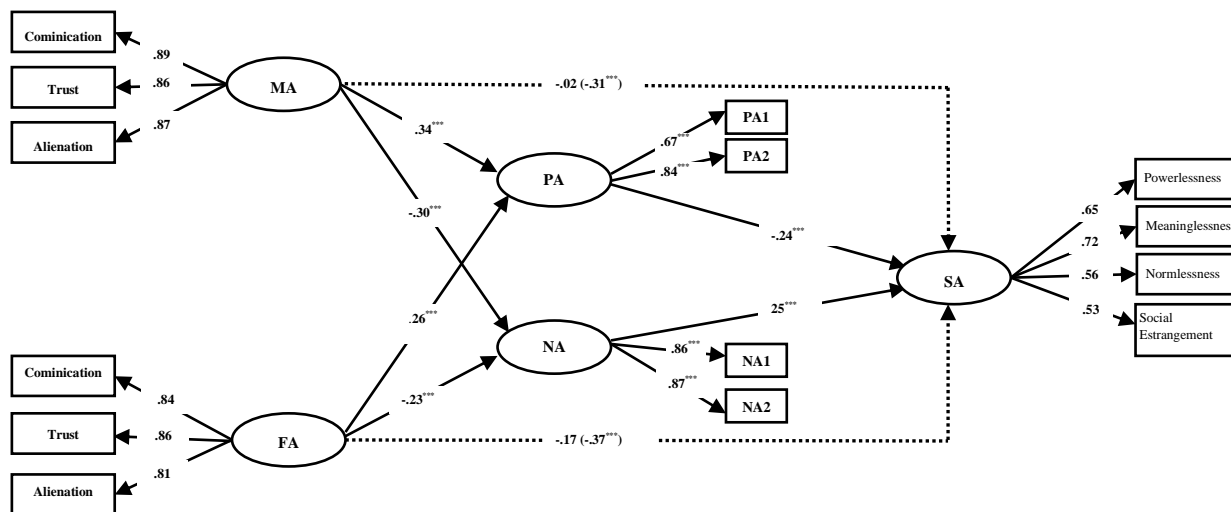


Figure 3. Standardized parameter values on Structural Model

Note: The values in parantheses show the basic correlation values without the influence of mediating positive and negative affect on the variables. (see Fig 2)

On the results of the structural model, though all the paths identified in the model were reasonable, the paths from mother and father attachment to school alienation were not. Thus the model was retested excluding these paths. Developed by Satorra and Bentler (2001), the “chi-square test” was a way of analysis to test the differences between the initial model and latter modified models. Thus, the paths from attachment to alienation, which were proposed in the first model but which did not come up with statistically sound values, were fixed to zero and the model was modified. Then, the paths from mother attachment to alienation and from father attachment to alienation were fixed to zero respectively, and the results were analysed by chi-square test. Examining the results, it was clearly seen that after excluding the path from mother attachment to alienation from the model, the goodness-of-fit values were still in high levels [χ^2 (57, N=227)= 113.57, $p < .001$, GFI=.93, AGFI= .89, CFI= .97, RMSEA= .066, SRMR= .037] and there was no sound difference between the initial model and the modified model by exclusion of this path [$\Delta\chi^2(1, N=227)= .41, p= .52$]. Similarly, when the path from father attachment to alienation was excluded from the model, it was seen that the goodness-of-fit values of the new and modified model were still high levels [χ^2 (58, N=227)= 114.09, $p < .001$, GFI=.93, AGFI= .89, CFI= .97, RMSEA= .065, SRMR= .039] and there was no sound difference between the two models according to chi-square test [$\Delta\chi^2(1, N=227)= .55, p= .46$]. As a result, it was now clear that both of the paths did not provide any contribution to the model, because exclusion of the paths from mother attachment and father attachment to alienation from the model did not make any sound difference in the structural model.

Discussion

The results of the analysis proved that emotional well-being perception (positive affect and negative affect) of the adolescents in the research functioned as a full mediator between mother and father attachment and alienation feelings in schooling. It was clear that positive and negative affect contributed as a full mediator to the relation between mother and father affect and alienation. It was found out that instead of the model with the direct influence of mother and father attachment on alienation, the one with the influence on alienation through positive and negative affect produced high levels of goodness-of-fit values.

Given the association between attachment and positive-negative affect in adolescents, the relation between mother attachment and positive affect was found .34, and between mother attachment and negative affect was found -.30. The relation between father attachment and positive affect was observed to be .27, and between father attachment and negative affect to be -.23. Though there was no

significant difference between mother attachment and father attachment, it was clear that mother attachment had more influence on positive and negative affect than father attachment. Considering the model as a whole and father attachment as an influencing factor, it was defined that mother and father attachment helped adolescents to reduce the school alienation through subjective well-being. This result was considered to be an important dimension of internal working model on adolescents' attachment pattern. This finding of the study shows consistency not only with the findings on the relation between attachment types and positive sense of self and adolescents' well-being (Wilkinson, 2004), but also the findings on the relation between attachment and school alienation (Shochet, Symthand Homel, 2007).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this study may bring into question some suggestions on the parent education and guidance process applied by school psychological counseling services. Psychological counselors at schools usually make their parent meetings, interviews and education activities with mothers. Many research findings showed that though mother and father's joint involvement in child's life contributed to his mental development and psychological well-being (Ducharme, Doyle, and Markiewicz, 2002), father himself, as well, provided positive contributions to child's development (Kocayörük, and Sümer, 2009). Considering the results of this study, psychological counseling at schools may arrange the meetings and activities at school so that fathers, as well, can join them. By doing this, they may organize activities that fathers, as well, can join and contribute to adolescents' developing positive peer relations and social development.

Considering the results of the study in more general sense, school psychological counselors may organize some events, such as seminars, informative meetings to find out what help and support parents can provide to prevent alienation towards the schooling environment and process. They may develop education and programs aiming to inform and teach some skills to parents to help them communicate effectively with adolescents in a fast growing and changing process, and provide them necessary and enough support in their development. Effective school counseling activities developed or determined by school counselors may help the effective communication and relations between parents and adolescents to develop. With the help of these activities, parents' knowledge on adolescents' development can be improved, they may develop better communication skills, thus a positive contribution could be provided for children's well-being and, consequently, their mental health.

Considering the psychological counseling process, results of this study may help the counselor to carry out his works more effectively. In order to handle the emotion of students' alienation at schools, their well-being levels could be strengthened with psychological counseling process. In the counseling settings, it is important for the counselor to develop skills to improve the positive affect and to reduce the negative affect, and results of this study assert that well-being was an influential mediating factor between attachment and alienation. Improving the positive affect and developing skills to cope with negative affect of adolescent students may ease their adaptation level to the schooling environment and process. These kinds of activities may help adolescents with insecure attachment not only to develop secure attachment towards their teachers and peers (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2004), but also to join the academic works and school activities (participation-identification model) (Finn, 1989). According to Bowlby (1988), attachment was a quite stable and difficult variable to handle, and for the counselor assessing attachment types, it can be very important to handle the perception of subjective well-being to carry out an effective psychological counseling process. Thus, findings of this research showed that, as well as parent training, psychological counseling process that strengthened adolescents' perception of well-being could also be contributive.

Apart from parental involvement and psychological counseling process, teachers' in-class applications and school guidance programs, as well, may be taken into account to develop adolescents' subjective well-being. As mentioned above, attachment to teachers and peer groups may be helpful to support the active participation to educational and school process. Especially the effective

communication of teachers with students and arranging practices and activities to improve classroom interaction result in students' developing attachment to teachers and peer groups (Kennedy and Kennedy, 2004) and get more satisfaction from schooling process (Edwards and Ray, 2008).

Considering the findings of the study, some suggestions could be made for the following researches. The recent studies on attachment to mother and father indicated that attachment was a ongoing process from childhood to adolescent (Bartholomew, 1993). Studying the contribution of types of attachment to mental health in a developmental perspective, further studies may contribute to prove the influence of adolescent attachment more clearly beside of the one in childhood.

The gender of the participants in the research is not considered. Taking gender into account in further studies may help to reveal male and female adolescents' attachment level to their mother and father and contribute a lot to the literature on attachment.

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