RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effect of Marital Messages Received From Family of Origin And Friends on Expectations From The Spouse

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse marital messages received by emerging adults from their families and friends and their spousal expectations and to determine the predictive relation between marital messages they receive from these sources and their spousal expectations. The participants of the study were 544 never-married emerging adults, 387 women and 157 men. The research data were collected with Marital Messages Scale, Spousal Expectations Scale and Personal Information Form. T-test, ANOVA and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis were implemented to analyse data. As a result of the study, a significant difference determined between genders and perceptions on the marriage of their parents of the participants. As for marital messages received from friends, a significant difference between gender and romantic relationship status was determined. A significant difference between spousal expectations of the participants in terms of variables of the way their parents married and gender. Additionally, marital messages received from parents and friends were together found to be explaining 5% of the total variance with relation to spousal expectations.

Marriage can be identified as one of the most important and enduring interpersonal relationships (Goldfarb & Trudel, 2019). Marriage, the primary structure for raising the next generations, is stated as a fundamental human relationship (Larson &Holman, 1994; Rosen-Grandon et al., 2004). Marriage is an important institution in almost every society in the world. For instance, more than 90% of the people living in the United States of America prefer to marry at a point in their life (Brubaker & Kimberly, 1993; Myers et al., 2005). Married individuals are healthier and live longer than those who are never-married, divorced or widowed (Lawrence et al., 2019). Marriage relationship is generally accepted as the most effective social relation for one's health and prosperity. This can be said that the health and quality of a marriage should be good to contribute positively to health of the couples.

Quality and happiness levels of marriage relationships are based on the way couples interact with each other and how they cope with life stresses (Taraban et al., 2017). Couples' interactions with each other are inevitably products of genetically and environmentally influenced personalities, attitudes and beliefs of them (Beam et al., 2018). Social and economic statuses and family life cycles of families of origin, educational backgrounds,

perceptions of gender roles, ethnic origins and religious beliefs of the couples (L'Abate, 1994) are among the factors that are affecting the marriage. Other effective factors are marriage age of the couples, adjustment before marriage and the number of children (Douglass & Douglass, 1995). Marital messages received from different sources are another factor affecting the marriage (Shurts, 2004). Marital messages affect both emotions, attitudes toward a future marriage and preparedness status for a special and important relationship as the marriage of individuals (Benson et al., 1993). Marital messages received from environment on "the time to get married", "how the marriage is" and "what the marriage is" can shape one's plans and behaviours for marriage.

Marital Messages

Marital messages mean messages from family, friends, mass media and other organisations on positive, negative and/ or neutral aspects of the marriage and marriage relationships that are generally received by individuals. In most of the researches conducted on marital messages, the family is worked on as the sole source of marital messages (Shurts, 2004); however, friends, mass media and other organisations (religion, government, etc.) were determined to be sources of marital messages (Shurts 2004; Shurts & Myers, 2012; Şahin, 2019) in addition to family in the studies on what marital messages sources are. Given the sources of marital messages, ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner can be said to be presenting a base framework for explaining this complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon (Espelage & Swearer-Napolitano, 2003).

Bronfenbrenner (1977), in his ecological systems theory, states that ecological contexts affect characteristics of an individual and are affected by characteristics of an individual. An individual is born and grows in a social and cultural system. One interacts with family, school, community and other institutions. In other words, units of the system in which an individual grows can directly and indirectly affect one (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) according to the ecological theory. An individual's perception of marriage can be shaped by the messages received from ecologic contexts. Messages from various sources on marriage can affect the relation to be established with the opposite sex, duration and health of this relationship and whether it ends up with marriage or not. Sources of marital messages and the relation between demographical variables and marital messages are analysed in the studies on marital messages (Shurts, 2004; Shurts & Myers, 2012).

Females were determined to receive more positive messages than males considering the relation between marital messages and gender. It was also determined that younger college students receive more positive marital messages than older college students (Shurts, 2004; Shurts & Myers, 2012).

Those with divorced parents were determined to receive more negative marital messages than those with married parents. Besides, students who have high-conflict families were determined to receive more negative marital messages than those with no-conflict families (Shurts & Myers, 2012). Researchers stated that marital messages affect emotions, and attitudes toward getting married in the future (Benson et al., 1993; Jennings et al., 1992; Larson et al., 1998; Shurts, 2004; Shurts& Myers; 2012). Marital messages can be determinant in one's behaviours, emotions and opinions on marriage. Therefore, marital messages from various sources received by an individual can shape one's spousal expectations.

Spousal Expectations

Spousal expectation is the wish and desire of a never-married individual for the future spouse to love one, to respect one and one's family, to adjust the change, to have a belief and culture similar to those of one, to have a positive sexual attitude and to have a socio-economic status similar to one's (Güllü, 2015). Marital expectations and marriage itself are influenced by a range of economic, structural, cultural and individual forces that unfold over the life span (Crissey, 2005). Various researches show that couples' expectations from each other plays an important role in their levels of satisfaction from married life and the quality of their common life (Vosoughi & Meymandi, 2012).

The most interesting explanation of spousal expectations is the growing independence of women as a result of increased access to education and participation in labour force (Harris & Lee, 2006). This process so improved that women started to demand active roles and participation in both family and society. Major changes at social scale and transition from tradition to modernity have affected individuals' view on marriage, family values, the quality of spousal interactions and family expectations (Vosoughi & Meymandi, 2012). Women's education, participation in business life and other changes in social areas can shape spousal expectations of both women and men.

Today, many changes occur in perspective on marriage as in many aspects of life. Arnett (2007) states average marriage age increased to late 20s and premarital sex and cohabitation in 20s became widely accepted. According to Arnett (2000) individuals aged 18-25 are in the period of emerging adulthood. Efforts of identity formation, trying and making decisions in love, work and worldview, which were started in adolescence, becomes completely evident in emerging adulthood period. Emerging adulthood is a period with more optimism and hopes. At the same time, most of the dreams of this period are alive. Emerging adulthood is the period of great hopes and dreams (Arnett, 2001). Almost every individual in this period believes that their life will be great and some of their dreams, at least, will come true (Arnett, 2004). As a result of these characteristics, having many expectations from their spouses in near or distant future is not surprising for emerging adults.

A difference between expectations of mothers and their daughters from their spouses was determined in the qualitative study on spousal expectations conducted in Iran, by Vosoughi & Meymandi (2012). Spousal expectations of mothers are more minimal than their daughters. Female college students were found to have more spousal expectations than males according to two different studies conducted with college students, in Turkey (Güllü, 2018; Söyler, 2021). More than half of the participants were of the same opinion in egalitarian items of all sub-scales of the inventory and many of them were of the same opinion in traditional items in the study conducted by Dunn (1960) on marital expectations which were including spousal expectations as well. Considering events prior to adulthood may help explain the formation of attitudes about marriage, and eventually union formation itself (Crissey, 2005). Experiences of an individual gained in one's past life, the family in which one raised, environment, society, culture and gender roles transferred through socialisation process and schemes one created combining all of these influence spousal expectations (Söyler, 2021). Messages from different sources received by one to date can play a determining role in one's marital expectations. No study on the relation between marital messages received from different sources and spousal expectations was found in the literature review. Therefore, marital messages received by never-married emerging adults from sources of family and friends, and spousal expectations of them were analysed and additionally, the relation between received messages from these sources and spousal expectations was tried to be determined.

Answers of the following questions have been searched in the study: "Do marital messages received by emerging adults from family and friends and spousal expectations of them significantly differ according to demographical characteristics (gender, the income level of the family, parents' perception of their marriage, the way parents married and romantic relationship status)?", "Do marital messages from family and friends predict spousal expectations?".

Method

Research Design
This study was designed according to the survey method. The survey method provides quantitative and numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes and opinions in the universe through studies on a sample from a universe (Creswell, 2014). Marital messages received by emerging adults from sources of family and friends, spousal expectations of them according to demographical characteristics and additionally, the relation between messages from these sources received by participants and their spousal expectations were analysed in the study through the relational survey model.

Study Group
The participants of the study were 544 never-married emerging adults (387 women and 157 men) studying at a university in Turkey. Convenience sampling method was used in the process of including emerging adults in the research. According to Şenol (2012), in cases of money, time and manpower limitations, choosing a sample consisting of units which are easily accessible and convenient for performing an application is called convenience sampling. When demographic characteristics of emerging adults in the working group analysed, this can be seen that most of the participants are females. On the other hand, the family income of most of the participants is between 2851-5700 Turkish Liras (₺). Participants perceiving the marriage of their parents as "generally inharmonious" are in the minority. Marriage of most of the parents of emerging adults participating in the research are arranged ones. Most of the participants expressed that they have no romantic relationship.

Ethical Processes and Data Collection

The study was conducted with the permission of the Ethics Committee of a university in Turkey dated 27.05.2021 and numbered 202-18 and numbered 18-05. In the study, information collection tools were applied by the researchers. Informed Consent Form was presented to the participants. For the sake of frankness when replying to data collection tools, the required motivation was tried to be created through explaining the subject and importance of the research. It was not mandatory to write down their names for participants to make them reply the tools frankly and sincerely.

Data Collection Tools

Marital Messages Scale (MMS), Spousal Expectations Scale (SES) and Personal Information Form were used in this study. Information on them is given below.

*Marital Messages Scale (MMS)***:** MMS was developed in the context of Turkish Culture. Explanatory-sequential design of mixed research methods was used in development of the scale. Validity of MMS was examined using Exploratory (EFA) and Confirmatory (CFA) Factor Analyses. In order to realize EFA, the scale was applied to 608 students, 276 males and 332 females. As a result of the analyses, the scale was found to be having a structure with 4 factors and 38 items. MMS as is, was applied to 324 participants in order to realize CFA. In consequence of CFA, the scale was found to be having an acceptable level of fitness with a model of 3 factors and 20 items. The reliability of MMS was analysed using internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) and test-retest methods. Within this scope, Cronbach's Alpha and test-retest coefficients of general inconsistency of the scale were respectively calculated as .95 and .91. On the other hand, sources of marital messages were determined to be "Family, Friends, Mass Media and Other Institutions". The lowest and highest scores that can be get from the scale for each source of messages are respectively 20 and 140. High scores are the indicative of receival of more positive marital messages from that source (Şahin, 2019; Şahin a& Bilge, 2019). Internal consistency of MMS was analysed using the data obtained from this research as well. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients calculated for the sub-scale of Marital Messages Received from Family and for the Marital Messages Received from Friends were respectively found as .96 and .95.

Spousal Expectations Scale (SES): It was developed by Güllü (2015) using the data obtained from never-married 896 college students, 669 females and 227 males and aged 19-30, in order to measure premarital spousal expectations of the youth. Internal consistency and equivalent half reliability coefficients of SES were respectively found as .92 and .91. SES is composed of 25 items and 7 sub-scales (love for spouse, socio-economic factors, harmony, sex, similarity of belief and culture, respect for families and respect for spouse). SES was determined to be explaining 59,14% of the total variance of the scale in the Exploratory Factor Analysis conducted with regard to it. The maximum and minimum scores can be get from SES are respectively 250 and 25. High scores show that spousal expectations of individuals are higher. In a similar scale validity study, a positive relation at the level of .50 was determined between SES and Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions Scale (ICDS) (Güllü 2015; 2018). Thus, the reliability of internal consistency of SES was analysed using the data obtained from that research. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient calculated in this scope is .85.

Personal Information Form (PIF): The form prepared by the researchers consists of 5 questions. These are aimed at determining gender, the income level of the family, the way parents married, parents' perception of their marriage and romantic relationship status of parents.

Analysis of Data

The data acquired from measurement tools were analysed through inserting them to SPSS 25.0 software. Skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the data acquired from MMS and SES were calculated to identify if the survey data meet the assumption of normality. If skewness and kurtosis values are ranged between -1,5 and +1,5 the distribution of data is accepted normal (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the data acquired from MMS and SES were identified to be in the range of -1,5 and +1,5. Parametric tests were used in the analyses conducted based on that. In the analysis of the data within this scope, t-test was applied to test if the difference between two-dimensional independent sample means is significant. On the other hand, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to determine if the difference between sample means of groups more than two is significant. The relation between scores acquired from the measurement tools were calculated using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient. Additionally, the predictive relation between marital messages and spousal expectation, which are respectively the independent and dependent variables of the research, was analysed with the multiple linear regression method. Effect size

statistics were calculated in order to determine to what extent the independent variable is effective on the dependent variable in the study (Büyüköztürk, 2021). In this scope, Eta-square (η^2) correlation coefficient was used to calculate effect size within groups compared using ANOVA. Eta-square (η^2) is interpreted as small, medium and wide effect sizes if it's respectively at the levels of .01, .06, .14 (Büyüköztürk, 2021). Cohen's d was calculated for the groups compared using t-test. Cohen's d is considered small, medium and large effects when it is respectively .20, .50, .80. (Cohen, 1998). The margin of error of the research was taken as .05.

Results

In this part of the research firstly, the findings on marital messages received by emerging adults from the sources of family and friends and their spousal expectations and then, the results showing predictive relations between marital messages received from the sources of family and friends and spousal expectations are given. The findings on marital messages received by participants from the sources of family and friends and spousal expectations according to gender are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Marriage Messages Received from Family and Friends and Expectations from the Spouse in Terms of Gender

Variable	Gender	n	$\overline{X}$	s	sd	t	p	Cohen's d
Marital Messages Received from Family	Male	157	113.02	24.57	542	2.66	.00	.02
	Female	387	106.54	26.20				
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Male	157	102.96	27.21	542	2.26	.02	.02
	Female	387	107.88	20.96				
Spousal Expectations	Male	157	198.90	27.51	542	6.16	.00	.05
	Female	387	212.66	20.85				

When means of scores obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family of emerging adults analysed according to gender, those of males ($\overline{X}$male=113.02) were found (p<.05) to be significantly higher than those of females ($\overline{X}$female=106.54). Besides, when means of scores obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends of emerging adults analysed according to gender, those of females ($\overline{X}$female=107.88) were found (p<.05) to be significantly higher than those of males ($\overline{X}$male=102.96). On the other hand, when means of scores obtained from Spousal Expectations Scale analysed according to gender, those of females ($\overline{X}$female=212.66) were found (p<.05) to be significantly higher than those of males ($\overline{X}$male=198.90). Cohen's d values, which were calculated to determine the effect of the gender variable on marital messages received from family and friends by participants, were found as .02. These values indicate that the gender variable is effective at low level on marital messages received from family and friends by participants. Accordingly, it is possible to say that males receive more positive marital messages from their families and females do so from their friends. Additionally, Cohen's d value, which was calculated to determine the effect of the gender variable on spousal expectations, was found as .05. This value indicates that the gender variable is effective at medium level on spousal expectations of the participants. Therefore, spousal expectations of females can be said to be higher than that of males.

It was analysed whether marital messages received from family and friends by emerging adults and spousal expectations of them vary according to the income level of the family. The findings are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Data on Marriage Messages Received from Family and Friends and Expectations from the Spouse in Terms of Family Income Level

Variable	Income Level of Their Families	n	$\overline{X}$	s
Marital Messages Received from Family	2850 ₺ and less	179	106.49	28.57
	2851-5700 ₺	240	108.57	25.29
	5701 ₺ and more	125	110.84	22.78

Table 2. *(Continued)*

Marital Messages Received from Friends	2850 ₺ and less	179	105.52	25.11
	2851-5700 ₺	240	107.76	20.50
	5701 ₺ and more	125	105.31	24.50
Spousal Expectations	2850 ₺ and less	171	210.32	23.36
	2851-5700 ₺	233	208.21	23.26
	5701 ₺ and more	113	207.22	25.47

Means of scores of emerging adults obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family, Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends and Spousal Expectations Scale according to the income level of the family are seen to differentiate. It was analysed whether this difference is significant using ANOVA and the results are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3. ANOVA Results Regarding Marriage Messages Received and Expectations from the Spouse in Terms of Family Income Level

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	p
Marital Messages Received from Family	Intergroup	1404.42	2	702.21	1.04	.35
	Within groups	362627.51	541	670.29		
	Total	364031.93	543			
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Intergroup	730.93	2	365.46	.68	.50
	Within groups	287240.40	541	530.94		
	Total	287971.33	543			
Spousal Expectations	Intergroup	750.70	2	375.35	.66	.51
	Within groups	291038.61	541	566.22		
	Total	291789.32	543			

When Table 3 analysed, no significant difference was found between marital messages from family and friends received by emerging adults and their spousal expectations according to the income level of their family (F=1.04, p>.05; F=.68; p>.05; F=.66, p>.05).

It was analysed whether marital messages from family and friends received by emerging adults and their spousal expectations change according to their perception on the marriage of their parents. The results are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Data on Marriage Messages Received from Family and Friends in Terms of Perception of Parents' Marriage and Expectations from Spouse

Variable	Perception of Parents' Marriage	n	$\overline{\text{X}}$	s
Marital Messages Received from Family	Generally Harmonious (a)	378	117.66	16.00
	Generally Inharmonious (b)	73	75.60	33.03
	Rarely Harmonious (c)	93	96.58	26.55
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Generally Harmonious (a)	378	106.83	22.68
	Generally Inharmonious (b)	73	103.24	26.65
	Rarely Harmonious (c)	93	107.47	21.32

Table 4. *(Continued)*

Spousal Expectations	Generally Harmonious (a)	378	209.05	23.59
	Generally Inharmonious (b)	73	207.85	24.87
	Rarely Harmonious (c)	93	207.92	23.86

Means of scores of emerging adults obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family, Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends and Spousal Expectations Scale according to their perception on the marriage of their parents are seen to differentiate. It was analysed whether this difference is significant using ANOVA and the results are depicted in Table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA Results Regarding Marriage Messages Received and Expectations from the Spouse in Terms of Perception of Parents' Marriage

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	p	n^2	Sig. Diff.
Marital Messages Received from Family	Intergroup	123937.15	2	61968.57	139.63	.00	.34	a-b-c
	Within groups	240094.78	541	443.79				
	Total	364031.93	543					
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Intergroup	903.43	2	451.71	.85	.42		
	Within groups	287067.90	541	530.62				
	Total	287971.33	543					
Spousal Expectations	Intergroup	148.29	2	74.14	.13	.87		
	Within groups	291641.02	541	567.39				
	Total	291789.32	543					

When Table 5 analysed, no significant difference was found between marital messages from friends received by emerging adults and their spousal expectations according to their perception on the marriage of their parents (F=.85, p>.05; F=.13, p>.05). On the other hand, a significant difference was identified between marital messages received from family by the participants according to their perception on the marriage of their parents (F=139.63; p<.05). According to the results of Scheffe's Multiple Comparison Test which was performed to find the source of the difference, the mean of scores obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family of participants perceiving the marriage of their parents as generally harmonious ($\overline{X}$=117.66) was found to be significantly higher than means of scores of those perceiving the marriage of their parents as inharmonious and rarely harmonious ($\overline{X}$=75,60, $\overline{X}$=96.58). Additionally, the mean of scores obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family of the participants perceiving the marriage of their parents as rarely harmonious ($\overline{X}$=96.58) was determined to be significantly higher than that of those perceiving the marriage of their parents as generally inharmonious ($\overline{X}$=75,60). Eta-square ($\eta 2$) correlation coefficient, which was calculated to determine the effect of the variable of the perception on the marriage of parents on the marital message received by the participants from family, was found as .34. This eta-square ($\eta 2$) value means that the perception on the marriage of parents has a wide effect on marital messages received from family by the participants. Accordingly, this can be said that those perceiving the marriage of their parents as generally harmonious receive more positive marital messages from the source of family than those perceiving the marriage of their parents as rarely harmonious and generally inharmonious. Additionally, those perceiving the marriage of their parents as generally inharmonious can be said to receive more negative marital messages from the source of family than those perceiving the marriage of their parents as rarely harmonious.

It was analysed whether marital messages from family and friends received by emerging adults and their spousal expectations change according to the way their parents married. The results are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6. Marriage Messages Received from Family and Friends in Terms of Parents' Marriage Style and Expectations from the Spouse

Variable	Way of parents marriage	n	$\overline{X}$	s	sd	t	p	Cohen's d
Marital Messages Received from Family	Arranged	390	107.44	26.03	542	1.38	.16	
	Consented	154	110.86	25.45				
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Arranged	390	106.65	22.95	542	.308	.75	
	Consented	154	105.98	23.28				
Spousal Expectations	Arranged	390	210.80	22.88	542	3.237	.00	.03
	Consented	154	203.34	25.21				

No significant difference was determined between means of scores of emerging adults obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family and Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends according to the way their parents married. However, when the means of scores of participants obtained from Spousal Expectations Scale according to the way their parents married considered, the mean score of those whose parents had an arranged marriage ($\overline{X}$arranged=210.80) was determined (p<.05) to be significantly higher than that of those whose parents had a consented marriage ($\overline{X}$consented=203.34). Cohen's d value, which was calculated to determine the effect of the variable the way parents married on spousal expectations, was found as .03. This value indicates that the variable of the way parents married is effective at medium level on spousal expectations of the participants. Therefore, spousal expectations of those whose parents had an arranged marriage can be said to be higher than that of those whose parents had a consented marriage.

It was analysed whether marital messages from family and friends received by emerging adults and their spousal expectations change according to the romantic relationship status. The results are depicted in Table 7.

Table 7. Marriage Messages Received from Family and Friends in Terms of Romantic Relationship Status and Expectations from the Spouse

Variable	Romantic Relationship	n	$\overline{X}$	s	sd	t	p	Cohen's d
Marital Messages Received from Family	Have	221	110.66	25.93	542	1.67	.09	
	Don't Have	323	106.87	25.78				
Marital Messages Received from Friends	Have	221	108.93	21.18	542	2.07	.03	.01
	Don't Have	323	104.77	24.09				
Spousal Expectations	Have	221	207.30	23.76	542	1.10	.27	
	Don't Have	323	209.65	23.78				

No significant difference was determined between means of scores of emerging adults obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family and Spousal Expectations Scale according to their romantic relationship status. On the other hand, when the means of scores of college students obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends according to their romantic relationship status considered, the mean score of college students who have a romantic relationship ($\overline{X}$have=108.93) was determined (p<.05) to be significantly higher than that of those who don't have one ($\overline{X}$don't have=104.77). Cohen's d value, which was calculated to determine the effect of the variable of romantic relationship status on marital messages received from friends by the participants, was found as .01. This value indicates that the variable of romantic relationship status is effective at low level on marital messages received from friends by the participants. Accordingly, this can be said those who have a romantic relationship receive more positive marital messages from friends than those who don't have one.

The findings on whether there is a correlation between marital messages received by emerging adults from family and friends, and their spousal expectations are given below. The correlation between marital messages received from family and friends, and spousal expectations is depicted in Table 8. Additionally, the results of multiple linear regression analysis on the prediction of spousal expectations by marital messages received from family and friends are depicted in Table 9.

Table 8. Correlation Coefficients and Significance Level Between the Scores Obtained from the Marital Messages Scale and Expectations from the Spouse Scale

Variables	n	Marital Messages Received from Family	Marital Messages Received from Friends	Spousal Expectations
Marital Messages Received from Family		1	.350**	.142**
Marital Messages Received from Friends	544	.350**	1	.219**
Spousal Expectations		.142**	.219**	1

**p < .01

Positive, significant and low-level relations (r= 0.142 and r=0.219; p < .01) were found between the means of scores of emerging adults obtained from Spousal Expectations Scale and Scales of Marital Messages Received from Family and Marital Messages Received from Friends.

A positive, significant and medium-level relation (r=0.35; p < .01) was found between the means of scores obtained from Scale of Marital Messages Received from Family and Scale of Marital Messages Received from Friends.

Table 9. The Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis on the Prediction of Spousal Expectations by Marital Messages Received from Family and Friends

Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	Binary r	Partial r
Constant	180.343	5.535		32.585	.000		
Marital Messages Received from Family	.066	.042	.073	1.594	.112	.142	.070
Marital Messages Received from Friends	.199	.047	.192	4.185	.000	.219	.182

R= .229, R^2= .052, F(2, 542) = 14.236, p= .000

As can be seen in Table 9, the variables of marital messages received from family and friends together turn out to have a low-level and significant relation (R=.229, R^2=.052, p< .01) with the scores of spousal expectations of emerging adults. Marital messages received from family and friends together explain 5% of the total variance with relation to spousal expectations. According to the standardized regression coefficient (β), the relative order of importance on spousal expectations of predictive variables is as: marital messages received from friends and marital messages received from family. When t-test results on the significance of regression coefficients analysed, only the variable of marital messages received by friends is seen to be an important (significant) predictive on spousal expectations. The variable of marital messages received from family does not have a significant effect.

Discussion and Comments

In this part of the study, acquired findings were discussed and interpreted within the framework of the existing literature. It was determined in the study that marital messages received by emerging adults from family and friends and their spousal expectations significantly differ according to gender. Therefore, males and females in emerging adulthood were determined to receive more positive marital messages respectively from their

families and friends. Additionally, spousal expectations of females in emerging adulthood were determined to be higher than that of males. In the literature, there are researches suggesting that marital messages received from family do not show significant differences according to gender (Shurts, 2004; Shurts & Myers, 2012; Şahin, 2019). As for the current research, males in emerging adulthood were determined to receive more positive marital messages from their families than females do.

In other words, females receive more negative messages from their families about the marriage. Bringing social and economic benefits, marriage provides a healthier and qualitied living for an individual (Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013). In Turkish society, similar views are suggested to unmarried young males. Many families can be said to be imposing to their sons that men are supposed to marry when they grow up and start to work. On the other hand, this can be said for today's Turkish community that families, especially mothers, direct their daughters to complete their education, have a job and plan to marry after these. TURKSTAT (2019) data are also suggesting this argument. Schooling data of TURKSTAT show women demand education more compared to 15 years ago.

The gender equality in education which is the indicator of the schooling rate, has made continuous progress in favour of women in higher education as in other levels of education since 2008. In other words, the schooling level of women in Turkey has increased also in the higher education since 2018. According to the TURKSTAT (2021) statistics, the schooling level of women in the higher education (46.3%) is higher than that of men (40.6%). This can be said that one of the reasons of the increase in the schooling level of women is participating in labour force. In the light of these, it is possible to say "completing education and starting a carrier rather than marrying" is advised to women by their families. On the other hand, many responsibilities relating to the marriage and family are perceived as if they belong to women in Turkish culture. As a result, women make more effort than men and get exhausted during the marriage. Thus, this point of view can cause women to receive more negative marital messages from family than men.

In the study, females in emerging adulthood were determined to receive more positive marital messages from friends compared to males. This result is consistent with the results of researches conducted by Shurts (2004), Shurts & Myers (2012) and Şahin (2019). Education life, for most of the emerging adults, continues and they live economically dependent on their families as adolescents. On the other hand, it is seen that some of the individuals in emerging adulthood have had a job and have experienced marriage and having a child (Arnett, 2004; Temiz, 2020). According to TURKSTAT (2021) data, the first marriage ages of men and women in Turkey are respectively 28.1 and 25.4. Based on this, it is possible to say that many of the women in Turkey marry in emerging adulthood. Especially, the adults, seeing and hearing their friends, acquaintances from a similar age group marry, can be receiving positive marital messages from those acts. As mentioned above, emerging adulthood is a period during which seeking love and work identity stand out (Arnett, 2000). Sharing many things with their friends, females in this period can be positively affected by them.

Spousal expectations of females in emerging adulthood were determined to be higher than that of males in the study. This is consistent with the results of the research conducted by Güllü (2018). As said above, emerging adulthood is a period during which hopefulness and optimism stand out. Dreams intensively occur in this period (Arnett, 2001). Most of emerging adults believe that their life will be good and some of their dreams will come true (Arnett, 2004). It is inevitable that these hopes and dreams are also about marriage. This can be said that females in emerging adulthood pin more hopes and dreams on a future spouse and marriage.

No significant difference was determined between marital messages emerging adults receive from family and friends, and their spousal expectations according to the income level of their families. Marriage is considered as an important institution in almost every society in the world (Brubaker & Kimberly, 1993; Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013). According to Saxton (1982), marriage is a universal institution varying from society to society. Therefore, not receiving positive, negative or neutral marital messages from the sources of family and friends according to the level of income is comprehensible. Any individuals with any socio-economic status can receive similar messages from family or friends on the necessity, importance, positive and negative aspects of marriage. Accordingly, the level of income of one's family can shape one's spousal expectations according to one's socio-economic status. As every society has its own consideration on marriage, this can be not causing any difference of received marital messages and spousal expectations.

In the study, those perceiving the marriage of their parents as inharmonious were determined to receive more negative marital messages from their families. These findings are consistent with the results of the researches

conducted by Benson et al. (1993), Shurts (2004), Shurts & Myers (2012) and Şahin (2019). If there are high conflicts between parents and they are very unhappy due to the marriage (Shurts, 2004; Shurts & Myers, 2012), it is likely to happen for their children that they receive negative marital messages from their families. Inharmony in the marriage of parents can reflect on children. This can be said that one's perception on the marriage starts with observing the marriage of parents. If inharmony, conflict and unhappiness arising from these are in the forefront in the marriage of parents the child can receive negative marital messages from that marriage.

The conflicts disturb harmony in the marriage. In addition to mental and physical negative consequences for parents, children are negatively affected from the conflict (Kahveci, 2016). The marriage of individuals having a good relationship and an open communication with each other represents the healthy family structure (Cutler and Radford, 1990). The marital relationship of parents especially effective on the perception and attitude of children toward marriage and divorce (Coleman & Ganong, 1984). Children raised in a family with a healthy relationship and communication can receive more positive marital messages from their families. The marriage of parents provides an improving environment for these children. High-level inharmony between spouses and conflict arouse due to it damages not only the marriages but also the perception of children they developed on the marriage.

No significant difference was identified in the research between marital messages received by emerging adults according to their perception on the marriage of their parents. This finding is consistent with the finding of the research conducted by Şahin (2019). Positive or negative intrafamilial conditions may not reflect on the communication with friends and messages received from them on various matters. Therefore, the reason for the inexistence of differences between marital messages received from family and harmony in the marriage of parents can be that.

The absence of a significant difference between spousal expectations of emerging adults according their perception on the marriage of their parents is another result obtained from the research. Kasapkara & Kasapkara (2014) states that one, during the process of spouse choosing, considers many characteristics of the possible spouse. Personal and physical characteristics and appearance, economic and social status, profession, religion and view of life can be priorities when choosing a spouse. One can get advices from parents or face directives on these mentioned characteristics. Reflection of harmony or inharmony in the marriage of parents on one's spousal expectations may not be effective for everybody and every situation.

In the study, no significant difference was determined between marital messages received by emerging adults from family and friends according to the way their parents married. This finding is different from the finding of the research conducted by Benson et al. (1993) and the results of the research conducted by Şahin (2019). Marital relationship of the parents can be affected by the way they married. The way of marrying can reflect on intrafamilial communications and relations. On the other hand, the way their parents married may not cause a difference on the positivity of the marital messages received by children from family and friends.

In the study, spousal expectations of those whose parents had an arranged marriage were determined to be higher than that of those whose parents had a consented marriage. One of the important notions in relation with marriage is the way of marrying. Şendil and Korkut (2008) stated that the way of marriage varies culturally, consented marriages are common in the western societies while arranged marriages are common in the societies prioritizing traditional values as Turkey's. In the researches conducted by Öner (2016) and Macit (2016), marital satisfaction and marital harmony of the women who had arranged and consented marriages were analysed. Marital satisfaction and harmony of women who had an arranged marriage were found to be lower. Children raised in the families that started with an arranged marriage can have an expectation from their spouses and marriages to be more satisfactory and harmonious.

No significant difference between marital messages received by emerging adults from family and friends and their spousal expectations according to their romantic relationship status. On the other hand it was determined that those who have a romantic relationship receive more positive marital messages from friends than those who have not one. Also in the researches conducted by Shurts (2004), Shurts & Myers (2012) and Şahin (2019), no significant difference was determined between marital messages received by college students from family and friends. Consistently with the results of the current research, in the study of Güllü (2018), no significant difference was found between spousal expectations of college students according to their romantic relationship status. Romantic relationships play a central role in the lives of individuals at college ages (Shurts,

2004). This can be said that romantic relationships are effective on the personality and psycho-social developments of individuals at these ages (Saraç et al., 2015). An individual in emerging adulthood was stated to be in search of identity of love and work by Arnett (2001). Starting a romantic relationship and maintaining it is a developmental task for emerging adults. In a way, the individual prepares to get married with these romantic relationships. This can also be said that one starts romantic relationship to prepare for marriage. In this scope, the individuals who have a romantic relationship can be receiving more positive marital messages from their romantic partners and other friends or it's possible that they started romantic relationship because they received positive marital messages.

In the study, marital messages received from family and friends were determined to be explaining 5% of the total variance with relation to spousal expectations. While marital messages received from friends were determined to be an important (significant) predictor on spousal expectations, marital messages received from family were determined to not have a significant effect. This can be said for spousal expectations of emerging adults that they affected more by marital messages from friends. Neff and Morgan (2014) states that the meaning and function attached to the marriage have changed radically over the centuries and the marriage serves as the primary source of one's emotional and personal satisfaction. According to Wiate and Gallagher (2001), as the expected roles of men and women have changed today, social definition of the marriage needs to be adjusted. In other words, changes occurred in the lifestyle in today's world reflected on the marriage as well as other behaviours of people. Different marital messages received from family and friends can be determinant in spousal expectations of individuals.

Limitations and Recommendations

The data of the research was collected online processes due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Collection of the data with online processes is a limitation of the research. The sample size is another limitation of the research. The sample size of 544 people is adequate and acceptable. On the other hand, increasing the sample size in future studies will improve the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, this study was conducted using a quantitative survey method. To obtain further information on the subject, qualitative studies can be planned to be conducted in the future.

In the study, participants perceiving the marriage of their parents as "generally inharmonious" were determined to receive more negative marital messages from their families. For children to have a healthy marriage in the future this can be recommended to parents that they should be positive role models for them and avoid arguing, yelling and fighting in the presence of them. Witnessing to the conflicts between parents or being included in them cause children to keep away from marriage and to find starting a marriage in the future unfavourable. Thus, this can be recommended to parents that they should take due precautions to keep children away from their conflicts. Intrafamilial relations between parents can be the marital message children receive from family and this can be effective on their perceptions on the marriage. Therefore, this can be recommended that parents should behave keeping in mind that they are role models of their children for marriage as well. A, even low-level, positive relation was found between marital messages received from family and friends and spousal expectation. Messages received from the environment – especially from family and friends – on various topics can be said to determining in one's perception on the subject of the message. Having reasonable, sensible and healthy expectations from the spouse is an important point in starting healthy marriages. Considering received marital messages when dealing with one's spousal expectations can be recommended for practitioners studying in the area of marriage and family counselling.

Conclusion

Marriage is an important developmental task to be achieved for many individuals. Marital messages received from different sources can be said to be effective in starting and maintaining the marriage. Marital messages received especially from kinspeople as family and friends can shape spousal expectations. One's spousal expectations and whether these expectations are met can reflect on the marital satisfaction, harmony and happiness in one's marriage. In this scope, it is possible to say the relation between received marital messages and spousal expectations is important. As a result of the research, a significant difference was found between marital messages received from family according to gender of the participants and their perception on the marriage of their parents. A significant difference was identified between marital messages received from friends according to gender and romantic relationship status. A significant difference was also identified between spousal expectations of the participants in terms of the variables of the way parents married and

gender. Additionally, a low-level positive relation between marital messages received from family, and friends and spousal expectations was determined.

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