

The Serial Mediating Role of Difficulties in Emotion Regulation and Entrapment between Intolerance of Uncertainty and Mental Well-Being

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Abstract

Mental health is a subject that has been extensively researched by mental health experts. It is essential for individuals to give priority to their mental well-being in order to live productive lives. Individuals may face unforeseeable circumstances, a range of emotions, such as feeling trapped, and situations that demand emotional self-regulation at any stage of their lives. An individual's mental health is contingent upon their capacity to uphold a heightened state of well-being despite encountering challenging circumstances. The current study aims to look into the mediating role of difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being. The current study's data were collected from 427 volunteer participants, including 316 women and 111 men. The mediation analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). According to the findings, difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment served as serial mediators between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being. The model posits that intolerance of uncertainty positively correlates with emotion dysregulation and a sense of being stuck, while both emotion dysregulation and feeling stuck negatively correlate with mental well-being. Tolerance of uncertainty may enhance mental well-being by facilitating emotional regulation and preventing feelings of stagnation.

Keywords

Intolerance of uncertainty
Difficulties in emotion regulation
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Belirsizliğe Tahammülsüzlük ile Mental İyi Oluş Arasında Duygu Düzenleme Güçlüğü ve Sıkışmışlık Hissinin Seri Aracı Rolü

Öz

Ruh sağlığı, ruh sağlığı uzmanları tarafından kapsamlı olarak araştırılan bir konudur. Bireylerin üretken bir yaşam sürebilmeleri için ruhsal iyilik hallerine öncelik vermeleri elzemdir. Bireyler hayatlarının herhangi bir aşamasında öngörülemez durumlarla, kapana kısılmış hissetmek gibi bir dizi duyguyla ve duygusal özenetim gerektiren durumlarla karşılaşabilirler. Bir bireyin ruh sağlığı, zorlu koşullarla karşılaşmasına rağmen yüksek bir iyi olma halini sürdürme kapasitesine bağlıdır. Bu çalışma, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkide duygu düzenleme güçlüğüne ve sıkışmışlık hissini aracı rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Mevcut çalışmanın verileri 316 kadın ve 111 erkek olmak üzere 427 gönüllü katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Aracılık analizi Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (YEM) kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgulara göre, duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve sıkışmışlık, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasında aracılık rolü üstlenmiştir. Modele göre, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve sıkışmışlık hissini olumlu olarak; duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve sıkışmışlık hissi ise olumsuz olarak mental iyi oluşu yordamaktadır. Belirsizlik karşısında hoşgörülü olmanın, insanların duygularını kolayca düzenleyebilmelerini ve sıkışmış hissetmekten kaçınmalarını sağlayarak potansiyel olarak daha yüksek düzeyde mental iyi oluşa yol açtığı ileri sürülebilir.


Anahtar Sözcükler

Belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük
Duygu düzenleme güçlüğü
Sıkışmışlık hissi
Mental iyi oluş


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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Giriş

İnsanoğlunun geleceği bilme kapasitesindeki sınırlılıklar belirsiz durumlarla karşı karşıya kalmalarını kaçınılmaz bir hale getirebilir. Belirsizlik bireyler için kolay kabul edilemeyen bir konumda olabilmektedir. Öngörülemez bir geleceğin bireyleri kaygılandırması söz konusu olabilir. Bu durumda bireyler belirsizliğe karşı tahammülsüz olabilmekteledir. Belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük, bireylerin olumsuz bir olayın gerçekleşme olasılığına dikkat etmeksizin bu olayın gerçekleşme olasılığını kaçınılmaz olarak görme eğilimlerini ifade etmektedir (Carleton ve diğer., 2007). Belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük anksiyete ve depresyonla ilişkili bir kavramdır (Jensen ve diğer., 2016). Olası olumsuz olaylara karşılaşıma durumunu yaşayabilecek bir ruh hali, kaygı yaşayan bireylerin belirsiz durumlara karşı tahammülsüzlük sergileyebileceği kabul edilmektedir (Barlow, 2004). Öngörülemez ve belirsiz durumlara ayak uydurabilmek bireylerin değişken yaşam koşullarıyla baş edebilmelerine yardımcı olabilir. 21.yüzyılda bireylerin sürekli değişen koşullara uyum sağlamaları gerekmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra bireylerin eylemlerinin öngörülemeyen sonuçlara yol açabilmesi de mümkündür. Ayrıca eylemleri sonrasındaki stratejileri ve seçenekleri etkileyebileceği durumlarda bireylerin karar verme ve harekete geçmeleri de gerekmektedir (Binkley ve diğer., 2012). Bireyler kötü hissettiklerinde ve olumsuz durumlardan kaçma girişimleri engellendiğinde; harekete geçme ve kaçma arzusunu temelinde bulunduran sıkışmışlık ortaya çıkmaktadır (Gilbert ve Allan, 1998). Sıkışmışlık hissi, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük gibi depresyon ve anksiyete ile ilişkili bir kavramdır (Gilbert ve diğer., 2002). Yaşamda her olay tam bir belirsizlik içermez, bu nedenle sıkışmış hisseden ve belirsizlik karşısında toleransı olmayan bireylerin kaygılı ve depresif olduklarına dikkat edildiğinde belirsiz durumlara karşı tahammülsüz olan bireylerin aynı zamanda sıkışmışlık hissedebilecekleri de düşünülebilir.

Psikoloji biliminin odaklandığı konular arasında hem mental sağlığı korumak hem de daha iyi bir hale getirmek yer almaktadır. Kişisel, toplumsal ve ekonomik gelişim için bir gereklilik olarak mental sağlık aynı zamanda bir insan hakkıdır. Mental sağlık; insanların yaşamın stresleriyle başa çıkabilmelerini, yeteneklerinin farkına varabilmelerini, iyi öğrenip iyi çalışabilmelerini ve toplumlarına katkıda bulunabilmelerini sağlayan bir mental iyi oluş durumudur (WHO, 2022). Mental iyi oluş ise mutluluğun öznel deneyimi, yaşam memnuniyeti ve olumlu psikolojik işlevsellik kapsamında başkalarıyla iyi ilişkiler kurmayı ve kendini gerçekleştirmeyi ifade eder (Stewart-Brown ve Janmohamed, 2008; Ryan ve Deci, 2001). Bireylerin belirsizliğe tahammülsüz olduklarında daha düşük seviyede iyi oluşa sahip oldukları bilinmektedir (Geçgin ve Sahraç, 2017). Zira duyguları düzenleyebilmenin bireylerin duygularını fark edebildikleri, gereken duygusal tepkileri duruma uygun ve esnek bir şekilde verebildikleri anlamına geldiği düşünüldüğünde karşılaşılan zorlu olaylarla duygusal olarak daha iyi bir şekilde başa çıkabilmeleri sonucunda daha fazla iyi olma hali hissetmelerine yol açtığı düşünülebilir. Ek olarak sıkışmışlık hissini iyi oluşu yordaması söz konusudur (Cheon, 2011). Bireylerin hareket etme ve kaçış isteğinin gerçekleşmeyeceği ve başarısız bir mücadele deneyiminden kaynaklanan sıkışmış hissetmesi onları intihar ile karşı karşıya bırakacak ciddiyette olumsuz bir durum olup, iyi oluşun düşük olması riskini beraberinde getirebilir. Ayrıca sıkışmışlık hissi, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ve duygu düzenlemenin ilişkili olduğu depresyon, anksiyete ve intihar kavramları iyi oluş ile negatif yönde ilişkilidir (Malone ve Wachholtz, 2018; Qian, 2021). Literatürden edinilen değerli bilgiler sonucunda ilgili kavramların ikiye ayrı ayrı araştırmalarda bir arada incelendiği veya ayrı araştırmalarda benzer kavramlarla ilişkili buldukları görülmektedir. Tüm bunlardan hareketle mevcut araştırmada psikoloji biliminin ruh sağlığını koruma ve güçlendirme misyonuna hizmet etmesi ümidiyle duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve mental iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkide belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ve sıkışmışlığın aracı rolünün incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Yöntem

Araştırmaya dair veriler kolay örneklem yöntemi ile ve çevrimiçi olarak (internet ortamında form hazırlanarak) toplanmıştır. Çevrimiçi toplanan veriler sosyal medya aracılığı ile duyurularak yapılmıştır. Toplamda 316 (%74) kadın ve 111 (%26) erkekten oluşan 427 katılımcıdan veri toplanmıştır. Katılımcılardan gönüllü olduklarına dair katılımı onam formu doldurmaları istenmiştir. Yaş ortalamaları 25.78 sd (8.09) olarak analiz edilmiştir. Katılımcıların çoğunluğu üniversite eğitimini tamamlayanlardandır (n:223, %52.2). Katılımcıların %74.7'si orta seviye sosyoekonomik düzeye sahiptir.

Araştırmanın analiz kısmında veriler toplandıktan sonra SPSS, JASP ve AMOS programlarından yararlanılarak ilk olarak belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük, mental iyi oluş, duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve sıkışmışlık kavramlarının SPSS programı ile betimsel istatistiklerine ve normal dağılıp dağılmadıklarına bakılmıştır. Daha sonra JASP programı ile güvenilirlik analizlerine ve tekrar SPSS programı ile korelasyon analizleri yapılmıştır. Kavramlar arası ilişkilerin anlamlı çıkması ile ileri istatistik yöntemi olan Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesine geçilmiştir.

Bulgular

Araştırma kapsamında kavramlar arasında çıkan anlamlı sonuçlar neticesinde YEM (yapısal eşitlik modellemesi) uygulanmıştır. Uygulama iki aşamalı olarak yapılmıştır. Belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük, mental iyi oluş, duygu

düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlık değişkenlerinin ölçüm modeline bakıldığında 4 tane gizli değişken ve 10 tane gözlenen değişken bulunmaktadır. Ölçüm sonuçlarına göre ise $\chi^2/sd= 4.61$, GFI= .963, CFI= .980, NFI= .969, TLI= .968, RFI= .952, IFI= .980, SRMR= .0306 ve RMSEA= .065 olarak uyum indekslerine göre uygundur. Faktör yükleri ise .77 ile .95 arasında değişmektedir. Bu durum gözlenen değişkenlerin gizli değişkenleri anlamlı şekilde temsil ettiği söylenebilir.

Ölçüm sonrası yapısal modelde katılımcıların belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasında duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlığın aracılık rolü olan modele bakılmıştır. Öncelikle belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasında duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlığın kısmi aracı olduğu modele bakılmıştır. Kısmi aracı modelde belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasında doğrudan yol bulunmaktadır ve ek olarak duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlık aracılık etmektedir. Ancak bu modelde uyum değerleri iyi çıkmasına rağmen belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasındaki yol anlamsız çıkmıştır. Uyum değerleri ve anlamlılık değeri Tablo 3'te belirtilmiştir. Kısmi aracı model sonrası tam aracı model denemesi yapılmıştır. Tam aracı modelde ise belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasında doğrudan yol bulunmamaktadır ve ek olarak duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlık aracılık etmektedir. Uyum değerleri tam aracı modelde kabul edilebilir ve istenilen düzeydedir. Anlamlı bir sonuçta bulunmuştur. Hem kısmi aracının hem de tam aracının değerleri tablo 3'te belirtilmiştir. Kısmi aracı modelin anlamsız çıkması durumunda tam aracı model araştırma için tercih edilmiştir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Ana hipotez kapsamında yapılan analizler ise belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile mental iyi oluş arasındaki ilişkide duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlığın seri aracılar olduğunu göstermiştir. Literatür incelendiğinde mevcut araştırma kapsamında ele alınan kavramların daha önce yapılmış çalışmalarda ikişerli olarak ele alındığı görülmüştür (örn. Cai ve diğer., 2018; Cheon, 2011). Daha geniş kapsamda bu kavramların üçünün bir arada ele alınmış olduğu bir araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre; duygu düzenleme gücünün belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ile depresyon, anksiyete ve stres gibi mental sağlık sorunları arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık ettiği bilinmektedir (Godara ve diğer., 2023). Mental sağlığın daha iyi anlaşılıp korunması ve geliştirilmesi adına yapılan bu araştırma kapsamında ele alınan kavramların ihmal ve istismar gibi insan hayatını tehdit eden bir konu ile ilişkili oldukları bilinmektedir (Kelek ve diğer., 2022; Moscardini ve diğer., 2022; Ong ve Thompson, 2019). Kendi aralarındaki ilişkiler ve ilgili kavramların farklı araştırmalarda benzer kavramlarla olan ilişkileri göz önünde bulundurulduğunda mevcut araştırma sonucunda elde edilen kavramlar arası ilişkilerin başka araştırmalarca da desteklendiği görülmektedir. Tüm bunlardan hareketle, yaşamın belirsizlik içermesi ve buna bireylerin tahammül gösterememelerinin duygu düzenleme gücü yaşamaları ve sıkışmışlık hissetmeleri dolayısıyla mental iyi oluşlarının olumsuz bir halde olması beklenebilir. Belirsizlik karşısında tahammül edebilmeyi bireyler, daha kolay bir şekilde duygu düzenleme ile yapabilir. Böylece bireyler daha düşük düzeyde sıkışmışlık hissederek yüksek düzeylerde iyi oluşa sahip olabilirler.

Sonuç olarak araştırma sonuçları belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlüğün mental iyi oluşu dolaylı olarak duygu düzenleme gücü ve sıkışmışlık vasıtasıyla yordadığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu sonucun, farklı kavramlar ile aracılık ilişkilerine bakan ve boylamsal yapıdaki gelecek araştırmalara ışık tutabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Introduction

Humans' limited ability to predict the future may force them to confront uncertain situations. Individuals may find it difficult to accept uncertainty. Individuals may be concerned about the future because it is unpredictable. In this case, people may become intolerant of uncertainty. Individuals with an intolerance of uncertainty tend to see the possibility of a negative event as unavoidable without considering the possibility of its occurrence (Carleton et al., 2007). Intolerance of uncertainty is linked to anxiety and depression (Jensen et al., 2016). It is recognized that individuals who experience anxiety as a future-oriented mood expressing preparation for potential negative events may exhibit intolerance toward uncertain situations (Barlow, 2004). Individuals who can adapt to unpredictable and uncertain situations may find it easier to cope with changing life circumstances. In the twenty-first century, people must adapt to constantly changing conditions. Individual actions may also have unpredictable consequences. Individuals must also make decisions and act when their actions may have an impact on future strategies and options (Binkley et al. 2012). When people feel defeated and their attempts to escape negative situations are thwarted, entrapment emerges, which is based on the desire to act and escape (Gilbert & Allan, 1998). Entrapment, like intolerance for uncertainty, is linked to depression and anxiety (Gilbert et al., 2002). Because every event in life lacks complete certainty, it is reasonable to assume that individuals who feel entrapped and intolerant of uncertainty are anxious and depressed.

Entrapment is described in the integrated motivational-volitional (IMV) model of suicidal behavior. This model associates suicide with defeat and entrapment (O'Connor, 2011). According to O'Connor and Kirtley (2018), feeling entrapped as a result of the perception that the desire to escape is blocked by the individual who feels defeated leads to suicide. In addition to the theoretical explanation, quantitative research results show a strong link between entrapment and suicidality (Trachsel et al., 2010). Another concept linked to suicidal thoughts is emotion regulation (Hatkevich, 2019). Entrapment can be experienced either internally or externally. Individuals experiencing external entrapment believe they are unable to receive help or support from their surroundings. Individuals who experience internal entrapment believe they are emotionally incapable of dealing with adversity. Individuals who feel entrapment may struggle with emotion regulation, given its intrinsic dimension and the similarity to suicide. Emotion regulation refers to neural, cognitive, and behavioral/actional processes that maintain, strengthen, or weaken emotional stimulation and the associated tendencies for feeling, motivation, cognition, and action (Izard et al., 2011). Emotion regulation enables people to recognize, understand, and accept emotions, control impulsive behaviors in the face of negative emotions, act in a goal-oriented manner, and be emotionally flexible by employing the appropriate strategy for the situation. Difficulties in emotion regulation refer to a lack of these abilities (Gratz & Roemer 2004). Individuals must regulate their emotions in a variety of situations, including their daily lives, social relationships, and exposure to various events and news. Difficulties in emotion regulation may lead to additional difficulties in the face of intolerable situations, such as uncertainty, which individuals may frequently encounter. Çutuk (2021) and Kennedy et al. (2021) found a link between difficulty regulating emotions and intolerance of uncertainty. Inadequate or dysfunctional emotion regulation can negatively impact well-being (Gross & Muñoz, 1995), despite its importance for adaptive functioning. Psychological science aims to both maintain and improve mental health. Mental health is a human right due to its importance in personal, social, and economic development.

Mental health allows people to handle life's challenges, recognize their talents, learn and work well, and contribute to their communities (WHO, 2022). Happiness, life satisfaction, positive psychological functioning, positive relationships, and self-actualization are all subjective experiences of mental well-being (Stewart-Brown & Janmohamed, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Individuals with a low tolerance for uncertainty report lower levels of well-being (Geçgin & Sahraç, 2017). Given that being able to regulate emotion implies that individuals can recognize their emotions and respond to them in an appropriate and flexible manner, it is possible that they can cope better emotionally with the difficult events they encounter, leading to a sense of well-being. Furthermore, Cheon (2011) found that entrapment predicts well-being. When people feel trapped as a result of an unsuccessful struggle experience in which their desire to move and escape is not realized, it is a serious negative situation that can lead to suicide and a low level of well-being. Furthermore, depression, anxiety, and suicide, which are associated with entrapment, intolerance of uncertainty, and emotion regulation, have a negative impact on well-being (Malone & Wachholtz, 2018; Qian, 2021). As a result of the valuable information obtained from the literature, it is observed that related concepts are examined in pairs in the same studies or in separate studies. Based on all of this, the current study seeks to investigate the mediating role of intolerance of uncertainty and entrapment in the relationship between difficulties in emotion regulation and mental well-being, with the hope that psychology can contribute to the mission of protecting and strengthening mental health. The hypotheses to be investigated in this context are as follows:

H1. There is a mediating role of difficulties in emotion regulation between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being.

H2. There is a mediating role of elements of entrapment between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well being.

H3. There is a serial mediating role of difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being.

Method

Research Design

This study, which examines whether difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment mediate the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being, was designed with quantitative method.

Participants

The study's data was collected using the convenience sampling method and online. The data collected online was made public via social media. Data were collected from 427 participants, including 316 (74%) women and 111 (26%) men. Participants were asked to sign a participant consent form indicating that they had volunteered. The average age was calculated as 25.78 sd (8.09). The majority of the participants were university graduates (n = 223, 52.2%). In terms of socioeconomic status, many participants were in the middle (n = 319, 74.7%). Table 1 provides detailed information about participant characteristics.

Table 1

Descriptive information of the participants

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Female	111	26
Male	316	74
Education level		
High school	188	44
Bachelor degree	223	52.2
Graduate	16	3.7
Marital status		
Married	76	17.8
Single	351	82.2
Socio-economic status		
Very low	22	5.2
Low	67	15.7
Middle	319	74.7
High	19	4.4
Very high	-	-

Data Collection Instruments

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale. Tennant et al. (2007) developed a scale to assess the mental health of adults. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Demirtaş and Baytemir (2019). Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to be 0.84 and 0.86. The scale's fit values ($\chi^2/sd = 1.58$; $p < .05$; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.04; NFI = 0.97; CFI = .99; GFI = .96; AGFI = .91) were acceptable. The scale is a 7-item Likert scale with positive statements ranging from never to always.

Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale-8. Penner et al. (2022) created the original scale to assess adults' difficulty with emotion regulation. Ekşi and Erik adapted the Turkish version in 2023. The scale has eight items and four sub-dimensions: "goal," "impulse," "non-acceptance," and "strategy." The internal consistency values for the scale's sub-dimensions ranged from .68 to .77, while the overall internal consistency value was .87. The fit indices were acceptable, with $\chi^2/df=3.05$, NFI=.964, CFI=.976, TLI=.951, and RMSEA=.075. The scale's response options are five-point Likert types. Higher scores indicate greater difficulty in emotion regulation.

Entrapment Scale Short-Form (E-SF). De Beurs et al. (2020) created a scale to measure the degree of adult entrapment. Türk et al. (2024) carried out the study on adaptation in Turkish. Consequently, the scale's Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.88. There is only one dimension and four items on the scale. The Likert scale is five points, and responses on a scale of 0–4 fall between "0 = not at all suitable for me" and "completely suitable for me." The

lowest and maximum scores on the scale are 0 and 16, respectively. The person's sense of entrapment is evidently growing as the scores rise.

Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale. A scale was created by Carleton et al. (2007) to measure how intolerant adult individuals are of uncertainty. The scale was translated into Turkish by Sariçam et al. (2014). The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.88. The fit values of the scale were found to be satisfactory with $\chi^2 = 147.20$, $df = 48$, $RMSEA = .073$, $CFI = .95$, $IFI = .95$, $GFI = .94$, and $SRMR = .04$. A high tolerance for uncertainty is indicated by high scores on the scale. Two sub-dimensions of the 12-item scale are "prospective anxiety" and "inhibitory anxiety." The Likert scale has five points. The scale has a total score range of 12 to 60. A high level of intolerance for uncertainty is indicated by rising scores.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the study's analysis section examined descriptive statistics and normal distributions of the concepts of intolerance of uncertainty, mental well-being, difficulties in emotion regulation, and entrapment using SPSS, JASP, and AMOS programs. The JASP program was then used to conduct reliability analyses, followed by SPSS for correlation analyses. When the relationships between the concepts were discovered to be significant, the advanced statistical technique of Structural Equation Modeling was used. The Amos program was used to model structural equations and measure additional parameters. ML (Maximum Likelihood) estimation method was used in the tested model. In the first stage, latent variables for the variables were developed, and the measurement model was tested by examining the relationship between these latent variables (Kaplan, 2001; Kline, 2011). Hu and Bentler (1999) considered the goodness of fit recommendations of SEM results within the measurement framework. In this context, chi-square, CFI, NFI, TLI, RFI, IFI, RMSEA, and SRMR values were used as a foundation. In terms of values, the chi-square test is expected to be less than 5, GFI, CFI, NFI, TLI, RFI, and IFI values are expected to be greater than .90, and SRMR and RMSEA values are expected to be less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Because the measurement fit values were adequate, the second measurement phase was initiated. Furthermore, to determine which SEM model is the best, the significance level, AIC and ECVI values, and the chi-square difference test were all examined. According to Browne and Cudeck (1993), the model with the lowest ECVI and AIC values was preferred. The parceling method was applied because mental health and entrapment are unidimensional in SEM. The parceling method, according to Nasser-Abu Alhija and Wisenbaker (2006), helps scales show a normal distribution, increases reliability, and decreases the number of observed variables. Two dimensions were produced by the parceling method: entrapment and mental health. Bootstrapping was employed to support the study and raise the mediation test's significance (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). By using the bootstrap value, the bootstrapping procedure produced a confidence interval and raised the sample count to 5000. This confidence interval's lack of a zero indicates that the mediation is likely to be significant.

Ethical Issues

The research was approved by 'Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University Human Research Ethics Committee' (Institutional Registration Date and Number: 04.06.2024/457210). All participants voluntarily filled out the consent form.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis are included in this section. Subsequently, the results of the measurement model and the structural model are presented. In the last stage, the results of the bootstrapping process are presented.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for concepts

	N	M	SD	S	K	Mc	Cr	G	1	2	3
1-Difficulty in Emotion Regulation	427	20.00	7.19	.221	-.490	.903	.901	.896	-		
2-Mental Well-Being	427	24.63	4.90	-.387	.573	.837	.833	.827	-.47**	-	
3-Intolerance of Uncertainty	427	40.14	9.50	-.255	-.002	.904	.903	.907	.46**	-.20**	-
4-Entrapment	427	7.52	4.31	.058	-.698	.874	.870	.849	.57**	-.47**	.42**

**p<.001, M: Mean; S: skewness; K: Kurtosis; Mc: McDonald's ω ; Cr: Cronbach's α ; G: Guttman's λ_6

Finney and DiStefano (2006) suggest that variables should meet normality criteria of ± 2 for skewness and ± 7 for kurtosis. Table 2 shows a normal distribution for Skewness (-.387 to .058) and Kurtosis (-.698 to .573). Table-2 reveals significant positive relationships between intolerance of uncertainty and difficulties in emotion regulation

($r: .46 p < .001$), intolerance of uncertainty and entrapment ($r: .42 p < .001$), and difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment ($r: .57 p < .001$). However, there were significant negative correlations between mental well-being and difficulties with emotion regulation ($r: -.47 p < .001$), entrapment ($r: -.47 p < .001$), and intolerance of uncertainty ($r: -.20 p < .001$). There are four latent variables and ten observed variables in the measurement model for intolerance of uncertainty, mental well-being, difficulties with emotion regulation, and entrapment. The measurement results show χ^2/SD : 4.61, GFI.963, CFI.980, NFI.969, TLI.968, RFI.952, IFI.980, SRMR.0306, and RMSE.065. Factor loadings ranged from 0.77 to 0.95. This means that the observed variables provide a meaningful representation of the latent variables.

The post-measurement structural model examined how participants' intolerance of uncertainty and mental health were related and how challenges with emotion regulation and entrapment played a mediating role. First, we examined a model in which the association between mental health and intolerance of uncertainty was mediated by issues with emotion regulation and entrapment. According to the partial mediation model, there is a direct correlation between mental health and an intolerance for uncertainty, with challenges with emotion regulation and entrapment serving as additional mediators. The association between intolerance of uncertainty and mental health was not significant, despite the model's good fit values. The fit and significance values are displayed in Table 3. A full mediation model was assessed after the partial mediation model. According to the full mediation model, challenges with emotion regulation and entrapment also contribute to mental health, and there is no direct correlation between an intolerance of uncertainty and mental health. Acceptable and desired fit values were obtained from the fully-mediated model. An important finding was made. The values for partial and full mediation are displayed in Table 3. The full mediation model was selected for the study in case the partial mediation model did not show statistical significance. Figure 1 displays the path coefficients for this model.

Table 3
Fit values for the models

	N	CMIN /DF	GFI	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	ECVI	p
PMM	427	2.802	.963	.969	.952	.980	.968	.980	.065	.030	133.24	.313	.102
FMM	427	2.790	.962	.968	.952	.979	.969	.979	.065	.033	133.71	.314	.000

** $p < .001$ PMM: Partial Mediator Model, FMM: Full Mediator Model

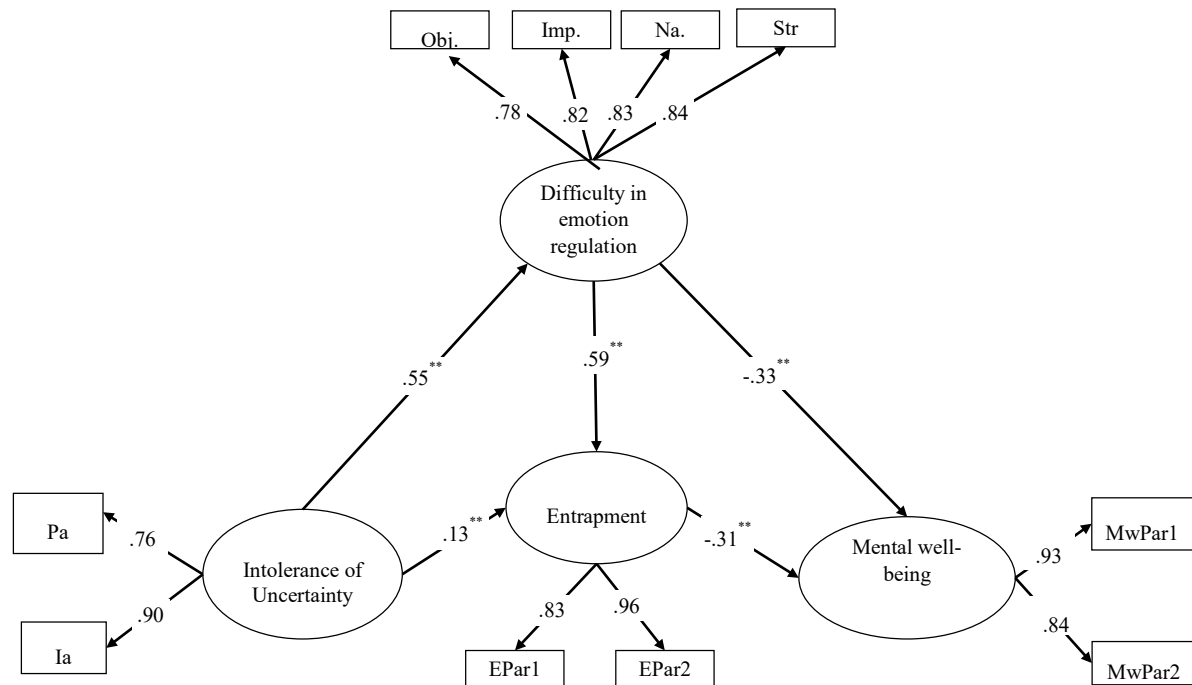


Figure 1. Standardised factor loadings for the fully mediated structural model. Note. N = 427; ** $p < .001$; Epar parcels of entrapment; Obj: objective; Imp: impulse; Na: non-acceptance; Str: strategy; Pa: prospective anxiety; Ia: inhibitory anxiety; MwPar parcels of mental well-being

After bootstrapping to strengthen the study, it was concluded that the path coefficients of intolerance of uncertainty predicting mental well-being indirectly through difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment were significant. The results related to this are presented in Table 4. Considering all these results, it can be stated that difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment play a full and serial mediating role between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being. In other words, intolerance of uncertainty predicts mental well-being indirectly through difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment.

Table 4

Direct and indirect effects on variables.

Path	Coefficient	95% CI	
		LL	UL
IU → DER → Mental Well-Being	-.283	-.352	-.219
IU → E → Mental Well-Being	-.263	-.340	-.188
IU → DER → E → Mental Well-Being	-.321	-.393	-.254

IU: Intolerance of Uncertainty; DER: Difficulty in Emotion Regulation; E: Entrapment
 CI confidence interval, LL lower limit, UL upper limit

Conclusion

Well-being can be defined as an individual's physical, mental, social, and environmental state. Each dimension interacts with the others, and its importance varies from person to person. A difference in an individual's well-being can cause behavioral changes or reflect on performance (Kiefer, 2008). Treating or eliminating mental illness does not result in a mentally healthy population. A strategy that focuses solely on mental illness can only reduce mental illness, not improve mental health (Keyes, 2007). With this approach, the current study hopes to contribute to a better understanding of mental health. Individuals may struggle with uncertainty and be less tolerant. In these difficult situations, they may struggle to regulate their emotions and may feel trapped. As a result, individuals may experience decreased mental well-being. Although it is known that related concepts have been investigated in different studies in pairs, there is no research in the literature that addresses all of these concepts simultaneously. As a result, the current study investigated the role of difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being. The hypotheses tested in this direction are discussed in light of existing literature.

First, the mediating role of difficulties in emotion regulation in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being was investigated, and it was discovered to be fully mediated. This means that intolerance of uncertainty predicts well-being indirectly via difficulties with emotion regulation. According to the findings, intolerance of uncertainty is positively associated with difficulties in emotion regulation, while difficulties in emotion regulation are negatively associated with well-being. In support of the current study's findings, a previous study found that intolerance of uncertainty and limited access to emotion regulation strategies are positively related (Ouellet et al., 2019). Furthermore, emotional intelligence is linked to well-being via specific cognitive emotion regulation strategies (Extremera et al., 2020). These studies show that intolerance of uncertainty is associated with emotion regulation, which is associated with well-being. In addition, a study found that intolerance of uncertainty and emotion regulation are negatively related, with a partial mediation of emotion regulation between intolerance of uncertainty and spiritual well-being (Yilmaz & Satici, 2024). The fact that spiritual well-being, as a type of well-being, is associated with the variables discussed in the current study lends support to the hypothesis. From this perspective, it is understood that people who are not tolerant of uncertainty struggle with emotion regulation and thus feel less well-being.

Another hypothesis was tested: the role of entrapment in mediating the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental health. Analysis revealed that entrapment plays a full mediating role. In other words, intolerance of uncertainty indirectly predicts well-being because it has a positive relationship with entrapment and a negative relationship with well-being. Entrapment is known to have a negative impact on positive mental health and well-being (Teismann & Brailovskaia, 2020). Entrapment also predicts depression, both directly and through hopelessness (Choi & Shin, 2023). A similar situation applies to the intolerance of uncertainty. Research has shown that intolerance of uncertainty is linked to hopelessness and depression (Andrews et al., 2023; Demirtas & Yildiz, 2019). In addition, intolerance of uncertainty and entrapment have been linked to anxiety in separate studies (Arbona et al., 2021; Griffiths et al., 2014). All of these findings are consistent with those of the current study. Individuals with uncertainty intolerance are expected to have lower levels of mental well-being due to feelings of entrapment.

Analyses conducted within the scope of the last hypothesis revealed that difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment served as serial mediators in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being.

When the literature was reviewed, it was discovered that the concepts addressed in this study were addressed in pairs in previous studies (e.g., Cai et al., 2018; Cheon, 2011). According to the findings of a study that examined three of these concepts in a broader context, difficulties with emotion regulation mediate the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and stress (Godara et al., 2023). It is known that the concepts addressed in the scope of this research, which is being conducted to better understand, protect, and improve mental health, are related to a life-threatening issue such as suicide (Kelek et al., 2022; Moscardini et al., 2022; Ong & Thompson, 2019). Considering the relationships among themselves as well as the relationships of related concepts with similar concepts in different studies, it is clear that the interconceptual relationships discovered in the current study are supported by other studies. Based on all of this, it is reasonable to expect that life is full of uncertainty, and individuals' inability to tolerate it may cause them to struggle with emotion regulation and feel trapped, resulting in a negative state of mental health. Being tolerant in the face of uncertainty demonstrates that people can better regulate their emotions. As a result, people can have high levels of well-being while feeling less trapped.

Discussion

The study's findings revealed that difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment play a serial mediation role in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and mental well-being. In other words, intolerance of uncertainty predicts mental health through difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment. Individuals' high intolerance of uncertainty has been identified as a factor that may contribute to lower levels of mental well-being due to greater difficulties in emotion regulation and feelings of entrapment. In the literature, intolerance of uncertainty is a quantitative model that explains the relationship between mental health, difficulties with emotion regulation, and entrapment. Being intolerant of life's variability and unpredictability can make conditions difficult for people and contribute to emotional regulation issues. Furthermore, it could indicate that the feeling of entrapment is more intense. As a result, one could argue that it has a negative impact on mental health. At this point, programs that teach individuals to be tolerant of uncertain situations can help them have fewer difficulties with emotion regulation and entrapment. Emotion regulation interventions are known to be effective in teaching and developing emotion regulation skills (Moore et al., 2022). Individuals can participate in group counseling or practice emotion regulation skills during individual counseling sessions. Individuals may find it easier to regulate their emotions, and they may feel less trapped. As a result, it may have some impact on people's well-being.

Limitations and Future Research

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the research findings, despite their significant contributions to the field. First and foremost, the data for this study were gathered using self-report-based measurement tools, despite the fact that no research in the literature addresses the concepts examined in the scope of the current study collectively. This shows that the variables that can be explained by the data are limited to those that fall within the measurement tools' range. Future research may use a range of methods in addition to self-report-based measuring instruments (e.g. observation, interview, peer assessment, etc.). An additional constraint pertains to the research methodology. Because of the cross-sectional nature of the sample and the nature of the quantitative method, care should be taken when interpreting the cause-and-effect relationship, even though the study employed structural equation modeling, which can yield robust results from quantitative methods, and bootstrapping to increase the number of samples to 5000. Longitudinal and experimental studies are necessary to fully reveal these causal orders, even though the structural equation model predicts that difficulties in emotion regulation and entrapment lead to mental health and that intolerance of uncertainty leads to those difficulties. The study's scope being limited to the variables listed is another drawback. It is possible to look into the mediating role of different concepts between mental health and the intolerance of uncertainty. Tolerating uncertainty may require different dispositions in different people. Research can now be done to assist people in adjusting to uncertain circumstances. However, it is possible to create programs that advance wellbeing. Emotional control and decision-making abilities can be taken into consideration when discussing entrapment. Programs based on mindfulness can be employed at these stages (Sanilevici et al., 2021).

Declaration of Competing Interest

As authors, we declare that there is no financial or non-financial conflict of interest that may affect this research.

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