SELF-COMPASSION AND INTERPERSONAL COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

ÖZ-DUYARLIK VE İLİŞKİLERLE İLGİLİ BİLİŞSEL ÇARPITMALAR

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions. Participants were 338 university students. In this study, the Self-compassion Scale and the Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions Scale were used. The relationships between self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions were examined using correlation analysis and the hypothesis model was tested through structural equation modeling. In correlation analysis, self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness factors of self-compassion were found negatively and self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification factors of self-compassion were found positively related to interpersonal cognitive distortions. The model demonstrated excellent fit (χ^2/df= 1.37, p=.036, GFI=.97, AGFI=.94, CFI=.99, NFI=.98, IFI=.99, RFI=.96, SRMR=.036, and RMSEA=.040) and also accounted for 93% of interpersonal cognitive distortions variances. According to path analysis results, interpersonal cognitive distortions were predicted negatively by self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Further self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification predicted interpersonal cognitive distortions in a positive way. Results were discussed in the light of the related literature.

Keywords: Self-compassion, interpersonal cognitive distortions, path analysis

ÖZET: Bu araştırmanın amacı öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemini 338 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılara Öz-duyarlık Ölçeği ve İlişkilerle İlgili Bilişsel Çarpıtmalar Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek için yapılan korelasyon sonucunda öz-duyarlığın, öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçlilik alt boyutlarının ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalarla negatif, öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme boyutlarının ise pozitif ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. İlişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaların öz-duyarlık tarafından açıklanma düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla kurulan yapısal eşitlik modelinden elde edilen uyum indeksleri modelin iyi uyum verdiğini göstermiştir (χ^2/sd= 1.37, p=.036, GFI=.97, AGFI=.94, CFI=.99, NFI=.98, IFI=.99, RFI=.96, SRMR=.036 ve RMSEA=.040). Öz-duyarlığın ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaları açıklama oranı R^2=.93 olarak bulunmuştur. Path analizi sonuçları, öz-duyarlığın öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçlilik boyutlarının ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaları negatif, öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme boyutlarının ise pozitif yönde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Bulgular literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Öz-duyarlık, ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar, path analizi

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-compassion is an alternative way to conceptualize having a healthy stance toward oneself that does not involve evaluations of self-worth. This structure involves being discerning and gentle towards oneself in the face of hardship or perceived inadequacy. It also entails acknowledging that suffering, failure, and inadequacies are part of the human condition and that all people, oneself included, are worthy of compassion (Neff, 2003b; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007). As described by Neff (2003a, b) self-compassion involves three principal components: (a) Self-kindness (an attitude of kindness and understanding to one's self as opposed to harsh judgment), (b) Common humanity (perceiving one's experiences as part of the larger human condition instead of feeling separate and isolated), and (c) Mindfulness (being mindfully aware of painful experiences without over-identifying with them). While these three dimensions of self-compassion are conceptually distinct and are experienced differently at the phenomenological level, they also interact so as to mutually enhance and engender one another (Neff, 2003a).

The first dimension, self-kindness, refers to being kind and understanding toward oneself in instances of pain or failure rather than being harshly self-critical. When noticing some disliked aspect of one's personality, for example, the flaw is treated gently and the emotional tone of language used towards the self is soft and supportive (Neff, 2009). Self-compassion requires not being self-critical when one's expectations are not met and not being harmful to individual's ego in order to make achievements. Instead, self-compassion suggests the individual should encourage his/her ego gently

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and patiently to change behaviors (Neff, 2003a). Common humanity, the second dimension of self-compassion, is seeing one's happy or painful experiences as not personal, but as all human beings'. The sense of common humanity principal to self-compassion involves recognizing that all humans are imperfect and that they fail and make mistakes (Neff, 2009). Having this kind of awareness, one perceives these experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than feeling isolated and alienated from the society and harshly criticizing oneself for failure and suffering experiences (Neff, 2003a). This awareness also emphasizes one's relatedness to all other humans and to another individual (Kirkpatrick, 2005).

Mindfulness, the last component of self-compassion, is a pre-conceptual awareness that allows individual to accept life's most stressful and painful emotions without being carried away by them (Gunaratana, 1993; Martin, 1997; Neff, 2003a; Nisker, 1998; Rosenberg, 1999). Mindfulness is a state of balanced awareness that one's feelings and thoughts are observed without avoiding or trying to change them, without exaggeration and prejudice. When individuals accept and tolerate their distress and pain, when they are gentle and kind toward themselves, they avoid suppressing their emotions and thoughts. Thus, when they are aware that distress and pain are something all humans experience, they are not trapped by over-identification. Therefore, self-compassion functions as an adaptive strategy for emotion-organizing through decreasing negative emotions but creating more positive emotions of kindness and relatedness (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005).

A growing body of research has found that higher self-compassion is associated with greater psychological well-being (Akın, 2008b): less depression, anxiety, rumination, and thought suppression, greater life satisfaction and social relatedness (Neff, 2003b). Neff, Rude, and Kirkpatrick (2007) found that self-compassion was associated with increased levels of reflective and affective wisdom, personal initiative, curiosity and exploration, happiness, optimism, and positive affect. They also found that self-compassion was significantly associated with extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism (negatively), though self-compassion still predicted unique variance in positive functioning after controlling for personality variables.

The other studies have demonstrated that self-compassion is negatively associated with performance-approach/avoidance goals (Akın, 2008a), submissive behavior (Akın, 2009); and positively associated with social relationship, emotional intelligence, self-determination (Neff, 2003a), self-deception (Akın & Abacı, 2009), and learning-approach goals (Akın, 2008a). In addition, it has been found out that although self-compassion is significantly related to self-esteem it is not associated with narcissism (Neff, 2003a).

Interpersonal cognitive distortions. The interpersonal cognitive distortions are highly exaggerated, inappropriately rigid, illogical, and absolutist thought patterns on the nature of relationships (DiGiuseppe & Zee, 1986). These distortions impact the manner in which people communicate with others and create barriers in effectiveness of that communication. People develop interpersonal cognitive distortions based partly on belief systems and family scripts. Interpersonal cognitive distortions constitute the eventual percepts of the external situations responsible for the elicitation of emotional/behavioral problems (Leung & Poon, 2001).

Examples of the major types of cognitive distortions are external attribution (i.e., blaming the occurrence of negative events to external sources), personalizing (i.e., taking excessive responsibility for the occurrence of negative events), catastrophizing (i.e., dwelling on the worst possible outcome of any situation), mental filtering (i.e., dwelling upon one single negative detail so exclusively, that the vision of all reality is darkened), and jumping to conclusions (i.e., making negative interpretation despite the fact that there are no definite facts to support the conclusion) (Beck, 1995).

Numerous research emphasize that cognitive distortions about the relationship play an important role in marital distress and in commencing and maintaining the dysfunctional behaviors and psychological disorders (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979). Studies showed that interpersonal cognitive distortions are associated positively with shyness, fear of negative evaluation, interpersonal rejection, unrealistic relationship expectation, interpersonal misperception (Koydemir & Demir, 2008), anxiety, depression, aggression (Leung & Poon, 2001), automatic thoughts, and conflict tendency (Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004) and negatively with relationship satisfaction (Haferkamp, 1994;

Sullivan & Schwebel, 1995), dyadic adjustment (Hamamcı, 2005), and self-esteem (Koydemir & Demir, 2008).

1.1. The Present Study

Although relatively less is known about the source of individual variation in interpersonal cognitive distortions levels, it is likely that some variance is explained by innate differences in self-compassion. Thus the current study examines the relationships between self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions.

Preliminary evidence suggests that self-compassion is related to cognitive based social personality traits such as extraversion, social connectedness (Neff & McGehee, 2010), self-determination, and feeling interpersonally connected to others (Neff, 2003a, b). Also higher levels of self-compassion have been associated with greater life satisfaction, emotional intelligence, as well as less self-criticism, depression, anxiety, rumination, thought suppression, perfectionism, and disordered eating behaviors (Adams & Leary, 2007; Neff, 2003a; Neff, Hseih, & Dejitthirat, 2005; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007; Neff & McGehee, 2010). In contrary interpersonal cognitive distortions are barriers to healthy communication between people and they can cause people to "misread" or "misinterpret" what others are saying. This type of communication impact the mental health of the thought holder and when these distortions are eliminated, the individual will have an improved mood.

Therefore in this study self-compassion was utilized as indicator of psychological health (Neff, 2009; Neff & Vonk, 2009) and interpersonal cognitive distortions as indicator of psychological maladjustment (Leung & Poon, 2001). Based on the relationships of self-compassion (Adams & Leary, 2007; Akın, 2008a, b; Akın, 2009; Akın & Abacı, 2009; Neff, 2003a, b; Neff, Hseih, & Dejitthirat, 2005; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007; Neff & McGehee, 2010; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007) and interpersonal cognitive distortions (Haferkamp, 1994; Hamamcı, 2005; Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004; Koydemir & Demir, 2008; Leung & Poon, 2001; Sullivan & Schwebel, 1995) with psychological and social constructs it was hypothesized that self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness would be associated negatively with interpersonal cognitive distortions. It was also hypothesized that self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification would be related positively to interpersonal cognitive distortions. This model is represented schematically in Figure 1.
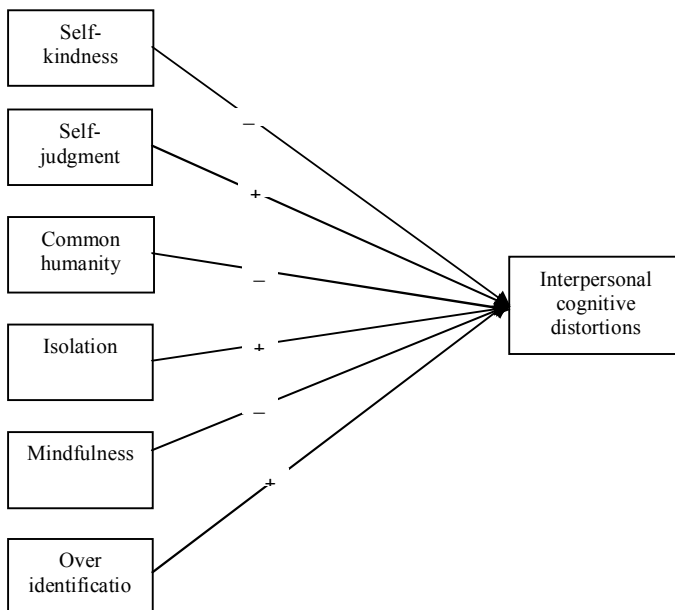

Figure 1. Path analysis between Self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

Participants were 338 university students (204 (60%) were female, 134 (40%) were male) who were enrolled in mid-size state University, in Turkey. Their ages ranged from 17 to 29 years and the mean age of the participants was 20.3 years.

2.2. Measures

Self-compassion Scale. Self-compassion was measured by using Self-compassion Scale (Neff, 2003b). Turkish adaptation of this scale had been done by Akın, Akın, and Abacı (2007). Self-compassion Scale is a 26-item self-report measurement and consists of six sub-scales; self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=*strongly disagree* to 5=*strongly agree*). Language validity findings indicated that correlations between Turkish and English forms were .94, .94, .87, .89, .92, and .94 for six subscales, respectively. Results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the model was well fit. The goodness of fit index values of the model were RMSEA= .056, NFI= .95, CFI= .97, IFI= .97, RFI= .94, GFI= .91, and SRMR= .059. The internal consistency coefficients were .77, .72, .72, .80, .74, and .74 and the test-retest reliability coefficients were .69, .59, .66, .60 .69, and .56, for six subscales, respectively.

Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions Scale (ICDS). The ICDS was developed to measure dysfunctional beliefs related to general human relationships (Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004). It consists of three subscales (i.e., interpersonal rejection, unrealistic relationship expectation, inter-personal misperception) with 19 items in all. The responses were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). High scores represented a high level of dysfunctional relationship beliefs. Internal consistency coefficient was .73 for the first subscale, .66 for the second, and .43 for the third (Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004). The test–retest coefficient in 15 days was .74. The ICDS correlated positively with automatic thoughts related to depression (r=.54), irrational beliefs (r=.54), and conflict tendencies (r=.53).

2.2. Procedure

Permission for participation of students was obtained from related chief departments and students voluntarily participated in research. Completion of the scales was anonymous and there was a guarantee of confidentiality. The scales were administered to the students in groups in the classrooms. The measures were counterbalanced in administration. Prior to administration of scales, all participants were told about purposes of the study. In this research, Pearson correlation coefficient and structural equation modeling was utilized to determine the relationships between dimensions of self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions. These analyses were carried out via LISREL 8.54 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1996) and SPSS 11.5.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Descriptive Data and Inter-correlations

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, inter-correlations, and internal consistency coefficients of the variables used.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Alphas, and Inter-correlations of the Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Self-kindness	1.00						
2. Self-judgment	-.60**	1.00					
3. Common humanity	.77**	-.63**	1.00				
4. Isolation	-.59**	.73**	-.64**	1.00			
5. Mindfulness	.75**	-.60**	.73**	-.52**	1.00		
6. Over-identification	-.62**	.77**	-.62**	.71**	-.63**	1.00	
7. Interpersonal cognitive distortions	-.59**	.72**	-.58**	.75**	-.56**	.73**	1.00
Mean	20,01	9,08	16,30	7,51	16,39	7,16	41,18
Standard deviation	3,67	3,45	3,09	2,86	3,08	3,20	9,53
Alpha	.83	.81	.88	.77	.80	.74	.79
**p < .01							

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there are significant correlations between dimensions of self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions. Self-kindness ($r=-.59$), common humanity ($r=-.58$), and mindfulness ($r=-.56$) related negatively to interpersonal cognitive distortions. In contrary, self-judgment ($r=.72$), isolation ($r=.75$), and over-identification ($r=.73$) were found positively associated with interpersonal cognitive distortions. There were also significant correlations between dimensions of self-compassion.

3.2. Structural Equation Modeling

Hypothesized model was examined via structural equation modeling (SEM). According to this model, interpersonal cognitive distortions are predicted by six dimensions of self-compassion. Figure 2 presents the results of SEM analysis, using maximum likelihood estimations. The model demonstrated excellent fit (χ^2/degrees of freedom= 1.37, $p=.036$, GFI=.97, AGFI=.94, CFI=.99, NFI=.98, IFI=.99, RFI=.96, SRMR=.036, and RMSEA=.040) and also accounted for 93% of the interpersonal cognitive distortions variances.
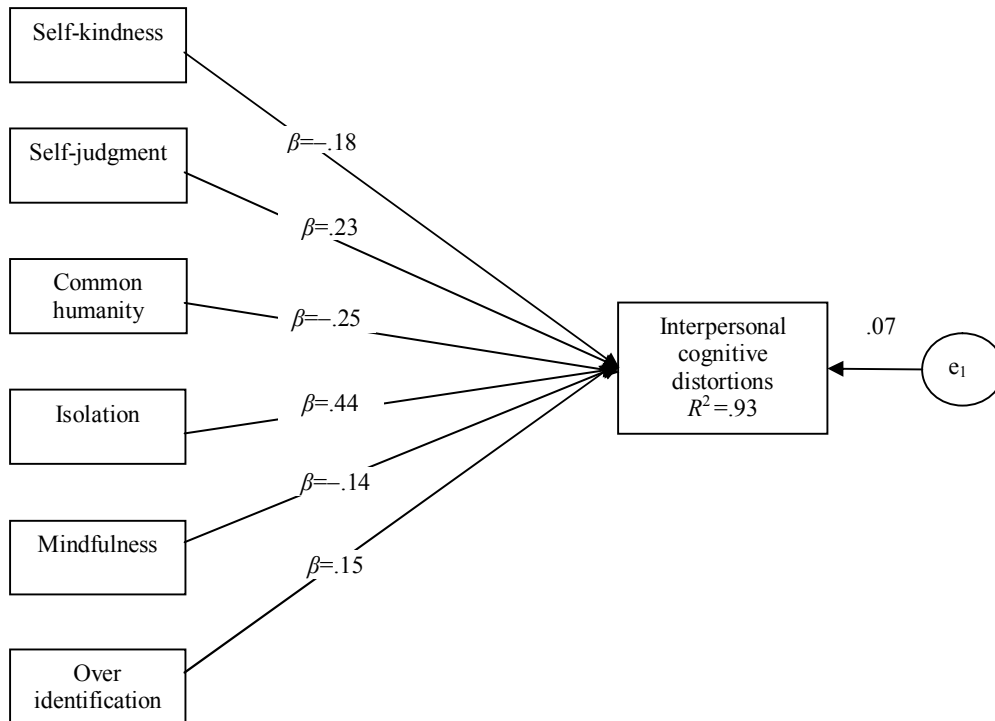

Figure 2. Path analysis between self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions

The standardized coefficients in Figure 1 clearly showed that interpersonal cognitive distortions was predicted negatively by self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (-.18, -.25, and -.14, respectively). On the other hand, self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification predicted interpersonal cognitive distortions in a positive way (.23, .44, and .15, respectively).

4. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationships between self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions. Findings demonstrated that there are significant relationships between these two variables. Also the goodness of fit indexes indicated that the model was acceptable and that correlations among measures were explained by the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The structural model illustrated that self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, positive dimensions of self-compassion, predicted interpersonal cognitive distortions negatively. These three components of self-compassion are adaptive in nature and they represent that, in the event of negative life-experiences, individual's approach toward himself is warm, gentle, and kind. Another feature of these dimensions is that individuals do not harshly judge and criticize themselves when they notice something about themselves they don't like and self-criticism is known to be an important predictor of anxiety and depression (Neff, 2009). Because people who high in self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness recognize when they are suffering, but when doing so they provide themselves feelings of warmth, kindness, and interconnectedness with the rest of humanity (Neff, 2009), they can experience more positive and less negative emotions.

The negative relationships between self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness and interpersonal cognitive distortions which have found in the present study support the results of previous research which suggest that self-compassionate people possess many of the psychological strengths such as happiness, optimism, positive affect (Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), and psychological well-being (Akın, 2008b). Contrarily, the interpersonal cognitive distortions was found correlated positively with maladaptive psychological variables, including shyness, fear of negative evaluation, interpersonal rejection, unrealistic relationship expectation, interpersonal misperception (Koydemir & Demir, 2008), anxiety, depression, aggression (Leung & Poon, 2001), automatic thoughts, conflict tendency (Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004), less relationship satisfaction (Haferkamp, 1994; Sullivan & Schwebel, 1995), and lower self-esteem (Koydemir & Demir, 2008). So it can be said that the interpersonal cognitive distortions may be viewed as psychologically maladaptive. Then the negative relationships between adaptive dimensions of self-compassion (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) and interpersonal cognitive distortions are not surprising.

However, self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification which can be viewed as maladaptive components of self-compassion were found positively correlated with interpersonal cognitive distortions. Among all other variables the isolation dimension has the highest correlation with interpersonal cognitive distortions. This partly may be due to the fact that interpersonal cognitive distortions are associated with the socially problems such as fear of negative evaluation, interpersonal rejection, and interpersonal misperception. Self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification means that individual attributes him/herself for making errors and unsuccessful life experiences, intensively identify him/herself with negative feelings when faced failure, being swept up in and carried away by the story-line of one's own pain (Neff, 2003b). They involve individual's self-critical, negative self-assessment, and being seized by emotions when they experience a stressful and painful event. Research on self-compassion consistently proved that self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification factors related positively to negative variables such as anxiety, depression, self-criticism, neuroticism, rumination, thought suppression, neurotic perfectionism (Neff, 2003a, b; Neff, Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2005; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), and submissive behavior (Akın, 2009). Therefore the positive relationships between maladaptive components of self-compassion and interpersonal cognitive distortions are seems understandable.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The present research demonstrates that the self-compassion associated with interpersonal cognitive distortions. An increment in interpersonal cognitive distortions will increase self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification and decrease self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. This research also suggests that the encouragement of self-compassion could be highly beneficial for diminishing interpersonal cognitive distortions. Additionally, encouraging the development of self-compassion should be useful individuals by helping them to counter destructive self-critical tendencies, recognize their interconnection with others, and deal with their emotions with greater clarity and equanimity (Neff, 2003a). Nonetheless it is important to note that research on self-compassion is still in its nascent phases and more research will need to be done before any policy implications can be drawn. Also there are enough positive indicators from self-compassion studies to suggest that more research on self-compassion would be a worthwhile (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005).

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Geniş Özet

Öz-duyarlık, bireyin acı ve sıkıntı çekmesine neden olan duygularına açık olması, kendine özenli ve sevecen tutumlarla yaklaşması, yetersizlik ve başarısızlıklarına karşı anlayışlı ve yargısız olması ve yaşadığı olumsuz deneyimlerin insan yaşamının bir parçası olduğunu kabul etmesi olarak tanımlanabilir. Öz-duyarlık üç temel unsurdan oluşmaktadır: (a) Öz-sevecenlik; (b) Paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve (c) Bilinçlilik. Öz-sevecenlik, bireyin ön yargısız olarak kendini anlamaya çalışması ve benliğini sert biçimde yargılama ve eleştirmesi yerine ona yönelik nazik ve sevecen bir tavır takınmasıdır. Paylaşımların bilincinde olma, bireyin yaşamın mutlu veya sıkıntılı deneyimlerinin sadece kendi benliğine özgü olmadığına ve diğer tüm insanların benzer deneyimler yaşadıklarına ilişkin farkındalığını ifade eder. Öz-duyarlığın üçüncü unsuru olan bilinçlilik ise bireyin yaşamının sıkıntılı ve üzücü duygularını kabul etmesini sağlayan ancak bu duygular tarafından sürüklenmesine izin vermeyen bir farkındalıktır (Gunaratana, 1993; Martin, 1997; Neff, 2003b; Nisker, 1998). Bu üç boyut kavramsal anlamda birbirlerinden farklı olmalarına ve fenomonolojik düzeyde farklı yaşanmalarına rağmen birbirleriyle karşılıklı etkileşimde bulunmakta, birbirlerinin meydana gelmesine ve gelişimlerine yardımcı olmaktadır. Araştırmalar öz-duyarlığın, öz-eleştiri, depresyon, anksiyete, derin düşünme ve düşünce baskısı (Neff, 2003a), boyun eğici davranış (Akın, 2009) ile negatif sosyal ilişki, duygusal zekâ, öz-saygı, öz-iradeli olma (Neff, 2003a) ve kendini aldatma (Akın & Abacı, 2009) ile pozitif ilişkili olduğunu kanıtlamıştır. Öz-duyarlık alanında yapılan araştırmalar oldukça yeni olduğu için, bu kavramın çeşitli değişkenlerle ilişkisini inceleyen araştırmalara ihtiyaç duyulduğu ortadadır.

İlişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar, bireylerin sosyal ilişkilerinde fonksiyonel olmayan duygu ve davranışların gelişmesinde önemli bir faktördür. Bu çarpıtmalar oldukça yüksek düzeyde katı, abartılı, mantıkdışı ve mutlakçı düşünce şablonları içermektedir (DiGiuseppe & Zee, 1986). İnanç sistemleri ve bireyin yetiştirilme tarzıyla yakından ilişkili olan ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar bireyin diğer bireylerle sağlıklı ilişkiler kurmasını engeller ve kişiler arası ilişkilerde yanlış anlaşılma ve yorumlamalara yol açar. Zamanla bu durum bilişsel çarpıtmalara sahip bireyin psikolojik sağlığını zedelediği için çarpıtmaların elimine edilmesi bireyin duygusal yapısının dengeli olmasına yardımcı olacaktır (Leung & Poon, 2001). Araştırmalarda ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaların; utangaçlık, olumsuz değerlendirilme korkusu, gerçekçi olmayan ilişki beklentisi, kişiler arası ilişkilerde yanlış anlama (Koydemir & Demir, 2008), otomatik düşünceler ve çatışma eğilimi (Hamamcı & Büyüköztürk, 2004) ile pozitif, ilişkiden elde edilen doyum (Haferkamp, 1994; Sullivan & Schwebel, 1995), öz-saygı (Koydemir & Demir, 2008) ve evlilik uyumuyla (Hamamcı, 2005) negatif ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur.

Bu araştırmanın amacı öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektir. Hipotez modelinde öz-duyarlığın; öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve

bilinçlilik alt boyutları ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalarla negatif, öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme alt boyutları ise pozitif ilişkilendirilmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklemini Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi'nin çeşitli bölümlerinde öğrenim gören 338 üniversite öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. 204'ü kız, 134'ü erkek öğrenciden oluşan örneklemin yaş ortalaması 20.3'tür.

Araştırmada ölçme aracı olarak Öz-duyarlık Ölçeği ile İlişkilerle İlgili Bilişsel Çarpıtmalar Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Neff (2003b) tarafından geliştirilen Öz-duyarlık Ölçeği 6 alt boyuttan oluşmaktadır: öz-sevecenlik, öz-yargılama, paylaşımların bilincinde olma, izolasyon, bilinçlilik ve aşırı özdeşleşme. 26 maddeden oluşan ve 5'li Likert tipi bir ölçme aracı olan Öz-duyarlık Ölçeği'nin Türkçe uyarlama çalışması ile geçerlik ve güvenirlik analizleri Akın ve diğerleri (2007) tarafından gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ölçeğin iç tutarlık güvenirlik katsayıları .72 ile .80, üç hafta arayla yapılan test-tekrar test güvenirlik katsayıları ise .56 ile .69 arasında değişmektedir. Hamamcı ve Büyüköztürk (2004) tarafından geliştirilen, İlişkilerle İlgili Bilişsel Çarpıtmalar Ölçeği (İBÇÖ) ise 19 bilişsel çarpıtma ifadesinden oluşmaktadır. Ölçekte, "Yakınlıktan Kaçınma" (8 madde), "Gerçekçi Olmayan İlişki Beklentisi" (8 madde) ve "Zihin Okuma" (3 madde) olmak üzere üç boyut bulunmaktadır. Ölçekte yer alan maddeler beş basamaklı Likert tipinde derecelendirilmektedir. Ölçeğin tümü için iç tutarlık katsayısı .67, test-tekrar test korelasyon katsayısı ise .74 olarak bulunmuştur.

Araştırmada öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasındaki ilişkiler korelasyon ve yapısal eşitlik modeliyle incelenmiştir. Elde edilen veriler SPSS 11.5 ve LISREL 8.54 programları kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek için yapılan korelasyon sonucunda, öz-duyarlığın öz-sevecenlik ($r = -.59$), paylaşımların bilincinde olma ($r = -.58$) ve bilinçlilik ($r = -.56$) alt boyutlarının ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalarla negatif ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Öz-duyarlığın diğer alt boyutları olan öz-yargılama ($r = .72$), izolasyon ($r = .75$) ve aşırı özdeşleşme ($r = .73$) ise ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalarla pozitif ilişkili bulunmuştur. İlişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaların öz-duyarlık tarafından açıklanma düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla kurulan yapısal eşitlik modelinden elde edilen uyum indeksleri modelin iyi uyum verdiğini göstermektedir (χ^2/sd= 1.37, *p*=.036, GFI=.97, AGFI=.94, CFI=.99, NFI=.98, IFI=.99, RFI=.96, SRMR=.036 ve RMSEA=.040). Path analizi sonuçları, öz-sevecenlik, paylaşımların bilincinde olma ve bilinçliliğin ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaları negatif yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Öz-yargılama, izolasyon ve aşırı özdeşleşme ise ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaları açıklamada pozitif katkıda bulunmuştur. Öz-duyarlık alt boyutlarının ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmaları açıklama oranı R^2=.93 olarak bulunmuştur.

Araştırmanın yürütüldüğü çalışma grubunun üniversite öğrencileriyle sınırlı olması elde edilen bulguların genellenebilirliğini bir derece kısıtlamaktadır. Bu nedenle araştırmada ele alınan değişkenlerin üniversite öğrencileri dışındaki diğer örneklem grupları üzerinde incelenmesi önemlidir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular bir bütün olarak ele alındığında öz-duyarlık ile ilişkilerle ilgili bilişsel çarpıtmalar arasında doğrudan bir ilişki olduğu söylenebilir. Eğitsel ortamların bireylerin öz-duyarlık düzeylerinin gelişmesine yardımcı olacak şekilde düzenlenmesi son derece önemlidir.