

**THE ROLE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES, COMMUNICATION
PATTERN AND SEXUAL SATISFACTION AS PREDICTORS OF HOW TO
CONSIDER DIVORCE IN MARRIED INDIVIDUALS**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to determine the conflict resolution styles, communication patterns and sexual satisfaction what extent truly classify married individuals' thinking about divorce and not thinking about divorce. The research group consists of 396 married people. In this study, those who think about divorce and those who do not are divided into two categories and Binary Logistic Regression analysis was performed to classify these groups by sub-dimensions of conflict resolution styles, aggressive communication pattern, destructive communication pattern and sexual satisfaction variables. Conflict Resolution Styles Scale, Communication Styles Scale and Golombok-Rust Sexual Satisfaction Scale were used for data collection. As a result of the analysis, it is seen that the sub-dimensions of conflict resolution styles (positive conflict, negative conflict, submission and withdrawal), aggressive communication pattern, destructive communication pattern and sexual satisfaction are effective in correctly classifying married individuals who are considering divorce or not.

Keywords: Divorce; conflict resolution; communication pattern; sexual satisfaction; binary logistic regression

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EVLİ BİREYLERDE BOŞANMAYI DÜŞÜNÜP DÜŞÜNMEMENİN YORDAYICISI OLARAK ÇATIŞMA ÇÖZME STİLLERİ, İLETİŞİM ÖRÜNTÜSÜ ve CİNSEL DOYUMUN ROLÜ

ÖZET

Araştırmanın amacı çatışma çözme stilleri, iletişim örüntüsü ve cinsel doyumun evli bireylerin boşanmayı düşünme ve düşünmeme durumlarını ne derece doğru sınıflandırdığını belirlemektir. Araştırma grubu evli 396 kişiden oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışmada boşanmayı düşünenler ve düşünmeyenler iki kategoriye ayrılmışlar ve bu grupların çatışma çözme stillerinin alt boyutları, saldırgan iletişim örüntüsü, yıkıcı iletişim örüntüsü ve cinsel doyum değişkenleri tarafından sınıflandırılmasına yönelik Binary Lojistik Regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Çatışma Çözüm Stilleri Ölçeği, İletişim Şekilleri Ölçeği ve Golombok-Rust Cinsel Doyum Ölçeği veri toplamada kullanılmıştır. Yapılan analiz sonucunda çatışma çözme stillerinin alt boyutları (olumlu çatışma, olumsuz çatışma, boyun eğme ve geri çekilme), saldırgan iletişim örüntüsü, yıkıcı iletişim örüntüsü ve cinsel doyumun boşanmayı düşünen ve düşünmeyen evli bireyleri doğru sınıflandırmada etkili olduğu görülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler. Boşanma; çatışma çözme; iletişim örüntüsü; cinsel doyum; binary lojistik regresyon

INTRODUCTION

Why some relationships are perpetual, while others are like a ticking time bomb? Why do some marriages sometimes get into trouble? Why do people who decide to bind their lives by loving each other so much decide to divorce one day? How to prevent a marriage from getting ruined? All these and similar questions have formed the basis of research, especially in the field of family and couple counseling.

Marriage provides many material and nonmaterial benefits for spouses (Waite & Gallagher, 2000). Married individuals reportedly have better psychological and physical health and have more financial opportunities than unmarried ones (Marcussen, 2005; Waite & Gallagher, 2000). Married individuals in Turkey are also reported to be happier than singles (TÜİK, 2021). On the other hand, when we look at divorce indicators in Turkey in the TÜİK data, 91994 people divorced in 2001 (with a divorce rate of roughly 1.35 per thousand), while this number increased to 135022 in 2020 (with a divorce rate of roughly 1.62 per thousand). However, the rough divorce rate in the world was 1.95 in 2020 (Kara, 2020).

Before the divorce is finalized legally with separation, it grows as a thought in individuals' minds, and they become lonely within themselves from an emotional perspective (Uyar, 1999). As part of its emotional, psychological, social, and economic consequences, divorce is a phenomenon that may affect both the spouses and the people around them. Considering the consequences, divorce may affect the individual and the family evermore over the years. Based on the theorem that healthy spouses are the foundation of healthy societies, couples should be considered primarily as social values, not just as persons in a romantic relationship (Tatkin, 2020).

The court records and statistical data on divorce data in Turkey show that the most common reason for divorce is the “disruption of family unity”, i.e., the dissension (Yıldırım, 2004). However, the reasons for divorce that could be considered as the disruption of marital union differ in the Turkish Civil Code. Such a general definition that dissension is the reason for divorce obscures the true reasons for divorce and leads to uncertainty (Sürerbiçer, 2008). Divorce is a complex process that cannot be explained by a single factor.

It is noteworthy that problems married couples experience during their marriage are parallel to the causes of divorce. Kelley et al. (1983) suggest determining the interaction patterns of the couples to understand whether a marriage is truly successful or not. Understanding the interaction patterns in a relationship depends on understanding an ongoing communication between spouses (Thomas, 1977). Malkoç (2001) states that spouses with low marital adjustment scores use more destructive communication than those with high marital adjustment scores; however, there is no difference in communication styles according to gender.

There is an emphasis on the importance of the couples’ ability to talk about their marriage in order to maintain a healthy relationship (Dokur & Profeta, 2006). To carry out the marital relationship in a healthy manner, many factors such as spouses mutually providing emotional support to each other, respecting and adapting to their personal characteristics, having positive communication skills, and sexual compatibility should be considered. Unresolved conflicts, weak and negative communication patterns emerge when these duties and behaviors are unfulfilled between the couples (Kalkan & Yalçın, 2015). When dissensions and differences between couples cannot be resolved through healthy communication, negative experiences rise between spouses over time. As a result, they may cause spouses to feel dissatisfaction in their relationships and increase negative perspectives regarding the relationship (Strong, DeVault, & Cohen, 2005).

A significant relationship between spouses’ communication patterns and relationship satisfaction in marriage has been demonstrated in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Carrere & Gottman, 1999; Gottman & Levenson, 1992). It is stated that the communication of couples, especially during conflict, is closely related to and a significant predictor of marital adjustment (Noller & Feeney, 2002). Additionally, strong communication is necessary for spouses to establish intimacy and commitment with each other and to manage their power and conflict (Feeney & Noller, 1991; Sillars, Leonard, Roberts, & Dun, 2002). Positive and strong communication between spouses, in particular, helps to overcome the tensions and difficulties in daily marriage life. It also prevents the accumulation of resentments and anger (Jacobson & Margolin, 1979). The communication styles established between marriage partners and these patterns that could predict a possible divorce are underlined as important variables (Gottman, 1999, 2011).

In addition to communication skills, dysfunction in conflict styles is also seen as one of the primary causes of problems in marriage. Raush et al. (1974) argue that avoidance and discussion styles at two

extremes of the conflict are dysfunctional. Research shows that hostile conflict is one of the signs of unhappiness in marriage (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman, 1999). Gottman and Silver (2017) define hostile conflict as the interaction pattern of a negative couple. They also argue that the four habits they call as Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling) increase conflicts and lead couples towards divorce. In this interaction pattern, arguments are frequent and quite heated, and couples insult and humiliate each other. In addition, unwillingness to listen, lack of emotional interest, and higher negative behaviors than positive ones are seen more in communication patterns (Topham, Larson, & Holman, 2005). It is emphasized that the preferred conflict styles in married couples, dissension (Gottman, 1999), and the existence of hostile conflicts predict divorce in marriage by 80% accuracy (Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Moreover, Roberts' (2000) study, examining the relationship between the current stage of the spouses and their future marital satisfaction, showed that hostile response is closely related to marital problems. Avoiding intimacy, avoiding conflict, avoiding anger, and hostile response behaviors are determined to be among the main predictors of marriage satisfaction.

Experiencing disagreements and discontentment in marriages where two different people come together is inevitable. The conflict styles of spouses are different from each other; while some avoid fighting without arguing, others fuel the escalation of the conflict by arguing. Some couples can also have gentle initiations during the argument by talking about their differences. The marriage of spouses who experience conflict but can resolve it is unproblematic than those who cannot (Öner, 2013). In some way, the quality of a relationship is not determined by the absence of conflict but by how conflicts are managed, and 31% of conflicts in relationships are resolved with communication skills (Gottman, 1999). In marriages where conflicts persist hostilely and constantly, spouses may break away emotionally from each other with time. As such, they may retire into their shells, feeling worthless in their marriage. In tandem with the increasing distance between them and their spouses, people organize their lives in such a way that are parallel but move towards loneliness (Gottman, 1999). Basically, the couples are getting divorced emotionally and are willing to end their marriage. In this context, conflict could be considered as a window through which we could see the future of an intimate relationship between spouses (Dhir & Markman, 1984). Conflict styles and how they are managed are important factors in maintaining the marriage, and from this perspective, determining the conflict resolution styles of the spouses may be imperative.

One of the most important elements of marriage is sexuality (Crowe, 1995). It is a phenomenon that binds the spouses to each other psychologically and biologically. The bond formed between spouses through sexuality is seen as an element that amplifies their intimacy with each other. The chief function of sexuality in marriage is sharing the pleasure they experience together, increasing and deepening their intimacy, and reducing tensions that may arise when tackling the challenges of life and marriage. Hence, unproblematic sexual function may contribute positively to marriage. However, the problems experienced

in sexual function have profound and negative impacts, and these problems even disrupt positive emotions and deplete intimacy between spouses (McCarthy, 1997). Research shows that sexuality is an important factor in marital harmony and the health of spouses (Eşsizoğlu, Yenilmez, Güleç, & Yazıoğlu, 2012). The satisfaction of couples from their sexual life also affects their marital satisfaction. When spouses cannot please each other sexually, they experience demoralization, and this affects their marital relations negatively (Çağ & Yıldırım, 2013).

Sexual satisfaction is stated to have a significant impact on couples in establishing and maintaining a healthy relationship (Donnelly, 1993). Several factors, such as marital problems and inadequate sexual life, can cause problems in sexual satisfaction (Boyacıoğlu, 1999). Sexual satisfaction, as a multidimensional concept, is a crucial factor for the general course and health of a marriage. What people think and feel about their sexuality, especially in their relationships, often affects their feelings and thoughts about their whole relationships. Couples, who are sexually satisfied with their marriage, also have positive opinions about their relationships. Byers (2005) associates sexual dissatisfaction with unresolved conflicts, lack of intimacy, and emotional distance between couples. As indicated, sexual communion has an indispensable place in marital relationships. At this point, the relationship between the sexual satisfaction and marital harmony of spouses gains significance. A study conducted by Witting et al. (2008) revealed that a high level of sexual satisfaction is associated with general relationship satisfaction and increases relationship satisfaction. Thus, the ability to provide sexual satisfaction, as is inherent in human nature, may also be instrumental in predicting the future of the relationship in married individuals.

Studies on improving the relationship between spouses are a relatively new phenomenon. In this context, it might be significant to examine the processes that lead spouses to think of divorce and reveal some variables that may be instrumental in improving the relationship between couples. There was no study in the relevant literature on spouses who think of divorce during an ongoing relationship and their processes before deciding to get a divorce. Generally, it appears that individuals who have obtained a divorce or have decided to divorce were studied. In addition, no study examined the effect of spouses' conflict styles, communication patterns, and sexual satisfaction variables together on the divorce process. In this context, providing sufficient awareness regarding the thoughts and behaviors of spouses during the marriage process seems essential. Knowing how these variables are related to each other seems necessary for raising enough awareness regarding the behaviors exhibited by spouses during the marriage process. This study aims to determine the extent to which conflict resolution styles, aggressive communication patterns, destructive communication patterns, and sexual satisfaction correctly classify married individuals' state of thinking or not thinking of divorce. The resulting findings are considered significant in revealing the factors affecting thoughts of divorce and determining factors that may strengthen the relationship. Moreover, the resulting findings may contribute to the theoretical and empirical marital research and the helping processes to

prevent and resolve problems arising during the marriage. The study seeks an answer to the following question: “Do the conflict resolution styles, aggressive communication patterns, destructive communication patterns, and sexual satisfaction correctly classify married individuals’ state of thinking and not thinking of divorce?”

METHOD

This study, conducted based on a quantitative research approach, is correlational. Correlational studies examine the association between two or more variables without performing any intervention to these variables. Correlational studies also reveal the relationships between variables. Such studies are quite instrumental in determining the level of relationships and also allow higher-order investigations on relationships (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2020). A purposive sampling method was employed in the study. Purposive sampling is a nonprobability and nonrandom sampling type. It allows the selection and in-depth examination of ideal situations in terms of gathering information in accordance with the purpose of the study (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020). Being married was considered a criterion in selecting individuals as the study group. Criterion sampling is a sampling method in which the units that meet the criteria specified for the study are included in the sample when the observation units consist of people, events, or situations with specific characteristics (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020). The dependent variable of the study was the married individuals’ state of thinking or not thinking of divorce, defined as a categorical variable. However, the independent variables comprised the sub-dimensions of conflict resolution styles, aggressive communication pattern, destructive communication pattern, and sexual satisfaction. All independent variables were continuous.

Study Group

The study group consisted of 396 people selected through a purposive criterion sampling method. Of these participants, 85 (21.5%) were men and 311 (78.5%) women. The age of all participants ranged between 25 and 70, with a mean age of $X = 40.02$. Considering the education status of the participants, 2 (0.05%) had primary school, 1 (0.3%) secondary school, 15 (3.8%) high school, 12 (3%) associate degree, 170 (42.9%) undergraduate, and 196 (49.5%) master’s and doctoral education. Almost all of the participants in the study group have a very high education level. It is thought that this situation is due to the fact that the researchers collected the data online through their close circle. Considering their professions, 125 (31.6%) were doctors, 76 (19.2%) teachers, 92 (23.1) counselors/psychologists, 26 (6.6%) engineers, 11 (2.8%) academicians, 6 (1.5%) civil servants, 5 (1.3%) lawyers, 8 (2%) housewives, and 47 (11.9%) self-employed. Moreover, 356 (89.9%) were employed, and 40 (10.1%) were unemployed. Considering the number of children the participants had, 81 (20.5%) had none, 127 (32.1%) had one, 165 (41.7%) had two, and 23 (5.8%) had three. Considering the number of marriages they had, 364 (91.9%) had their first marriage, and

31 (7.8%) had their second marriage. Lastly, considering the marriage decision of the participants, 367 (92.7%) married through dating, and 28 (7.1) through arranged dating and deciding by themselves, and 1 (0.3%) through an arranged marriage.

Data Collection Tools

Personal information form

The personal information form included questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the married individuals in the study group, such as age, gender, education, occupation, employment status, and the number of their children. In addition, questions about how many marriages they had and their marriage decision were also included in this form.

Conflict Resolution Styles Scale

The Conflict Resolution Styles Scale (CRSS) developed by Özen (2006) to determine the conflict resolution styles used by married individuals was used in the study. The scale was designed to measure each spouse's four conflict resolution styles, including positive, negative, submission, and withdrawal conflict resolution styles. It consists of 25 items, including positive conflict (6 items), negative conflict (7 items), submission (6 items), and withdrawal (6 items).

In Özen's (2006) study, the scale had a four-factor construct, where the first factor (negative) accounted for 16.93% of the total variance, the second (submission) 13.07%, the third (positive) 11.33%, and the fourth (withdrawal) 11.01%. The factor loadings of the items in the scale ranged between 0.46 and 0.76. Moreover, the factor loadings of the items were high, and the number of items under each subscale was also adequate. The Cronbach alpha for the positive conflict resolution style was 0.77, 0.81 for submission, 0.75 for withdrawal, and 0.75 for negative conflict resolution styles. The adjusted item-total correlation ranged between 0.38 and 0.64 for the positive conflict, 0.35 and 0.67 for the negative conflict, 0.50 and 0.62 for submission, plus 0.36 and 0.62 for the withdrawal. In addition, the correlations of the items in the subscales were higher than 0.20 (Özen, 2006). The reliability coefficient was calculated within the scope of this study, and the Cronbach alpha was 0.81 for the negative conflict resolution style, 0.72 for the positive conflict, 0.72 for the submission, and 0.80 for the withdrawal.

Communication Patterns Scale

The communication patterns scale developed by Sullaway and Christensen (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Malkoç (2001) is Likert type scale consisting of 35 items (Sullaway & Christensen, 1983). The scale addresses the spouse's behaviors during three stages of conflict. These phases are as follows: a) when some problems arise in the relationship (four questions about withdrawal and discussion at this stage), b) during the discussion of a relationship problem (18 questions about behaviors such as criticism, blame, and withdrawal at this stage), and c) after discussion of a relationship problem (13 questions about post-conflict phase such as withdrawal or reconciliation at this stage). High validity and reliability values were obtained

in the adaptation study of the scale. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale, consisting of the destructive, constructive, emotional/logical, and aggressive communication patterns subscales, ranged between 0.61 and 0.81 (Malkoç, 2001). In addition to these subscales in the scale, the woman demand/man withdrawal, man demand/woman withdrawal, and total demand/withdrawal scores are also calculated. The internal consistency coefficients of these subscales ranged between 0.50 and 0.85 (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van De Vliert, 1997). In this study, the 13-item destructive communication pattern and the 8-item aggressive communication pattern subscales of the Communication Patterns Scale were used. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the destructive and aggressive communication pattern subscales were computed as 0.73 and 0.69, respectively.

Golombok-Rust Sexual Satisfaction Scale

The scale was developed by Rust and Golombok (1986). Golombok-Rust Sexual Satisfaction Scale, standardized by Tuğrul, Öztan, and Kabakçı (1993), is an evaluation tool for determining sexual function disorders and sexual intercourse quality. In this study, it was used to measure the sexual satisfaction of spouses. It is applied to couples and heterosexual individuals with permanent partners and provides information about the quality of sexual functions. Some of the subscales of the scale are also used for diagnosis (Golombok & Rust, 1988; Tuğrul, Öztan, & Kabakçı, 1993). The scale consists of 28 items of male and female forms. Communication, avoidance, satisfaction, touch, and intercourse frequency subscales are the same in both forms. There were four items regarding the quality of sexual intercourse in both forms. In addition, the female form includes vaginismus and orgasm disorder, and the male form includes premature ejaculation and erectile dysfunction subscales. Scores obtained from the scale for both the total and subscales can be used in the evaluation. They report that the split-half reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.87 in women and 0.94 in men. The internal consistency coefficients of the subscales ranged between 0.61 and 0.83. The Cronbach alpha was 0.92 in men, and 0.91 in women, considering the total score (Golombok & Rust, 1988).

In the standardization study of Tuğrul, Öztan, and Kabakçı (1993), the Cronbach alpha values relating to the subscales ranged between 0.63 and 0.91. The sexual intercourse frequency subscale had the lowest value in both men and women. The reliability coefficients were calculated in this study, and the Cronbach alpha was 0.42 in women and 0.79 in men considering the total score.

Procedure

The scale form was collected online through Google forms. The data collected were imported into the SPSS 26 program.

Data Analysis

At the first stage of the analysis, the missing data were controlled in the dataset. There was no any missing data in the dataset. Then, one-dimensional extreme values were examined and nine outliers greater

than +3 and smaller than -3 were excluded from the dataset transformed to standard z scores. However, there was no any multi-dimensional extreme value.

The skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the variables and the scatter diagram matrix were examined. The dataset met the univariate and multivariate normality and linearity assumptions. In terms of multicollinearity problem, all pairwise correlations of the variables in the dataset were examined, and they were less than 0.90. The VIF values of the variables were smaller than 2, and the tolerance values were greater than 0.10. There is an emphasis that multicollinearity problem may arises when pairwise correlations are greater than 0.90, the VIF values are equal to or greater than 10, and the tolerance values are smaller than 0.10, (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, Büyüköztürk, 2021).

Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) emphasize that logistic regression analysis does not need to meet the assumptions required in linear regression models, but the assumptions about extreme values, sample size, and multicollinearity problems should be considered. Çokluk et al. (2021) state that there should be groups of at least 50 people for each independent variable to achieve significant results in the logistic regression analysis. In this study, the sample met this assumption. After testing all the required assumptions, Binary Logistic Regression analysis was performed. Binary Logistic Regression analysis was conducted to test whether the sub-dimensions of conflict resolution styles, that is, the aggressive communication pattern, destructive communication pattern, and sexual satisfaction variables addressed in the study, correctly classify the participants according to their thinking and not thinking of divorce that was determined as the dependent variable. In Binary Logistic Regression, the dependent variable can be categorical, while the independent variables can be categorical or continuous. It is an analysis method that presents a model that can capture the relationship between dependent and independent variables in a way that best fits with the least number of variables (Çokluk et al., 2021).

FINDINGS

The findings obtained within the scope of the research problem are presented below. The accuracy level to which the independent variables classify the spouses who think and do not think of divorce was examined through Binary Logistic Regression Analysis. First, those thinking of separation were coded as “1”, and those not thinking of separation were coded as “0”. Then, the analysis was conducted using the “Standard (Enter)” method. In the Enter method, all common variables are entered into the regression model as a block, and parameter estimates are calculated for each block (Çokluk et al., 2021).

Two values relating to -2LL (-2Log Likelihood) are calculated in the analysis. These are the values that are included in the initial model and the outcome model formed by the introduction of predictor variables into the model. By comparing the difference in -2LL in these two models, the improvement in the model caused by the predictive variables is evaluated (Çokluk et al., 2021). As shown in Table 1, in this

study, the -2LL value of the initial model with only the constant term is 543,140. The -2LL value shows the extent to which the maximum likelihood estimate has a perfect fit. It is known that the value of -2LL, which indicates a perfect fit in the model, takes the value of “0”, and in such a case, the likelihood is “1” (Çokluk et al., 2021).

Table 1. Initial Model Iteration History

Iteration		-2 LL	Coefficients
			Constant
Step 0	1	543.140	- .242
	2	543.140	- .244
	3	543.140	- .244

In the initial model of the analysis, all subjects are classified in a category that includes more subjects by an arbitrary calculation, assuming that all subjects are in a single category (Field, 2005; as cited in Çokluk et al., 2021). In this study, all participants were classified in the group thinking of divorce with a classification percentage of 56.10% in the initial model, and the percent of correct classification was 56.10% (Table 2).

Table 2. First Classification Obtained As a Result of the Logistic Regression Analysis

Observed Case		Estimated Case		
		Divorce Thought		Correct Classification
		Yes	No	Percent
Step 0	Yes	222	0	100.00
	No	174	0	0.00
Total Percent of Correct Classification				56.10

Table 3 presents the variables include in the initial model. As seen, it includes the constant term making up the initial model, the standard error of the constant term, the Wald statistic that tests whether the variable is significance, the degrees of freedom of the Wald statistic, significance level, and $\text{Exp}(\beta)$ (exponential logistic regression coefficient).

Table 3. Variables Included in the Initial Model/Equation

Step 0	β	Standard Error	Wald	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Exp (β)
Constant	-.244	.101	5.789	1	.016	.784

As seen in the following, variables not included in the initial model were examined with error chi-square statistic (χ^2_{bo}) whether they significantly contribute to the model. The significance of the calculated chi-square value indicates that the prediction power of the model increases with the inclusion of the predictor variables not included in the initial model (Çokluk et al., 2021). In this study, it was found as $\chi^2_{bo} = 76.043$. This finding shows that the predictor variables added later to the model will increase the prediction power of the model.

The score values and *p* values given in Table 4 show whether the contribution of the predictor variables to the model is significant.

Table 4. Variables Not Included in the Initial Model

	Score	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	
Step 0	Positive Conflict	14.864	1	.000
	Negative Conflict	40.541	1	.000
	Submission	5.206	1	.023
	Withdrawal	6.027	1	.014
	Aggressive Communication	51.104	1	.000
	Destructive Communication	51.104	1	.000
	Sexual Satisfaction	.184	1	.668
	Error Chi-square Statistic (χ^2_{bo})	76.043	7	.000

As shown, the negative conflict style, aggressive communication pattern, and destructive communication pattern variables related to χ^2_{bo} statistic ($p < 0.01$) significantly contributed to the model ($p = 0.000$). The score values provide information about the extent to which each predictor variable contributes to the model. In this context, the biggest contribution to the model came from the aggressive communication pattern variable, followed by the destructive communication pattern and negative conflict style variable, respectively.

Findings regarding the outcome (intended) model, formed by including the predictor variables into the model, are presented below.

Table 5. Iteration History for the Case in Which Predictor Variables Enter the Model

Iteration	Coefficients								
	-2LL	Constant	Positive	Negative	Submission	Withdrawal.	Aggressive	Destructive	
Sexual			Conflict.	Conflict			Communication.	Communication	
Satisfaction									
1	462.224	2.537	.018	-.048	-.016.	-.009.	-.028	-.024	-.002
2	459.603	2.982	.023	-.057	-.019	-.011	-.039	-.026	-.003
3	459,581	3.016	.024	-.058	-.019	-.011	-.040	-.027	-.004
4	459,581	3.016	.024	-.058	-.019	-.011	-.040	-.027	-.004

According to Table 5, the -2LL value, which was 453.140 in the initial model, has dropped to 459.581. The difference of -2LL value was 83.559 (543.140 – 459.581) when the predictor variables were included in the initial model where there was only the constant term. In this case, the change in the model fit is significant.

Table 6. Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients

Step		Chi-Square	df	p
1	Step	83.559	2	.000
	Block	83.559	2	.000
	Model	83.559	2	.000

* $p < .05$

The Omnibus Test results are examined first in the intended outcome model (Table 6). The Omnibus test calculates the chi-square value as the model, block, and step. The computed chi-square value indicates the difference between the initial and outcome models. The significant chi-square values show the effectiveness of predictor (independent) variables in classifying the dependent variables. In this study, the chi-square value was 83.559 for the model ($p = 0.000$). According to the chi-square value of the model in Table 6, one could argue that predictor variables significantly predict the married individuals' state of thinking and not thinking of divorce ($p < 0.05$).

The Cox and Snell R^2 value relating to the outcome model was 0.19. This finding shows that 19% of the dependent variable (thinking or not thinking of divorce) will be explained when the predictor variables enter the model. The Cox and Snell R^2 is also hard to interpret, as it never reached "1". Therefore, the Nagelkerke R^2 is computed (as cited in Çokluk et al., 2021). Nagelkerke R^2 is the transformed form of

the Cox and Snell coefficient and ensures the range is between 0-1 (Garson, 2008, as cited in Çokluk et al., 2021).

The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test evaluates the fit of the logistic regression model as a whole. Moreover, non-significance of the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test ($p > 0.05$) reveals that the model has an acceptable fit. However, when the test result is significant ($p < 0.05$), one understands that the model does not fit the data. In this study, the chi-square value relating to the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test was 18.013 ($p > 0.05$). Accordingly, one could say that the model has a good fit.

Findings regarding the classification obtained as result of the logistic regression model are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Findings on Classification Yielded by Logistic Regression Analysis

Observed Case		Estimated Case		
		Divorce Thought		Correct Classification
		Yes	No	Percent
Step 1	Yes	176	46	79.30
	No	70	104	59.80
Total Percent of Correct Classification				70.10

According to Table 7, 104 out of 174 people who did not have thoughts of divorce were classified correctly, and 70 were classified incorrectly, and the percent of correct classification of married individuals who did not have thoughts of divorce was 59.80%. Moreover, 176 out of 222 people having thoughts of divorce were classified correctly, and 46 were classified incorrectly.

Married individuals who had thoughts of divorce were classified with a correct classification of 79.30%. In the intended outcome model, married individuals thinking and not thinking of divorce were classified with a total correct classification percentage of 70.10%. In the initial model, this classification percentage was computed as 56.10%.

Although this finding is considered as a sign of model-data fit, another method that tests the significance of the model is the Wald statistics. Wald statistic is a measure that reveals the significance of β and the contribution of each variable to the model (Çokluk et al., 2021). Table 8 presents the findings on the coefficient estimates of the Wald statistics and the outcome model.

Table 8. The Coefficient Estimates of the Outcome Model

Step 1	β	Standard Error	Wald	df	p	Exp (β)
Positive Conflict	.024	.024	1.006	1	.316	1.024
Negative Conflict	-.058	.022	6.975	1	.008	.944
Submission	-.019	.022	.737	1	.391	.981
Withdrawal	-.011	.020	.340	1	.560	.989
Aggressive Communication	-.040	.018	4.971	1	.026	.961
Destructive Communication	-.027	.009	8.233	1	.004	.974
Sexual Satisfaction	-.004	.009	.142	1	.706	.996
Constant	3.016	1.030	8.571	1	.003	20.415
Cox & Snell $R^2 = .19$		Nagelkerke $R^2 = .25$		Hosmer-Lemeshow = .021		

As seen in Table 8, one unit of increase in negative conflict style predictor variable increased the odds (true likelihood ratio) of thinking about divorce (coded thinking of divorce as “1”) by 5.6% [(1-0.944).100], one unit of increase in aggressive communication pattern predictor variable increased the odds of thinking about divorce by 3.9% [(1-0.961).100], and also one of increase in destructive communication pattern predictor variable increased the odds of thinking about divorce by 2.6% [(1-0.974).100]. These findings show that predictor variables of negative conflict style, aggressive communication, and destructive communication pattern contribute significantly to the classification of married individuals who think or do not think of divorce. Put differently, the probability of married individuals thinking of divorce is observed to increase as the negative conflict, aggressive, and destructive communication patterns increase. In addition, considering the Cox and Snell R^2 and Nagelkerke R^2 values, when the independent variables are included in the model, thinking of divorce explains 19% of the variance in the dependent variable and 25% according to Nagelkerke.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a result of the study, the sub-dimensions of the conflict resolution styles (positive conflict, negative conflict, submission, and withdrawal), aggressive communication pattern, destructive communication pattern, and sexual satisfaction, classified married individuals thinking and not thinking of divorce correctly by 70.10% rate. The predictor variables of negative conflict style, aggressive communication, and destructive communication pattern contributed significantly to the classification of married individuals who did and did not think of divorce. The greatest contribution to the percentage of this classification was from the negative conflict style. Then, the predictor variables of aggressive

communication and destructive communication patterns made significant contributions. In this context, one could say that negative conflict style had a significant impact on classifying married individuals who do and do not think of divorce.

The relevant literature shows that there are significant and negative relationships between the negative conflict styles and marital adjustments (Soylu & Kağnıcı, 2015). Varol (2019) points out that there are significant differences between the scores of married individuals from the conflict resolution scale and those who are in the process of divorce. The same author also stated that couples in the process of divorce have less conflict resolution skills., Driver, Tabares, Shapiro, and Gottman (2017) observed 843 married couples in their longitudinal research for more than 30 years. In the love laboratory they established, they studied the conflict patterns of happy and stable marriages and marriages leading to divorce. They found that the most important factor separating happy and unhappy couples are conflict patterns. Moreover, the conflict patterns that led couples to divorce were hostile conflict and stonewalling (Gottman, 2017). Similarly, in a study that examined the relationship between marital stability and conflict resolution styles, Njoroge (2017) reported that individuals who were happy in their marriages used the validating conflict resolution style the most. Research has found that couples using this conflict style demonstrate behaviors like sharing their thoughts more with each other, being more sensitive in order not to hurt their feelings, and prioritizing the wishes of their spouses rather than their own (Kavak, 2018). Hacı's (2011) study, examining the relationship between marital adjustment and conflict resolution styles, revealed that negative conflict resolution and submission conflict resolution styles significantly predict the marital adjustment between spouses. Again, in parallel with the present study, Hacı reported that positive conflict resolution and withdrawal conflict resolution styles were not significant predictors of marital adjustment (Hacı, 2011). Having positive conflict resolution skills is a condition that ensures the continuation of marriage. One could argue that the negative conflict resolution style existing, especially between married individuals, might be one of the reasons that lead them to the divorce process.

In this study, the predictor variables of positive, submission and withdrawal, of sub-dimensions of conflict resolution styles, do not significantly contribute to the classification of married individuals who think of divorce. Although this finding of the study does not contribute significantly to the classification of married individuals who are thinking of divorce, it may significantly contribute to the classification of married individuals who are not thinking of divorce. Couples who use a positive conflict resolution style are more open to listening and understanding each other. Whenever they encounter a problem, they tend to solve it together through discussion and producing a solution. Kavak (2018) studied the conflict resolution styles of couples having high and low marital satisfaction and found that there was a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and positive conflict resolution styles of spouses. Similar to the present study, Kavak's (2018) study revealed that all sub-dimensions of general family functionality and

conflict resolution style (positive, negative, submission, withdrawal) together explained 28% of the total variance in the marital satisfaction of couples. A similar finding is that of these predictor variables, marital satisfaction is mostly predicted by positive, negative, and submission conflict resolution styles. However, withdrawal conflict resolution style was reportedly a non-significant predictor of marital satisfaction (Kavak, 2018).

A spouse who uses the submissive conflict style generally tends not to take the current situation seriously so that the problem does not get worse and aggravate in case of a conflict with his or her partner. Additionally, when a conflict erupts, they try to calm down their spouses and do whatever they want. In the long term, such cases may lead to a decrease in marital satisfaction of the partner who uses the submission conflict resolution style. Some studies in the literature show that there is a positive and significant relationship between submission conflict resolution style and marital adjustment (Soylu & Kağnıcı, 2015; Karakoyun, 2012).

Contrary to the submission conflict resolution style, there is no a significant relationship between the withdrawal conflict resolution style and marital adjustment (Hacı, 2011; Karakoyun, 2012; Öner, 2013; Soylu & Kağnıcı, 2015). Partners using the withdrawal conflict may prefer avoiding the conflict by staying silent or moving away from the environment to prevent an existing problem from getting worse at that moment. However, since this conflict resolution style does not include any permanent solution, spouses may have to face the same problem again in the continuum. Although couple therapists work with couples in therapies on reconciliation as one of the most effective ways together with the conflict management skills, 14% of couple problems seem to finalize through reconciliation (Gottman, 2017). Around 61% of couples postpone their arguments and quarrel (Benokraitis, 1993). Thus, one could say that as spouses who use the withdrawal conflict resolution styles suspend their problems, they may also suspend their thoughts about their relationships. In the present study, positive conflict, submission, and withdrawal may not have made a significant contribution to the classification of married individuals who think of divorce due to high mean conflict resolution scores.

Moreover, this study revealed that aggressive and destructive communication patterns were important variables in predicting married individuals who do and do not think of divorce. The problems spouses experience in communication may also be a factor that increases their conflict frequency. Researchers define the communication pattern as the mutually occurring and constantly repetitive communication processes between spouses. In this context, they separated conflict behaviors from communication patterns, pointing out that the resulting behavior was following by other behavior (Sullaway & Christensen, 1983). Couples experiencing problems in communication patterns often use the demanding-withdrawing communication pattern. In this communication pattern, spouses generally avoid

communication, causing psychological distance and conflict (Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Christensen & Shenk, 1991).

Destructive communication patterns such as contempt, criticism, shouting, and, belittlement and accompanying behaviors increase the negative evaluation of spouses about their marriage over time, negatively affecting the continuity of marriage (Heene, Buysse, & Oost, 2007; Kavak, 2018; Kurdek, 1995; Pasch & Bradbury, 1998) and marital satisfaction (Burlinson & Denton, 1997; Cleek & Pearson, 1985; Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1990; Young & Long, 1998).

Couples using us language in their communication are happier in their relationships and also behave more positively in addressing and solving the problems they experience (Seider, Hirschberger, Nelson, & Levenson, 2009). Beside, exposure to verbal violence, especially within the aggressive and destructive communication patterns between spouses, is reported to negatively affect marital satisfaction (Christensen & Heavey, 1990). Spouses with destructive communication patterns do not show each other many behaviors such as trusting each other, loving and respecting each other, and sharing their feelings and thoughts. Similarly, Gottman (2017) notes that the failure of unhappy couples in solving problems stems from the hostile and accusatory communication style they use. The negative attitudes and behaviors of couples having such a communication pattern with each other increase over the passage of time and push them towards divorce.

This study showed that the predictor variable of sexual satisfaction did not make a significant contribution to the classification of married individuals, thinking or not thinking of divorce. In the relevant literature, studies also show there are independent relationships between marital adjustment and marital satisfaction. Litzinger and Gordon (2005) state that the sexual satisfaction of couples who do have strong communication skills in the relationship can be satisfactory. They also argue that this condition may compensate for the impacts of unsuccessful communication patterns that negatively affect marital satisfaction. Some researchers also report a significant relationship between marital and sexual satisfaction (Butzer & Campbell, 2008). Girma (2016) examined the effect of sociodemographic variables, sexual intercourse satisfaction, marital satisfaction, communication, and marital conflict on marriage quality. He found a significant and strong relationship between marital satisfaction and marital stability. He also found that sexual intercourse satisfaction and communication were significant predictors of marital satisfaction (Girma, 2016). Also, when spouses have positive conflict resolution styles and constructive communication patterns, establishing verbal communication about sexuality may become easy for them and this open communication may indirectly increase their positive thoughts about their relationships. Verbal communication of spouses about sexuality has been found to increase their sexual satisfaction and contentment (Babin, 2013). As such, sharing sexual pleasure in marital relationship reportedly strengthens the intimacy between couples, and they will feel less tension in coping with their problems (Öztürk & Arkar,

2014; Gülsün, Aydın, & Gülçat, 2006). However, in this study, sexual satisfaction was the weakest variable in the classification of married individuals thinking of divorce.

SUGGESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations of this study was that 21.5% of the participants were men, and 78.5% were women. Conducting this study with larger sample groups and more male participants may increase the generalizability of the results. Although the study focused on processes relating to the relationship, the data were collected only from one spouse. Evaluation of the future of a relationship may yield more consistent results with the findings obtained from both spouses. In addition, more comprehensive data could be collected if this study is conducted with married couples and couples who in the process of divorce.

The research is limited to data obtained from the self-report scales. Besides, the Cronbach alpha of the Sexual Satisfaction Scale used in this study was 0.42, which is one of the limitations of this study. Although there are measurement tools used to evaluate the relationships of married individuals in our country, there is a need for measurement tools sensitive to Turkish culture that can measure the quality of sexual relationship in couples and the relationship quality in general in different dimensions.

In this study, the data were collected through quantitative methods. In order to reach more in-depth findings, new studies could be supported with qualitative data and enriched with longitudinal studies.

Another issue that needs to be investigated to strengthen the marriage and family structure across the country is the conflicts in marriage. Increasing conflict resolution and communication skills, considered influential in divorce, may strengthen marriage and family structures. Moreover, reorganizing activities and programs on family empowerment, enacted in cooperation between the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and universities, in a systematic and continuous manner is believed to be important. The data obtained from this study may provide an insight for researchers working in theoretical and practical fields.

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