



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Marital Adjustment and Marital Self-Efficacy Levels of Married Individuals Based on Former University Accommodation

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the differentiation status of university-graduate married individuals in marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy levels in the context of their experiences living with or apart from the family during their university years. Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used to investigate, and the research was designed in a sequential explanatory design. According to this, quantitative data were collected using data collection tools, and qualitative data were obtained through interviews. Quantitative data comprises the responses of 324 participants (184 women, 140 men) to the measurement tools. The findings obtained by analyzing the data did not indicate a statistically significant difference in marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy levels according to the accommodation status during the university years. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews with willing participants via a structured interview form. According to findings from the qualitative data gathered from 20 participants (10 female and 10 male), the participants' experiences and several factors make differences in marital adjustment and self-efficacy levels. The discrepancy in parallelism between the quantitative and qualitative data outcomes may be cause separate working groups presented these results. Application and study suggestions were given to researchers and field experts in line with the information obtained from the research findings.

Marital Adjustment

There have been many studies (Asfaw & Alene, 2023; Eftekhari et al., 2021; Safak-Öztürk & Arkar, 2014; Tulum, 2014) and different opinions throughout the years on the definition of marital adjustment, which does not have a clear conceptualization, so there is confusion on its meaning (Chung, 1990; Hünler & Gençöz, 2003; Şafak-Öztürk & Arkar, 2014; Tabakçı, 2019; Yüksel, 2013). It is stated in the literature that many factors affect marital adjustment (Darekar, 2018; Mutlu et al., 2018; Tazkiya & Puspitawati, 2022) and that these factors were not transferred from one marriage to another (Johnson et al., 1992).

According to related literature, the continuity, success, and adjustment of marriage are discussed with the couples living together before marriage, and research on this subject has revealed various results. Giulio et al.(2019), in their study examining the ways of living together in some European countries, drew attention to the fact that the understanding of living together as a premarital experience has decreased in the last decade. However, they stated that cohabitation has begun to be seen as an alternative to marriage.

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As a form of accommodation, sharing a house or room with peer groups, unlike a partner, is seen as a method frequently preferred by young adults (Clark et al., 2019). Individuals who want to maintain an independent life mostly prefer a house/roommate, which is more economical than living alone at the point of living apart from their families (Christy & Tan, 2022; Hughes, 2003; Kim et al., 2020; Woo et al., 2019). It is considered that the social and emotional benefits of living with a roommate (Clapham et al., 2014), which have other benefits besides being economical, increase the quality of life (Heath et al., 2018).

Living with a house/roommate has the function of establishing empathy (Tutarel- Kışlak & Çabukça, 2002), being cooperative in sharing responsibility and task distribution (Clark et al., 2019; Şener, 2002; Ünal & Akgün, 2022), which are essential components of marital adjustment (Van Laar et al., 2005). Moreover, it increases social functionality (Erb et al., 2014), which has a positive effect on the success of marriage (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Czechowska-Bieluga & Lewicka-Zelent, 2021; Samadaee-Gelehkolaee et al., 2016), and it has laid the groundwork for this study.

Self-efficacy in Marriage

Self-efficacy in marriage has an essential place in studies conducted with couples in premarital and marital relations for many years (Henderson-King & Veroff, 1994; Jokar et al., 2023; Kieren & Tallman, 1972; Rezazadeh & Damirchi, 2021). It is the belief in having the skills to successfully establish and maintain a marital relationship (Cihan-Güngör & Özbay, 2006, p. 82). According to Stinnett (1969), marital self-efficacy is the ability to act as necessary to meet essential needs in the marital relationship. Stinnett stated that marital success is primarily determined by marital adjustment, created by family education and maintained in the family.

It has been reported that the self-efficacy expectations of partners are effective in finding solutions to problems and feeling marital satisfaction (Dostal & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1997; Jaenudin et al., 2020). Erus and Canel (2016) discussed the perceived problem-solving skills of married individuals with their self-efficacy beliefs towards their marriage. As a result of their study, it was stated that the perceived problem-solving skills of married individuals significantly predicted their marital self-efficacy. Similarly, individuals' self-efficacy beliefs support their beliefs that they can find solutions to problems and be successful in the behaviors they are expected to perform and enable them to obtain positive results (Bandura, 1997; Trautnera & Schwingerb, 2020; O'Leary, 1992; Voica et al., 2020). Individuals' perceived problem-solving abilities were positively related to marital satisfaction (Madden & Janoff-Bulman, 1981). Problem-solving and communication skills are also significantly related to social competence. Communication skills and interpersonal problem-solving skills are important determinants of social competence (Erözkan, 2013). Increasing communication skills increases the effectiveness of interpersonal relations (Korkut-Owen, 2015).

Peer-sharing households are portrayed as critical areas in popular culture that promote friendship (Boyer & Leland, 2018; Heath, 2004). Preferring to live alone or with someone else is mainly seen between 18 and 24 (Datamonitor, 2003, as cited in Heath, 2004). The familiarity of living together and exposure to that person creates positive emotional bonds between housemates/roommates (Heath et al., 2018; Van Laar et al., 2005) and makes it easier to understand the other's viewpoint (Karazor et al., 2018; Tummers, 2015). The results of these studies have determined that living with a house/roommate has a positive relationship with the capacity to empathize and sociability, sociability with competence, and competence and empathy capacity with marital adjustment. Based on this finding, the accommodation status of married individuals during their university years, when their experience of living with a house/roommate before marriage increases, can make a significant difference in the rise in marital self-efficacy levels and adjustment scores. In this regard, the questions addressed in the quantitative dimension of the research are as follows; "Do the marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy levels of married individuals differ significantly according to their sociodemographic characteristics?" The questions addressed in the qualitative dimension were determined as follows: "Do accommodation experiences during university years affect individuals' marital lives, household management experiences, socialization, empathy capacities, marital task distribution, and individuals' awareness of domestic responsibilities?" and "Is the experience of living with a roommate similar to marital experience?"

Methods

The research was designed in a sequential explanatory design, one of the mixed research designs. In this context, quantitative data were collected and analyzed, followed by qualitative data to describe and support the quantitative data. Considering that designing the research in a sequential explanatory design can contribute more to the related research than other designs (Creswell, 2015), it is aimed to provide a more detailed and comprehensive examination of a phenomenon by using various advantages of quantitative and qualitative designs (Mills & Gay, 2018).

The quantitative study group of the research consists of people determined by the stratified purposive sampling method. Data were collected from appropriate individuals, regardless of the ratio of the strata in the universe, to show, describe, and compare the characteristics of the subgroups determined in this method (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). With the snowball sampling method, the forms were sent to the people suggested by the participants, and the study data were expanded. For collecting quantitative data, forms were sent to 500 people, and 324 forms were obtained after receiving the returnable and usable forms. The quantitative study group comprised 184 female and 140 male participants aged between 24 and 77. One hundred nineteen participants lived at home with their families during their university years, 73 at home alone or with friends, and 133 in a dormitory. Ninety-one participants were married for 0-5 years, 64 for 6-10 years, and 170 for 11 years or more. Seventy-four participants had no children, 126 had only one child, and 125 had two or more children. Three-hundred-eleven participants were in their first marriage, and 14 were in their second or third marriage.

In the collection of qualitative data, the planned number of people to be interviewed was 20; considering the voluntariness of the participants and easy accessibility criteria, ten female and ten male university graduate-married individuals were questioned. The study group consisted of individuals aged between 27 and 49 years. In the qualitative aspect of the research, interviews were held with the participants via the Zoom.us video conference program within the scope of COVID-19 measures. The interviews were recorded with the verbal consent of the participants. In this age, which is defined as the information age, it is necessary for social scientists to focus on new structures and processes and to move qualitative research to the internet field due to their practical benefits (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Seven participants lived at home with their families during their university years, eleven lived alone or with a friend, and two lived in a dormitory. Fourteen participants have been married for 0-5 years, four participants for 6-10 years, and two participants for 11 years or more. Twelve participants did not have children; seven had only one child, and one had two or more children. All of the qualitative study groups were in their first marriage.

In analyzing the qualitative data, the recordings of the interviews conducted by the researcher, taken with the participant's permission, were deciphered as they were, without any additions or deletions. All interviews and analyses were conducted by the same researcher. The answers to the questions prepared in the context of categories determined by the literature were filed and reported separately for each participant. In the NVIVO 12 package program, the participant's answers were analyzed using descriptive and content analysis methods with the help of themes and codes determined by expert opinion. Within the scope of descriptive analysis, the data were summarized in line with the predetermined themes, the data were processed with the created framework, and the organized data were defined. Within the scope of content analysis, the data were examined in depth within the scope of the codes and themes created, and it was aimed to reach explanatory concepts and relationships. The purpose of the content analysis to be carried out in the relevant research could not be fully explained by descriptive analysis; however, the essential elements of the research are conveyed through quotations.

In the quantitative dimension of the study, the Demographic Information Form was created by the researcher with the support of the literature; the Near East Marital Adjustment Scale (Bayraktaroğlu et al., 2017) was used to measure the marital adjustment variable. The Marital Self-efficacy Scale was used to measure the marriage competence variable (Cihan-Güngör & Özbay, 2006). The Demographic Information Form and Structured Interview Form prepared by the researcher were used to collect the qualitative data for the research. The Demographic Information Form includes questions about gender, age, duration of marriage, number of marriages and children, sharing of household chores, and accommodation situation during university years. The structured interview form was created by reviewing existing theoretical knowledge and drawing upon the relevant literature. The questions determined to be suitable for the research questions were sent to 3 different

field experts. Experts expressed that the structured interview questions were appropriate for the study and research questions. The structured interview form consists of 10 questions and asks participants to share their accommodation experiences during their university years. These questions are focused on whether the experiences of living with a roommate or family contribute to married life by influencing assumptions about domestic duties and responsibilities, fostering empathy and socialization skills, facilitating household management, and ensuring an ideal distribution of housework. If so, the inquiry seeks answers regarding the specific areas impacted.

The Near East Marital Adjustment Scale is a 42-item, four-sub-dimension, four-point Likert-type measurement instrument in which 11 items are reverse-scored. The "Satisfaction in Marriage" sub-dimension consists of sixteen items, the "Communication in Marriage" sub-dimension consists of nine items, the "Empathy in Marriage" sub-dimension consists of ten items, and the "Relations with Root Family" sub-dimension consists of seven items. Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the relevant sub-dimensions were found to be .92, .86, .81, .78. The total reliability of the scale was found to be .94. The total score that can be obtained from the entire scale is 168. High scores obtained from the scale indicate a high level of marital adjustment. In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined to be .96.

The Marital Self-efficacy Scale is a five-point Likert-type scale consisting of 33 items, with no reverse-scored items, and a two-factor scale. The lowest score from the entire scale is 33, and the highest is 165. High scores indicate the individual's efficacy in the marital relationship is high. As a result of descriptive factor analysis, two factors were determined. It was observed that the factors explained 54.45% of the total variance. The first factor consists of expressions reflecting relationships with the spouse, explaining 44.95% of the total variance. The second factor includes expressions reflecting relationships with the immediate environment, presenting 9.50% of the total variance. The fit index of the marital self-efficacy upper dimension of the scale, which has two sub-dimensions, was found to be GFI = .99 and AGFI = .99. In the internal consistency calculation made to determine the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was found to be .96. In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was also determined to be .96.

Findings

Quantitative Research Findings

As a result of the normality test performed by analyzing the Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients, in studies with more than 300 participants, the Skewness value being less than two and the Kurtosis value being less than 7 was considered appropriate in terms of accepting the distribution among average values (Kim, 2013, p. 53). Accordingly, it was concluded that only the variable in the number of marriages did not show a normal distribution, and the other demographic variables were distributed within the limits of normality.

Table 1. ANOVA Test Results On Whether The Total Scores And Sub-Dimensions Of The Marital Adjustment Scale Differ According To The Variable Of Accommodation During The University Years

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | p |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Marital Adjustment Total | Between Groups | 912.933 | 3 | 304.311 | .774 | .509 |
| | Within Groups | 126223.694 | 321 | 393.220 | | |
| | Total | 127136.628 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Satisfaction | Between Groups | 143.351 | 3 | 47.784 | .617 | .605 |
| | Within Groups | 24874.292 | 321 | 77.490 | | |
| | Total | 25017.643 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Communication | Between Groups | 67.456 | 3 | 22.485 | .876 | .454 |
| | Within Groups | 8241.147 | 321 | 25.673 | | |
| | Total | 8308.603 | 324 | | | |
| Empathy in Marriage | Between Groups | 33.744 | 3 | 11.248 | .437 | .726 |
| | Within Groups | 8257.333 | 321 | 25.724 | | |
| | Total | 8291.077 | 324 | | | |
| Relations with the Families | Between Groups | 38.616 | 3 | 12.872 | 1.047 | .372 |
| | Within Groups | 3947.864 | 321 | 12.299 | | |
| | Total | 3986.480 | 324 | | | |

In Table 1, total marital adjustment score ($F (.774)$, $p > .05$) and marital satisfaction ($F (.617)$, $p < .05$), communication ($F (.876)$, $p < .05$), empathy ($F (.437)$, $p < .05$), and relations with the families ($F (1.047)$, $p < .05$) sub-dimensions were examined and it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference.

Table 2. ANOVA Test Results On Whether The Total Scores And Sub-Dimensions Of The Marital Self-Efficacy Scale Differ According To The Variable Of Accommodation During The University Years

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | P |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Marital Self-efficacy | Between Groups | 2300.019 | 3 | 766.673 | 1.515 | .210 |
| | Within Groups | 162427.938 | 321 | 506.006 | | |
| | Total | 164727.957 | 324 | | | |
| Partner Relationship | Between Groups | 648.186 | 3 | 216.062 | 1.156 | .327 |
| | Within Groups | 59997.765 | 321 | 186.909 | | |
| | Total | 60645.951 | 324 | | | |
| Relationship by Close Environment | Between Groups | 580.100 | 3 | 193.367 | 1.389 | .246 |
| | Within Groups | 44676.072 | 321 | 139.178 | | |
| | Total | 45256.172 | 324 | | | |

The Marital Self-efficacy Scale total score ($F (1.515)$, $p > .05$), relationship with partner ($F (1.156)$, $p > .05$), and relationship by close environment ($F (1.389)$, $p > .05$) examined in Table 2. The differentiation status of the sub-dimensions and the context of the accommodation where the participants lived during their university years did not show statistical significance.

Table 3. ANOVA Test Results On Whether The Total Scores And Sub-Dimensions Of The Marital Adjustment Scale Differ According To The Number Of Children Variable

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | P |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Marital Adjustment Total | BetweenGroups | 3488.416 | 2 | 1744.208 | 4.542 | .011 |
| | WithinGroups | 123648.212 | 322 | 384.001 | | |
| | Total | 127136.628 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Satisfaction | BetweenGroups | 762.508 | 2 | 381.254 | 5.061 | .007 |
| | WithinGroups | 24255.135 | 322 | 75.327 | | |
| | Total | 25017.643 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Communication | BetweenGroups | 154.626 | 2 | 77.313 | 3.053 | .049 |
| | WithinGroups | 8153.977 | 322 | 25.323 | | |
| | Total | 8308.603 | 324 | | | |
| Empathy in Marriage | BetweenGroups | 185.219 | 2 | 92.610 | 3.679 | .026 |
| | WithinGroups | 8105.858 | 322 | 25.173 | | |
| | Total | 8291.077 | 324 | | | |
| Relations with the Families | Between Groups | 46.055 | 2 | 23.027 | 1.882 | .154 |
| | Within Groups | 3940.425 | 322 | 12.237 | | |
| | Total | 3986.480 | 324 | | | |

In Table 3, the differentiation status of the total score of the Marital Adjustment Scale and its sub-dimensions according to the number of children variables were examined. While there was no statistically significant difference in the sub-dimension of relations with the families ($F (1.882)$, $p > .05$); satisfaction ($F (5.061)$, $p < .05$), communication ($F (3.053)$, $p < .05$), and empathy ($F (3.679)$, $p < .05$) sub-dimensions, and scale total score ($F (4.542)$, $p < .05$) were found to be a statistically significant difference.

According to the scale's total score, there was a statistically significant difference between childless couples and couples with only one child and two or more children, and this difference favored childless couples. In the Marriage Satisfaction sub-dimension, it was observed that there was a statistical difference between the couples without children and the couples with one child and two or more children, and this difference was found to be in favor of the couples without children. The differentiation status of the Communication in the Marriage sub-dimension according to the variable of having children was examined, and it was seen that the couples without children differed statistically from the couples with two or more children, and the difference was in favor of the couples without children. In the Empathy sub-dimension of marriage, there was a statistically significant difference in favor of couples without children between couples with two or more children and couples without children.

Table 4. ANOVA Test Results On Whether The Total Scores And Sub-Dimensions Of The Marital Self-Efficacy Scale Differ According To The Number Of Children Variable

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | P |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Marital Self-efficacy | Between Groups | 4769.265 | 2 | 2384.633 | 4.800 | .009 |
| | Within Groups | 159958.691 | 322 | 496.766 | | |
| | Total | 164727.957 | 324 | | | |
| Partner Relationship | Between Groups | 2437.592 | 2 | 1218.796 | 6.742 | .001 |
| | Within Groups | 58208.358 | 322 | 180.771 | | |
| | Total | 60645.951 | 324 | | | |
| Relationship by Close Environment | Between Groups | 513.021 | 2 | 256.511 | 1.846 | .160 |
| | Within Groups | 44743.151 | 322 | 138.954 | | |
| | Total | 45256.172 | 324 | | | |

In Table 4, the differentiation status of the Marital Self-efficacy Scale total score and sub-dimensions according to the number of children variables were examined. While there was no statistically significant difference in the relationship with the close environment sub-dimension (F (1.846), $p > .05$), in the relationship with the partners sub-dimension (F (6.742), $p < .05$) and scale total score (F (4.800), $p < .05$) were found to be statistically significant. According to the scale's total score, there was a statistically significant difference between childless couples and couples with only one child and two or more children, and this difference favored childless couples. When the differentiation status according to the Relationship with partner dimension was examined, it was seen that there was a statistically significant difference between the couples without children and the couples with one child and two or more children in favor of the couples without children.

Table 5. ANOVA Test Results On Whether The Total Scores Of The Marital Adjustment Scale And Its Sub-Dimensions Differ According To The Variable Of Person Who Undertakes The Housework

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | P |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Marital AdjustmentTotal | Between Groups | 11215.242 | 4 | 2803.810 | 7.740 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 115921.386 | 320 | 362.254 | | |
| | Total | 127136.628 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Satisfaction | Between Groups | 2562.573 | 4 | 640.643 | 9.130 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 22455.070 | 320 | 70.172 | | |
| | Total | 25017.643 | 324 | | | |
| Marital Communication | Between Groups | 653.206 | 4 | 163.302 | 6.826 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 7655.397 | 320 | 23.923 | | |
| | Total | 8308.603 | 324 | | | |
| Empathy in Marriage | Between Groups | 766.186 | 4 | 191.546 | 8.146 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 7524.891 | 320 | 23.515 | | |
| | Total | 8291.077 | 324 | | | |
| Relations with the Families | Between Groups | 30.199 | 4 | 7.550 | .611 | .655 |
| | Within Groups | 3956.281 | 320 | 12.363 | | |
| | Total | 3986.480 | 324 | | | |

In Table 5, the differentiation status of the Marital Adjustment Scale total score and sub-dimensions according to the variable of the person responsible for the household chores were examined, while there was no statistically significant difference in the family relations sub-dimension (F (.611), $p > .05$), in the scale total score (F) (7.740) $p < .05$, marital satisfaction (F (9.130), $p < .05$), communication (F (6.826), $p < .05$), and empathy (F (8.146), $p < .05$) sub-dimensions statistically significant difference was found.

According to the scale's total score, there was a statistically significant difference between the participants who stated that their partners did the housework alone and those who did it with the division of labor. The difference favored couples who said they did together with the division of labor. A statistically significant difference was found between the participants who stated that the person who undertook the housework was often their partner, sometimes himself, and those who said that they launched it alone. Additionally, it was determined that the difference mostly favored the participants who stated they were responsible for themselves and sometimes their partners. Moreover, there was a statistically significant difference between the participants who indicated that they took on the housework alone and those who stated that they did it with the division of labor, and the difference favored the participants doing it with the division of labor. It was determined that the

statistically significant difference between the participants who answered “often me, sometimes my partner” and those who answered “I do alone” mainly was in favor of the participants who answered “me, sometimes my partner.”

In the marital satisfaction sub-dimension, the statistically significant difference observed between the participants who stated that their partners sometimes took on the housework themselves and those who indicated that they did it alone mostly favored the participants who answered "my wife and sometimes me." On the other hand, a statistically significant difference was found between the participants who took on the housework with the division of labor and the participants who answered that they took on it alone, in favor of the participants who took on the division of labor together. Similarly, a statistically significant difference was found between the participants who answered “often me, sometimes my partner” and those who responded, “I do alone.” It was observed that the difference often favored the participants who answered: “me, sometimes my partner.”

According to the marital communication sub-dimension, there was a statistically significant difference between the participants who stated that their partners took on the housework alone and did it with the division of labor. Moreover, the difference favored the participants who indicated that they had undertaken together with the division of labor. There was a significant difference between the participants who answered that “my wife often does the housework, sometimes I do” and those who said they did it with the division of labor.

In the sub-dimension of empathy in marriage, there was a significant difference among the participants who stated that “their partners do the housework alone,” “often they do it,” “sometimes their partner does it,” and “they do it by themselves,” and those who stated that “they do it with the division of labor.”

Table 6. ANOVA Test Results on Whether The Total Score And Sub-Dimensions Of The Marital Self-Efficacy Scale Differ According To The Variable Of Person Who Takes The Housework

| | | Sum Square | df | Mean Square | F | p |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Marital Self-efficacy | Between Groups | 12644.841 | 4 | 3161.210 | 6.652 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 152083.116 | 320 | 475.260 | | |
| | Total | 164727.957 | 324 | | | |
| Partner Relationship | Between Groups | 7173.943 | 4 | 1793.486 | 10.733 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 53472.008 | 320 | 167.100 | | |
| | Total | 60645.951 | 324 | | | |
| Relationship by Close Environment | Between Groups | 1260.477 | 4 | 315.119 | 2.292 | .059 |
| | Within Groups | 43995.695 | 320 | 137.487 | | |
| | Total | 45256.172 | 324 | | | |

In Table 6, the differentiation status of the Marriage Self-efficacy Scale total score and sub-dimensions according to the variable of the person who undertook the housework was examined. While there was no statistically significant difference in the sub-dimension of the relationship by the close environment ($F(2.292)$, $p > .05$), there was a statistically significant difference in the sub-dimension of the partner relationship ($F(10.733)$, $p < .05$) and the total score of the scale ($F(6.652)$, $p < .05$).

According to the scale's total score, there was a statistically significant difference between the partners who did the housework together with the division of labor and the partners who stated that they did it alone. This difference favors partners who undertook housework with the division of labor. Additionally, a statistically significant difference was found between the participants who said they often did the housework themselves and sometimes their partners and those who indicated that they did it alone. It was observed that the difference was mostly in favor of the partners who answered “me and sometimes my partner” undertook it.

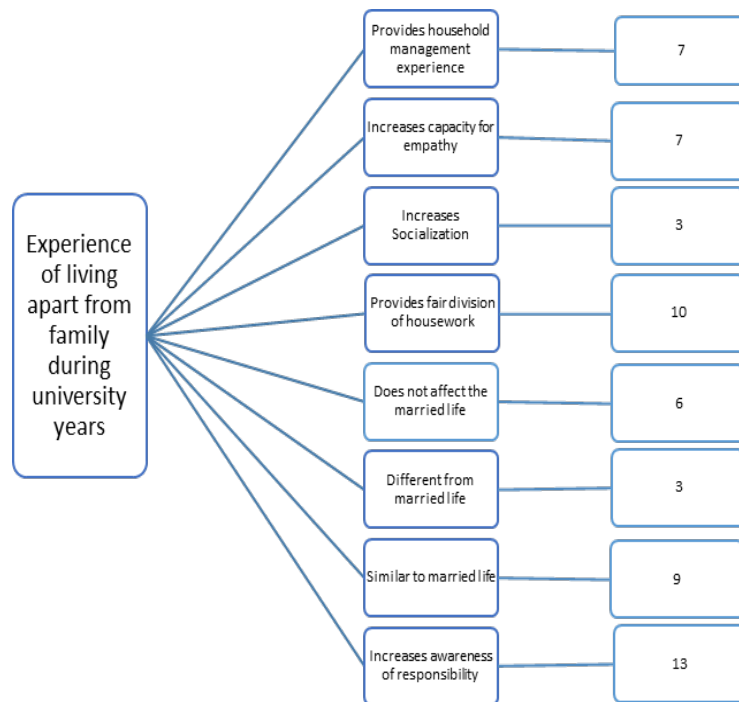
In the sub-dimension of the partner relationship, there was a statistically significant difference between the participants who stated that their partners took over the housework alone and the couples who indicated that they did it with the division of labor, and the difference favored the people who did it with the division of labor. Likewise, the statistically significant difference between the partners who stated that their partner took on alone and those who said "often me, sometimes my partner" favored the participants who answered, "often me, sometimes my wife." There was a significant difference between the participants who answered "often my wife, sometimes me" and those who stated that they took on with the division of labor, in favor of the

participants who indicated that they took on with the division of labor. It was observed that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of the participants who answered "often my partner, sometimes me" and those who stated that they took on alone. There was a statistically significant difference between the participants who answered "I do alone" and those who responded with the division of labor. It was determined that the difference favored the participants who answered with the division of labor. A statistically significant difference was found between the participants who answered "often me, sometimes my partner" and those who responded, "I do alone." It was seen that the difference favored the participants who stated that they often did the housework themselves and sometimes their partner.

Qualitative research findings

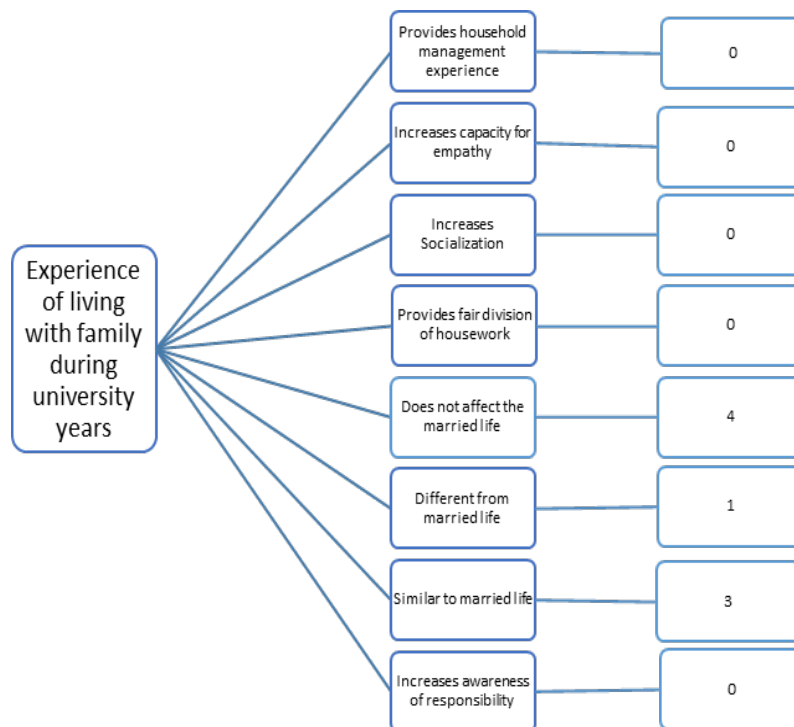
The qualitative data collection tools of the research were the demographic information form prepared by the researcher and the structured interview form questions prepared by taking expert opinions. The code was used to represent the participants in presenting the data obtained from the Structured Interview Form. For instance, the answers of the participants who lived apart from their families during their university years were presented as A1, A2, and A3, respectively, while the answers of the participants living with their families were presented as B1, B2, and B3, respectively. Information about the age and gender ("F" for female, "M" for male) of the participants are presented in parentheses.

Figure 1. Distribution Of Codes and Themes Obtained From Qualitative Findings In The Context Of The Experience Of Living Apart From Family During University Years



The participants' answers were grouped according to the codes and themes (see Figure 1). Accordingly, seven participants stated that living apart from their families during university provided a household management experience. Three participants said that living apart from their families during their university years increased their sociability, while ten noted that it offered a fair division of housework in their marriage. Six participants said that living apart from the family during their university years did not affect their married life, and three participants said that it did not show any similarity with their married life. According to nine participants, it was similar to their married life; according to seven participants, it increased their capacity for empathy, and according to thirteen participants, it increased their awareness of responsibility.

Figure 2. Distribution Of Codes And Themes Obtained From Qualitative Findings In The Context Of The Experience Of Living With Family During University Years



In Figure 2, the answers given by the participants were grouped in the context of the codes and themes. Accordingly, four participants stated that living with the family during their university years did not affect their married life, and one noted that it did not show any similarity with married life; three participants stated that it was similar to their married life. In the answers given by the participants who lived with their families during their university years, no content related to other codes and themes was determined. Some excerpts selected from the answers given by the participants within the framework of the determined codes and themes were presented.

Does the accommodation status during university years affect married life?

A1 (M, 31): So there is nothing I can call any positive or negative effect. As I said before, the contexts and conversations are different, so there is no positive or negative effect between the situation there and the situation in marriage. All of them are in another place; the conditions of that time were different, so there is nothing positive or negative.

B1 (M, 28): So actually, the two are entirely different situations because now, of course, there is a difference between living with family and living with your partner; in our home with my wife, more awareness of 'This is my home' is formed.

A3 (M, 31): While living in the same house with my friends in the home at the university, we were experiencing and learning many things that needed to be done about the home.

B6 (F, 29): At first, I had a hard time because I did not know how to manage and organize a home; I did not know what it was to make a balance of income and expenses. I learned how valuable vacuuming is when I lived in my house and married. If I lived in a home or dormitory to manage by myself during my university years, I would know how to do these things; this responsibility would be manageable. Unfortunately, the first year I got married, I turned into a person who cried because the house was messy, so I realized how easy it is to live with a family, but in the first year of marriage, so to speak, I became like a fish out of water.

Does accommodation status during university years affect socialization skills?

A6 (M, 27): For example, even living with a roommate contributes to your married life in many ways. In other words, it has had very positive aspects regarding managing a person as a social subsistence.

B3 (F, 28): Since I did not share it with anyone else, it would have been crazy, of course; since I did not have such an experience with a roommate, I guess we could have experienced different things.

Does accommodation status during university years affect the capacity for empathy?

A2 (F, 31): I never thought of it like that, but living in a home with a stranger has been beneficial, at least in meeting the common denominator and sharing responsibility.

A7 (F, 35): sharing a house with an adult of the same age group in the same house has a positive effect in terms of accepting and establishing mutual respect in the same way. Because we experience similar things with our roommate or our partner.

Does the accommodation status during university affect the housework's fair division?

A8 (M, 28): It is affected; the division of labor may have come from there.

A9 (M, 36): No one said that you would do this or you would do that. Nothing happened verbally; everyone did whatever they wanted. I used to like washing dishes when I was a student. I like to wash dishes like a mountain. We did not have a dishwasher, and at home, though, I headed straight for the dishwasher to wash the dishes. For example, I like to sweep, my wife does not like to sweep, I wouldn't say I like ironing, and my wife likes ironing. We did not verbally discuss it because it just fell into place like puzzle pieces.

Does the accommodation status during university affect the awareness of responsibility at home?

A10 (M, 28): I think it affects more positively because, as I explained earlier in those years, people take some responsibilities, most simply, thinking about renting or not having the food ready when you come home or washing the dishes, even though these seem like straightforward things, they get used to the people to married life.

B6 (F, 29): Surely, it would change; I would not have been so hard on myself. At first, I would not have been hard on myself; it would not have changed our relationship with my wife, but it could have made my life easier in the first year of our marriage because I did not know how to do the laundry. I needed to learn how to wash the dishes. I was not aware of how hard to clean up the strands falling on the floor was; in this respect, I honestly wish I had a time when I lived in a different place apart from my family.

Is the accommodation status during university years similar to married life?

A9 (M, 36): It affects this; even we talked to my wife long before this research, just in case I feel the benefit of it over time; because their marriage is a kind of roommate, the behavior of people in the home seems to be different. I can say that perceiving, realizing this, and knowing this affects married life more positively.

B1 (M, 28): It is similar. It is the same in marriage; for example, we go out when we are flirting; yes, social life is perfect; everyone is traveling together, dusting, eating, and drinking, and everything seems to be in harmony, but when we enter marriage life, nothing may be the same.

Discussion, conclusion, and recommendations

Interpretation of quantitative research data

In this study, there was no significant difference in marital adjustment and self-efficacy according to the accommodation status of the participants. The participants' experiences of living apart from their families and with a house/roommate during their university years could create a statistically significant difference in their adjustment and self-efficacy scores by supporting the components of harmonious marriages, such as empathizing, taking responsibility, cooperating in the division of housework, and increasing social functionality (Clark et al., 2019; Erb et al., 2014; Van Laar et al., 2005; Tutarel-Kışlak, 2002). Additionally, individuals coping with the problems they encountered for the first time during their university period and their social adaptation increased their psychological resilience. They allowed them to eliminate difficulties quickly (Durmuş & Okanlı, 2018). University experience was accepted as an essential building block in growing individuals' self-confidence and assertiveness skill levels, and university education made individuals creative, flexible, adaptable, and problem-solving skills (Yüksel, 2020). Problem-solving skills are necessary for individuals to lead a happy and satisfying life (Öztürk & Karagün, 2020).

In summary, university period experience provided individuals with opportunities and information to improve their problem-solving skills and increased their perceived level of competence; individuals with high self-

efficacy displayed a more cooperative, empathetic, and harmonious attitude in solving the problems they encountered in their marriage. The fact that the present research findings did not differ regarding marital adjustment and self-efficacy total scores and sub-dimensions may be because the participants were university graduates, and therefore, the marriage was defined as harmonious. The individuals gained the necessary experience to feel competent in marriage.

According to the number of children variables, a statistically significant difference was found in the Marriage Adjustment Scale total score marital satisfaction, marital communication, and marital empathy sub-dimensions, and in the Marriage Self-efficacy Scale, total score and the relationship with partner sub-dimension. This difference favored the participants without children. In other words, the findings of this study indicated that the marital adjustment, satisfaction, communication and empathy levels, marital self-efficacy, and the level of the relationships of married individuals with each other were higher than those with children.

The literature stated that having a child strengthened the adjustment in marriage by sharing the responsibility of marriage and making decisions together (Şahin-Altun et al., 2020). In a study conducted with 103 married women aged between 21 and 41 and over, the effect of sociodemographic factors on marital adjustment was investigated, and it was found that the number of children did not affect marital adjustment (Yalçın, 2014, p. 250). However, it was also stated that having children is a source of stress for partners and a factor that negatively affects marital adjustment by preventing intimacy between partners (Belsky, 1990) (as cited in Yeşiltepe & Çelik, 2014).

The assumption that the perceived equality in marriage and marital satisfaction will be higher in couples who maintain the egalitarian gender role ideology than in couples who maintain the traditional ideology was supported by the results of the research (Kulik, 2002, p. 460). There was a negative relationship between the equal division of labor and those who reported burnout, while a positive relationship between the individuals who stated that they had the most minor problems and those who noted the equal division of labor. The findings obtained from this study also showed that the adjustment and self-efficacy scores of the individuals were significantly higher in marriages where there was equality and sharing in the housework.

Interpretation of qualitative research data

In line with the data obtained from the in-depth interviews conducted in the qualitative dimension of the research, it was concluded that the status of accommodation during university years was influential on the factors that increased the marital adjustment and self-efficacy of the individuals. As can be seen in the quotations from the answers given by the participants, the experience of living with a roommate was facilitated by a lot of experience in doing chores (rent and invoice tracking, shopping for household needs, house cleaning, etc.). Individuals who stated that living apart from their families increased their experience in the relevant issue said that knowing the way, time, and method of doing things within the scope of housework in their married life increased their self-confidence and competencies and benefited their marriage.

Gülgör and Tortop (2018) explained that trust in marriage was related to the understanding of equality in the distribution of roles, covering expenses, and the distribution of chores and that the presence of factors that undermined trust in a marriage affected marital satisfaction. Erzeybek and Gökçearslan-Çifci (2019) conducted qualitative research with seven married female academicians and found that the division of labor and understanding between spouses increased marital adjustment. Participants who lived with their families during their university years did not provide data on the ideal distribution of chores and the effect of the division of labor on their marriage.

The data obtained from the participants showed that the sense of responsibility was affected by different accommodation thicknesses. Participants living apart from their families stated that they had to take on the duties of their parents at home, and they had the advantage of experiencing responsibilities that were not given before in terms of preparing themselves for marriage. The participants living with their families mentioned the adverse effects of taking less responsibility. They stated that being with their parents had a conservative impact on their material and spiritual development, being accepted as adults, and their emotions and behaviors. While Bilen (1983), Hrytsiuk et al. (2022), and Wider et al. (2021) stated that responsibilities should be accepted with maturity for a harmonious marriage, Leonard and Roberts (1998), Midgette (2020)

and Sun and Wang (2023) emphasized that there should be a satisfactory distribution of housework in a harmonious relationship. Clark et al. (2019) stated that cooperating in sharing responsibility was essential to marital adjustment. According to these studies, individuals with high awareness and experience in sharing responsibility would also have high marital adjustment.

The participants who said that the status of accommodation during their university years was not effective in their marital life emphasized that matrimonial relations were different from other relations and stated that they evaluated them in a separate context. They indicated no connection between their experiences of living with their families or peers and their experiences of living with their spouses. Moreover, they stated that they did not observe any effect on the change in their conditions, perceptions, and behavior patterns. The participants, who indicated they were similar, also stated that their married life was a kind of roommate, and the problems experienced were identical. There might be differences in opinion when two adults got along very well before living in the same house, which was seen in both cases (marriage and roommate).

When the qualitatively collected data were examined, university-graduate married individuals stated that their experiences living apart from their families affected their married life. Individuals said their communication with their spouses, attitude toward responsibility, and problem-solving knowledge and skills improved. Individuals living with their families stated that matters such as housework, housekeeping, and responsibilities remained the same, and they thought that the adjustment problems they encountered in the first years of their marriage were due to their inexperience.

When the results obtained from the quantitative and qualitative findings of the research were examined, there was no parallelism between them. This situation could be related to the fact that the results obtained in the quantitative dimension of the study were limited to the findings obtained from the scale. Even though the data were assumed to be answered sincerely by the participants, the general questions in the qualitative dimension provided the participants with the opportunity to express their experiences and thoughts in detail. While available information could be obtained from quantitative research, information about its depth and the reasons behind it could not be reached. Qualitative research methods offer the opportunity to explain real-life events based on interpretations (Sönmez & İlgün, 2018). Since marital adjustment was a phenomenon that needed to be evaluated as multidimensional (Kaya-Örk, 2021), it would be appropriate to handle it with methods that increased the expressiveness of the participants and allowed them to interpret. Additionally, it was thought that the collection of quantitative and qualitative data obtained within the scope of the research from different groups led to the lack of parallelism in the findings.

In this research, marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy, along with certain demographic variables, have been examined, yielding various results. It has been noted that variables showing no significant differences are connected to other factors they influence marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy. For instance, the difference in the level of marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy is not related to gender but rather to the extent to which individuals adopt masculine attitudes (Akpınar & Kıriloğlu, 2020). Similarly, the experience of living with or without family during university years is not the determining factor; instead, it is linked to levels of empathy, collaboration, and problem-solving skills (Clark et al., 2019; Heath et al., 2018; Öztürk Karagün, 2020). Long-term marriage is not necessarily associated with high adjustment and satisfaction but rather with the absence of different, more desirable alternatives (Kendrick & Drentea, 2016) and individuals sharing similar perspectives over time (Kulik, 2002). In this context, considering the mentioned demographic variables in a multifaceted manner is deemed valid.

The data collected within the qualitative dimension of the research were examined. Consequently, it was observed that married university graduates mentioned the impact of their experiences while living apart from their families on their marital life. Individuals reported improved communication with their spouses, a sense of responsibility, and problem-solving knowledge and skills. On the other hand, those living with their families said no significant changes in matters such as housework, household management, and responsibility. They attributed adaptation problems in the initial years of marriage to their lack of experience. Participants living with their families highlighted the adverse effects of having a low level of responsibility. They noted that being with their parents influenced their acceptance, feelings, and behaviors as adults in a conservative manner. Clark

et al. (2019) asserted that cooperative sharing of responsibilities is crucial to marital adjustment. Similarly, Gülgör & Tortop (2018) suggested that trust in marriage is linked to the fair distribution of duties and responsibilities, covering expenses, and understanding equality in domestic duties. Based on this information, it can be predicted that individuals with high awareness and experience in sharing responsibilities will exhibit high levels of marital adjustment and marital self-efficacy.

Current research findings have shown that the experience of living apart from the family is practical in gaining home management practice, finding opportunities to socialize, distributing tasks within marriage fairly, increasing empathy capacity, and increasing individuals' awareness of domestic responsibilities. In this regard, as individuals become adults, they assume some household responsibilities, regardless of their accommodation situation; it may be suggested that they act with the awareness that their level of marital adjustment will increase as their marital self-efficacy increases. In addition, it may be crucial for professionals in the field to enlighten married individuals on variables such as childlessness and fair distribution of housework, which have been identified as positively influencing marital harmony and competence. This information could be essential for fostering the healthy development of relationships.

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