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FAMILY FUNCTIONS, SENSE OF FAMILY COHESION AND SELF-ESTEEM IN MARRIED INDIVIDUALS: CASE IN GÜMÜŞHANE

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Abstract

Family is a very important institution. Self-Esteem of married individuals is an important issue for the continuation of their marriage therefore this study examines the relationship between family functions, sense of family cohesion, and self-esteem among married individuals in Gümüşhane, Turkey. A sample of 532 participants completed paper surveys, providing data on family functions using the Family Functions Scale (FFS), sense of cohesion within the family using the Family Sense of Coherence Scale, abbreviated (FSOC-S), and self-esteem using the Two-Dimensional Self-Esteem Scale. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation tests, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used for data analysis. Results indicate significant direct effects of family functions on both sense of family cohesion ($\beta=1.648$, $p<0.001$) and self-esteem ($\beta=0.682$, $p<0.001$), highlighting the influential role of family dynamics on these variables. Additionally, a significant relationship between sense of family cohesion and self-esteem ($\beta=0.193$, $p<0.001$) underscores importance of family cohesion in shaping individual self-esteem. These findings contribute to understanding the complex interrelations among family functioning, cohesion, and psychological well-being in married individuals.

Keyword: Family Functions, Sense of Family Cohesion, Self-Esteem, Married Individuals

Evli Bireylerde Aile İşlevleri, Aile Bütünlük Duygusu Ve Benlik Saygısının İncelenmesi: Gümüşhane Örneği

Öz

Bu çalışma Gümüşhane'deki evli bireylerde aile işlevleri, aile bütünlüğü duygusu ve benlik saygısı arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Bu çalışmada 532 evli katılımcıdan oluşan bir örnekleme sahip omaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Aile İşlevleri Ölçeği'ni (FFS) kullanarak aile işlevlerine, Aile Tutarlılık Duygusu Ölçeği'ni (FSOC-S kısaltılmış versiyonu) kullanarak aile içindeki bütünlük duygusuna ve (FSOC-S kısaltılmış) İki Boyutlu Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği kullanarak benlik saygısına ilişkin verileri sağlayan araçları kağıt ve yüz yüze şeklinde toplandı. Veri analizinde tanımlayıcı istatistikler, Pearson korelasyon testleri ve Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (SEM) kullanıldı. Sonuçlarda, aile

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işlevlerinin hem aile bütünlüğü duygusu ($\beta=1.648$, $p<0.001$) hem de benlik saygısı ($\beta=0.682$, $p<0.001$) üzerinde anlamlı doğrudan etkilerine işaret ederek, aile dinamiklerinin bu değişkenler üzerindeki etkili rolünü vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca aile bütünlüğü duygusu ile benlik saygısı arasındaki anlamlı ilişki ($\beta=0.193$, $p<0.001$), bireysel benlik saygısının şekillenmesinde aile bağlılığının önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu bulgular evli bireylerde aile işleyişi, bağlılık ve psikolojik iyi oluş arasındaki karmaşık ilişkilerin anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelime: Aile İşlevleri, Aile Bütünlüğü Duygusu, Benlik Saygısı, Evli Bireyler

Introduction

Human society is based on the family, which is the primary institution for socialization, emotional support, and personal growth (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Bowlby, 1982). People carry out different family functions within this complex web of relationships, aiming to achieve identity, safety, and a feeling of inclusion (Minuchin, 2018). Furthermore, the quality of a person's familial interactions and support system has a significant impact on their self-perception, which is embodied in their self-esteem (Orth et al., 2008). Married couples take on a journey of shared responsibilities, goals, and difficulties, which increases the complexity of family life (Gottman and Notarius, 2000).

Family functions play a crucial role in the mental well-being of married individuals (Wu et al., 2022, Kille and Kabasakal, 2015, Zakiei et al., 2020). Research indicates that family functioning significantly predicts psychological symptomatology, with married couples showing better family functioning compared to divorcing couples (Edwina et al., 2022). Moreover, family function is associated with self-esteem, which acts as a mediator between family functioning and mental health outcomes (Ara and Shah, 2015).

Family cohesion refers to the amount and quality of interactions within a family, encompassing both marital and familial dynamics. It involves navigating interpersonal tasks, rights, and duties, the absence of which can lead to disturbances and breakdowns within marital and familial relationships (Coe et al.,

2018). Furthermore, family cohesion plays a crucial role in determining the success or failure of communication between couples (Gupta and Bowie, 2018).

It encompasses the emotional bond and commitment among family members, characterized by factors such as emotional intimacy, the frequency and quality of interactions, parent-child relationships, and how family members spend their leisure time together (Hur et al., 2017). Families characterized by high cohesion demonstrate emotional intimacy and stability over time, driven by mutual respect and expressions of care among members (Mendes et al., 2017).

Married people who have strong family cohesion tend to have higher self-esteem. People are more likely to feel appreciated, respected, and accepted when they live in a warm, supportive, and open communication family (Yao et al., 2022). A strong sense of security and belonging is fostered by this supportive atmosphere, and it supports a healthy sense of self-worth. Spouses in these kinds of families are more likely to have faith in their own skills and abilities because they know they have a solid support network. On the other hand, low family cohesiveness can be harmful to one's self-worth. People may feel rejected, alone, and inadequate in families where there is conflict, neglect, or a lack of emotional connection. Married people may find it difficult to maintain a positive self-image and may even exhibit signs of low self-esteem, such as insecurity and self-doubt, in the absence of the comfort of a loving family environment.

Research on the relationship between family functions, maintaining family cohesion, and individual self-esteem is an important undertaking in modern psychology. With a focus on the distinct socio-cultural environment of Gümüşhane, Turkey, this study sets out to explore these complexities. Gümüşhane, with its picturesque scenery and rich historical legacy, offers the perfect backdrop for investigating the ways in which modernity and tradition converge in family relationships. Through an analysis of married people's experiences in Gümüşhane, we hope to shed light on the relationship between promoting family integrity, fostering positive self-esteem, and fostering healthy family functioning.

Method

A total of 532 married individuals from Gümüşhane, Turkey, participated in the current study by completing paper surveys. Ethical approval was secured from the Gümüşhane university ethics committee at Masked for review ethics committee (E-95674917-108.99-181977).

Data were gathered for Sense of Family Cohesion using the 12-item, 7-point Likert scale of the the Family Sense of Coherence Scale, abbreviated (FSOC-S). We employ the 60-item, 4-point Likert scale (FFS) (Bulut, 1990) for family functions. The Two-Dimensional Self-Esteem Scale (16-item) developed by Tafarodi and Swann Jr (2001) is used to measure self-esteem.

The data were analyzed utilizing SPSS v.28 for descriptive statistics and AMOS version 24 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Initially, descriptive statistics were conducted to examine the socio-demographic characteristics among married individuals. Subsequently, Pearson's correlation tests were employed to explore the relationships among family functions, sense of family cohesion, and self-esteem. Finally, SEM was performed using AMOS 24.0. A significance level of $\alpha=0.05$ (two-tailed) was applied to all analyzed data.

Result

The survey of 532 married people from Gümüşhane (Table 1) shows a nearly equal number of men and women, with 47% being men and 53% women. Most of the participants are between 35 and 54 years old. In terms of education, many have finished highschool (28.2%) or have a bachelor's degree (26.3%). The length of marriage varies, but most have been married for 11-15 years (26.3%) or 16-20 years (20.7%).

Table 1. Demographic Information

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	250	47.0

	Female	282	53.0
Age	18-24	45	8.5
	25-34	110	20.7
	35-44	150	28.2
	45-54	120	22.6
	55-64	75	14.1
	65+	32	6.0
Education	Primary School	75	14.1
	Secondary School	105	19.7
	High School	150	28.2
	Bachelor's Degree	140	26.3
	Master's Degree	50	9.4
	Doctorate	12	2.3
Years of Marriage	0-5 years	60	11.3
	6-10 years	100	18.8
	11-15 years	140	26.3
	16-20 years	110	20.7
	21-25 years	60	11.3
	26+ years	62	11.7

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Fornell–Larcker Analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3
Self-Esteem	3.280	1.254	-0.439	-1.621	0.925		
Sense of Family Cohesion	4.428	2.025	-0.419	-1.743	0.670	0.871	
Family Functions	2.673	0.891	-0.386	-1.797	0.720	0.702	0.958
Valid N	532						

We assessed data normality using skewness and kurtosis (Hair Jr et al., 2023). The results show that the skewness and kurtosis values fall within the acceptable range of -2 to +2 (DeCarlo, 1997). Therefore, the data in this research is considered normally distributed (Table 2).

In this study, the reliability of each construct exceeds 0.70, indicating the data is reliable. According to Hair et al., acceptable CR values range from 0.904 to 0.987. Therefore, all construct values in this study are above 0.70 (Table 3). Our results show that composite reliability is also higher than the recommended cutoff of 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 3. *Validity and Reliability Metrics*

Latent variables	Observed variables	factor loadings	C.R	AVE
Self-Esteem	Self-competence	.946	0.923	0.856
	Self-linking	.949		
Sense of Family Cohesion	Comprehensibility	.955	0.904	0.758
	Manageability	.968		
	Meaningfulness	.969		
	Problem Solving	.959		
Family Functions	Communication	.951	0.987	0.917
	Roles	.944		
	Affective Responsiveness	.925		
	Affective Involvement	.962		
	Behavior Control	.949		
	General Functioning	.932		

The model fit indices (Table 4) are CMIN/df = 1.073, GFI = 0.984, AGFI = 0.967, CFI = 0.998, and TLI = 0.997, all exceeding the 0.90 benchmark for good model fit recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999). Additionally, the RMR and RMSEA values are 0.013 and 0.012, respectively, both below the acceptable threshold of 0.08 (Hair Jr et al., 2023).

Table 4. *Model Fit Indices*

Chisq/df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	TLI	NFI	RMR	RMSEA
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Model	1.073	0.984	0.967	0.998	0.997	0.995	0.013	0.012
Acceptance range	1-3	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	<0.08	<0.08

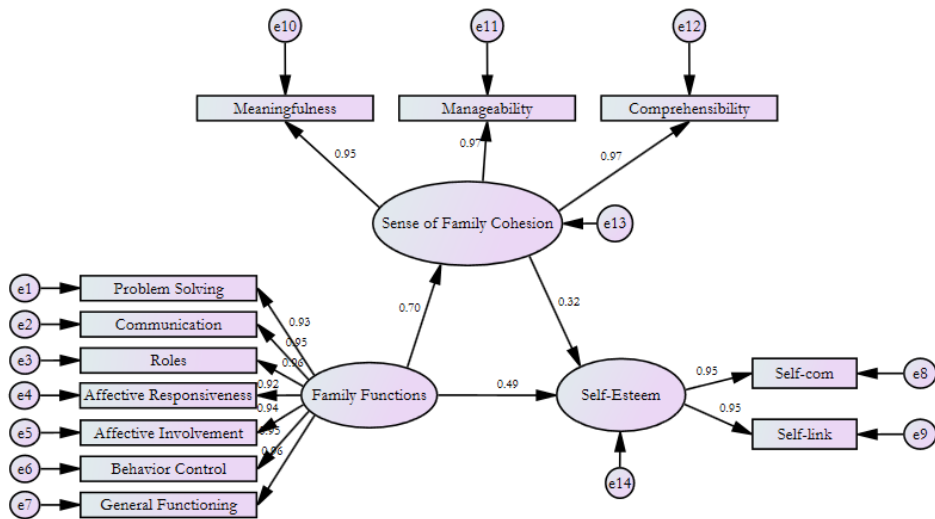


Figure 1. Structured model

Table 5. Model Hypothesis Analysis

Hypothesis	Path	β	S.E	C.R.	P	Result
H ₁	Family Functions → Sense of Family Cohesion	1.648	.080	20.644	<0.001	Accepted
H ₂	Family Functions → Self-Esteem	.682	.063	10.900	<0.001	Accepted
H ₃	Sense of Family Cohesion → Self-Esteem	.193	.027	7.254	<0.001	Accepted

The analysis reveals that the direct effect of Family Functions on Sense of Family Cohesion is significant ($\beta=1.648$, $p<0.001$), indicating a strong relationship between these variables. Similarly, the direct impact of Family Functions on Self-Esteem is also significant ($\beta=0.682$, $p<0.001$), suggesting a substantial influence of

family functions on self-esteem. Moreover, the analysis demonstrates that the relationship between Sense of Family Cohesion and Self-Esteem is significant ($\beta=0.193$, $p<0.001$), underscoring the role of family cohesion in shaping individual self-esteem (Table 5).

Discussion

The structural equation modeling adequately represented the relationships between the variables in this study. Individual self-esteem, family functions, and family cohesion are all related. Understanding these relationships is crucial to promoting better family environments and assisting in the psychological well-being of its members. This study sheds light on these relationships and offers valuable insights into married individuals within the framework of families.

The first hypothesis's result showed that the sense of family cohesion is strongly impacted by family functions. The importance of family functions in promoting unity within the family is highlighted by this relationship. These roles whether they involve sharing decision-making, effective communication or emotional support serve as the cornerstones around which family cohesion grows. These results confirmed the study of Ghanbari Panah and Sharif Mustaffa (2019) which demonstrated a strong correlation between family cohesion and functions.

The direct effect of Family Functions on Self-Esteem was significance. This explains how family Functions have a significant impact on a person's sense of self. Good relationships with family, caring surroundings, and a feeling of community can support a person's self-worth and provide them with the confidence and fortitude to face life's obstacles.

Family function significantly affects self-esteem in various populations. Research shows that family function influences self-esteem levels (Wu et al., 2022). with family dysfunction leading to lower self-esteem (Cubero-Plazas et al., 2023). Moreover, family function affects mental health through self-esteem mediation (Huang et al., 2022), indicating its crucial role in mental wellness. Studies highlight the negative correlation between family function and anxiety,

depression, optimism, and pessimism (Theodoropoulou et al., 2023), emphasizing the impact on overall well-being.

Additionally, the research emphasizes the significant correlation between Self-Esteem and Sense of Family Cohesion. This study emphasizes how these concepts are symbiotic, meaning that a strong sense of family cohesion enhances each individual's sense of self. Feeling valued, connected, and supported within the family unit promotes a positive self-concept and sense of self-worth.

These findings align with the study by McFarlane et al. (1995), who explored how family closeness and adaptability affect family members' mental health, behavior, and views of their relationships. Their research demonstrated that family cohesion is associated with positive outcomes, such as family satisfaction, marital harmony, and effective parent-child communication.

These results have important impacts for human personal and family well-being. We can strengthen the familial tie and boost each member's self-esteem by creating a supportive home that is marked by efficient operations and a strong sense of unity. Acknowledging the complex interactions among these factors enables families to foster environments that support psychological well-being.

Limitations

We must consider limitations for interpreting our results: First, the questionnaire's distribution was random, and the number of participants was low. This sample is not representative. Secondly, this research data was collected only from Gümüşhane city in Türkiye. Thirdly, as the survey was distributed via the internet, families without any digital terminal could not take part.

Conclusion

In summary, the research provides insightful information about the complex relationships between married people in Gümüşhane and their families, as well as their sense of self-worth. Stronger individual well-being and healthier family environments are made possible by acknowledging and utilizing these relationships. Building a strong support system within the family is the first step

toward developing self-esteem (self-competence, self-linking), which in turn paves the way for a happy and rewarding life.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

This research is written by a single author and all work belongs to me

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Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online

Data Availability Statment

The data used for this article are available in the open science framework repository <https://data.mendeley.com/preview/d5wf4tcysr?a=715299e5-6983-4a9e-b667-c6f6843464c6>

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