THE PREDICTIVE ROLE OF CONSTRUCTIVE THINKING ON ATTRIBUTIONS AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

YÜKLEMELER VE EVLİLİK DOYUMUNUN YORDAYICISI OLARAK YAPILANDIRMACI DÜŞÜNME

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Abstract

In this study, the relationships between constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction in married individuals were investigated and tried to reveal the predictive role of constructive thinking on attributions and marital satisfaction. Correlational research design was used in the study. The study group of the research consisted of a total of 202 married individuals, 142 females and 60 males. In order to collect data Constructive Thinking Inventory, Relational Attribution Measure and Marital Life Scale were used. Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficient Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis were used in the analysis of the data. According the results of multiple regression analysis in order to reveal what extent to constructive thinking predicts attributions it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful and the variables in the model all explain 20% of the total variance of attributions. According to the results, emotional coping and superstitious thinking have highest contribution on the model. According to the results of the multiple regression analysis in order to reveal what extent to constructive thinking and attributions together predict marital satisfaction, it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful. The variables in the model all explain 47% of the total variance of marital satisfaction. Causal attributions, total attributions and behavioral coping have highest contribution on the second model.

Keywords: Constructive Thinking, Attributions, Marital Satisfaction

Öz

Bu çalışmada evli bireylerde yapılandırmacı düşünme, yüklemeler ve evlilik doyumu arasındaki ilişkiler incelenmiş ve yapılandırmacı düşünmenin, yüklemeler ve evlilik doyumu üzerindeki yordayıcı etkisi ortaya çıkarılmaya çalışılmıştır. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya koyma amacı taşıyan araştırmada ilişkisel desen kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, 142'si kadın, 60'ı erkek olmak üzere toplam 202 evli bireyden oluşmaktadır. Verilerin toplanmasında Yapılandırmacı Düşünme Envanteri, İlişkilerde Yükleme Ölçeği ve Evlilik Yaşamı Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Pearson Momentler Korelasyon Katsayısı Analizi ve Çoklu Regresyon Analizi kullanılmıştır. Analiz bulguları, yapılandırmacı düşünmenin yüklemeleri ne ölçüde yordadığına ilişkin modelin bir bütün olarak anlamlı olduğunu ve modeldeki değişkenlerin tümünün yüklemelerdeki toplam varyansın yüzde 20'sini açıkladığını göstermektedir. Analiz sonuçlarına göre modele en fazla katkıda bulunan yapılandırmacı düşünme alt boyutlarının; duygusal başa çıkma ve batıl inançlarla düşünme olduğu görülmüştür. Analiz sonuçlarına göre, yapılandırmacı düşünme ve yüklemelerin evlilik doyumunu ne ölçüde yordadığına ilişkin ikinci modelin bir bütün olarak anlamlı olduğu görülmektedir. Modeldeki değişkenlerin hepsi, evlilik doyumunun toplam varyansının % 47'sini açıklamaktadır. Standartlaştırılmış regresyon katsayısına göre, modele en fazla katkıda bulunan değişkenler, nedensel yüklemeler, nedensel ve sorumluluk yüklemelerin toplamı ve yapılandırmacı düşünmenin alt boyutu olan davranışsal başa çıkma olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yapılandırmacı Düşünme, Yüklemeler, Evlilik Doyumu

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1. INTRODUCTION

Satisfying intimate relationships are a primary source of happiness and give meaning to one's life. Marriage is the most significant intimate relationship of all adult life structures. Researchers have long been investigating variables that create a strong marriage in which both partners are satisfied. Marital satisfaction is the most frequently studied subject in research on marriage and family relationships (Heyman, Sayers, & Bellack, 1994). Marital satisfaction was defined as how happy or satisfied an individual is with different aspects of his or her marriage, based on the extent to which a partner fulfills the individual's most important needs (Fowers & Olson, 1989). Satisfaction in relationships has been widely studied and deemed a significant influence in the success of marital relationships (Locke & Wallace, 1959; Fowers & Olson, 1989; Bradbury, Fincham. & Beach, 2000). In viewing the family as a system, clearly strong, stable, happy marriages can be the key to helping each member of the family become strong, successful, happy, and healthy individuals (Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2008). The quality of a marital relationship can affect the quality of life for all family members, and distressed marriages can lead to depression, anxiety, and additional health problems (Graham, Liu, & Jeziorski, 2006).

The strong negative effect of marital disfunction has attracted a large amount of research on how romantic partners interact with one another throughout the course of marriage. The researches which were based on both cross-sectional and observational studies have demonstrated that communication of couples is consistently and significantly related to marital satisfaction (Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Rogge & Bradbury, 1999). According to Bradbury and Fincham (1992), in this communication, the attributions that spouses make for a partner's behavior have been consistently related to their marital quality. The central idea of social attribution theory concern how and why individuals make causal explanations for events (Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1967). Heider (1958) suggested that an important way that individuals accommodate their global and specific perceptions of others is through making attributions, defined as "the analysis of the underlying conditions that give rise to perceptual experience" (p. 22). Karney and Bradbury (2000) stated that the relationship between attributions and satisfaction is the strongest link in the literature on close relationships. According to Bradbury and Fincham (1990), the attributions or explanations that spouses propose for a partner's behavior have been constantly related to their marital quality. Theoretically, the basis for considering attributions within the context of marriage stemmed from the observation that in distressed marriages one spouse's negative behavior often precipitated the other spouse's negative behavioral response (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). In literature it is hypothesized that distressed spouses make attributions for negative events that emphasize their impact (e.g., they find the cause in their partner, see it as stable or unchanging, and see it as global or influencing many areas of the relationship), whereas non-distressed spouses are thought to make attributions that minimize the impact of negative events (e.g., they do not find the cause in the partner and they see it as unstable and specific). For example, distressed spouses are more likely to blame the partner for marital problems and to perceive the partner's negative behaviors as intended and selfishly motivated than non-distressed spouses.

The research findings point out that maladaptive attributions of the partners for events in their relationship are predictor factors of decreasing marriage quality (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Fincham, 1994; Bradbury et al, 1996). Studies on attributions and marital satisfaction show that spouses who attribute their spouse's negative behaviors to internal factors are more likely to be martially distressed (Fincham, 1994; Epstein & Baucom, 1993; Fincham, Beach, & Bradbury, 1989). In the marital literature, studies have shown evidence for the hypothesis that attributions for either positive or negative events are associated with

spouse's behavioral responses (Fincham, & O'Leary, 1983;Fincham. Beach & Nelson, 1987). One study (Fincham, Beach, & Nelson, 1987) showed that responsibility attributions are related to affective reactions. Results showed that spouses who viewed certain acts as most selfish and blamable had the strongest emotional reactions and were most likely to respond to their partner with punitive behavior. The above findings suggest that maladaptive attributions may contribute to negative behavioral exchanges overtime such as avoidance, blaming, and withdrawal (Bradbury and Fincham, 1992).

In a distressed marriage one or both spouses will invariably have many faulty perceptions about their partner, including attributions for a spouse's behavior which are distorted, biased, or illogical (Beck, 1988). The following are examples of what cognitive therapists mean by distorted, biased, or illogical attributions; (1) making a generalization about one's spouse based upon the assumption that because something happens once in a while, it is a rigid pattern; (2) personalizing benign behaviors of one's spouse; (3) filtering out relevant information about one's spouse or a marital event. A persistent pattern of faulty perceptions, left unchecked, can create numerous misunderstandings and eventually contribute to a marriage where each feels disillusioned with the other and emotionally distant (Beck, 1988). Epstein (1998) indicated that if we wish to understand people's everyday maladaptive behavior, we have to understand the nature of their constructive thinking. Constructive thinking refers to a set of cognitive productive and counterproductive automatic habitual thoughts that affects one's ability to think in a manner that solves everyday problems in living with minimal stress (Epstein & Meier, 1989; Epstein, 1998). The people who demonstrate high constructive thinking level use a range of adaptable, reality based cognitive processes and problem assessments that facilitate coping and maximize the likelihood of effective solutions to life problems, whereas low constructive thinkers are inclined to make broad negative attributions and overgeneralizations of themselves following unfavorable life outcomes and to rely on superstitious beliefs and other forms of magical thinking to explain or control their environments.

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Constructive thinking helps us establish better relationships with people generally, also in intimate love relationships. In the study of college students, Epstein (1998) found that people who were good constructive thinkers had more satisfactory relationships than those who were not. People who score high on global constructive thinking have a more active social life and they are more satisfied with the support they receive from others than people with lower scores. Good emotional copers have close, satisfying relationships with people. Good behavioral copers have extensive social networks. Most people who think in personally superstitious ways have a limited social life and are unhappy about it. Categorical thinkers have a limited social life but are not distressed about it—perhaps because they are suspicious of people anyway, particularly those who are not ''their kind'' of people. Over the range of human involvement, from intimate to casual contacts, good constructive thinkers tend to establish more rewarding relationships than do others. Constructive thinking helps the spouses solving the problem of how to establish constructive love relationships by understanding the problem, as opposed to trying to get what you want by demanding it, offering material or emotional bribes or other futile strategies.

According to Epstein (1992) it may be that good constructive thinkers may take better care of themselves (e.g., healthier life styles), may have behave in ways which induce less stress (e.g. they ingage in less provocation of others, and are more disciplined and conscientious). It could also be that good constructive thinkers interpret events in less stressful, and more adaptive ways (e.g., viewing stressful event as a challenge versus threat), and that once these interpretations are made, they tend to demonstrate more effective behavioral and emotional coping skills. The sum of this possibilities explains why

constructive thinkers experience fewer symptoms over time, and less symptomatology in the face of stressors. Constructive thinking appears to moderate the effects of stressful events on well-being and thus acts as a buffer (Epstein, 1992). Training in constructive thinking has been demonstrated to be a useful procedure for improving feelings, thinking, and the behavior of people in their daily lives (Epstein, 1998, 2001). In Turkey, Demirtaş's research on university students (2016) demonstrated that the 9-sessions psycho-educational program that was formed and based on cognitive-experiential theory has caused significant increase in students' constructive thinking level. The participants stated that the psycho-educational program helped them to gain a new perspective on how to deal with emotions and stress.

Giving existing theory and the empirical literature reviewed above, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction and the predictive role of constructive thinking on attributions and marital satisfaction. Determining these relationships and the predictive role of constructive thinking through theoretical explanations, the current research is considered to contribute to the marital satisfaction literature.

The purpose of the study is to answer the following questions:

- Are there any relationships between constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction?
- Does constructive thinking predict attributions?
- Do constructive thinking and attributions predict marital satisfaction together?

2. METHOD

Research Design

Correlational research design was used in this study. According to Heppner, Wampold and Kivlighan (2008), correlational research is used to examine the relations between two or more variables. The causal relations between constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction was examined in the study.

Sample

The study group of the research consisted of a total of 202 married individuals, females (142) and males (60). The mean age of study participants was 34 (SD: 7,27). Convenience sampling was used for the study group. Convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest individuals from those to whom she / he has easy access (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2007).

Data Collection Tools

Constructive Thinking Inventory (CTI): In order to collect data CTI was used developed by Epstein and Meier (1989) and adapted Turkish Culture by Tosun and Karadağ (2008). The original form of CTI is a 108-item self-report instrument. The instructions for the CTI ask subjects to rate on a five-point Likert-type scale the frequency these automatic constructive and destructive thoughts occur in their everyday life. The inventory has six sub-scale: Behavioral Coping, Emotional Coping, Categorical Thinking, Esoteric Thinking, Personal Superstitious Thinking, Naive Optimism. The CTI also has three primary scales, including The Global Scale, Emotional Coping, and Behavioral Coping. The CTI has well-documented evidence of satisfactory reliability (internal-consistency coefficients of its major scales range from .80 to above .90) and validity, as determined by its coherent relations with a variety of indexes of effective functioning, including work success, relationship satisfaction

and mental and physical well-being (Epstein, 1992a, 1992b; Epstein & Katz, 1992; Katz & Epstein, 1991).

The CTI was adapted Turkish Culture by Tosun and Karadağ (2008). To examine the factor structure of the inventory, the researchers conducted exploratory factor analysis using Kaiser Meyer Olkin = .71 and Bartlet analysis (p > .01). The results indicated that the inventory was 85 items, 7 sub-scales: Emotional Coping, Behavioral Coping, Superstitious Thinking, Categorical Thinking, Esoteric Thinking, Naïve Optimism and Defensiveness. The factor loadings of the items are changed between 0.31 and 0.61. The validity variable of the original form was not fulfilled for the Turkish version of the form. It can be explained that inventory items and factors are different from each other culturally (Epstein, 2001; Tosun ve Karadağ, 2008). The 7 sub-scales have %47 of the total variance. Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated to define internal consistency of the factor of inventory, and changed between .53 and .75, it was also calculated as .79 for all items of the inventory. The confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on 459 university students to examine the construct validity of the adapted version of the inventory by Demirtaş (2016). The results indicated that the hypothesized 7 factor model represented an acceptable fit to the data (χ^2 = 8649, sd = 3394, χ^2 / sd = 2,54, p = 0.00, RMSEA = 0.05, NFI = 0.88, CFI = 0.87, GFI = 0.89 ve SRMR = 0.08). Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated to define internal consistency of the factor of inventory, and changed between .50 and .80, it was also calculated as .87 for all items of the inventory. Test-retest reliability (for three weeks interval) coefficients for the CTI changed between .50 and .79, it was also .82 for all items.

Relational Attribution Measure (RAM): The attributions of couples were measured using RAM that was generated by Fincham and Bradbury (1992) and adapted Turkish Culture by Tutarel-Kışlak (1999). The measure consists of 24 items which represents for spouses four negative events and for each event spouses were asked to rate 6 different statements. Causality attributions and responsibility attributions were represented by even statements in each negative event. Items are rated on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores reflect that spouse carries more negative attributions. Turkish adaptation of Relational Attribution Measurehad internal consistency between .72 and .80 with test-retest reliability between .56 and .69.

Marital Life Scale (MLS): The scale was developed by Tezer (1996) to measure the level of general satisfaction provided by marital relationship. The scale is a measure of the likert type of 5, in which 10 statements are included. The higher score is the indicator of marriage satisfaction. The reliability coefficient determined by the test-retest method of the scale was .85 and the internal consistency coefficient of Cronbach Alpha was found to be .88 for male group and .91 for female group. These findings show that the scale is reliable.

Procedure

In the analysis of the data, the Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to examine the relations between the variables and the enter method of Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables. 22 missing observations were omitted from 224. Values of kurtosis and skewness were examined to determine whether the data had a normal distribution. The skewness and kurtosis values were found changing between -1 and +1, excluding the naïve optimism sub-dimension (skewness and kurtosis values: marital satisfaction, -.52, -.55, constructive thinking total, .02; -29, attributions total .32; -. 42,causality, .00, -.52, responsibility, .60, -.21, emotional coping, -.20, -17, behavioral coping, -41, .20,superstitious beliefs, .33, -. 06, categorical thinking .26, .32, esoteric thinking-.15, -.56, naïve optimism-.2, 3.23, defensiveness-.16; .49). When the relationships between the variables in the model are

examined, it is seen that the correlation values change between .14 and -.67, so there is no multiple connection problem.

3. FINDINGS

In this section, first, the relationships between the variables was presented for the first sub-problem of the research. Then, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the second sub-problem to what extent the constructive thinking predict the attributions, and finally the third sub-problem was investigated to what extent the constructive thinking and attributions together predict marital satisfaction.

Table 1. *Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Descriptive Statistics Between Variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	$\overline{X}$	Ss
Marital satisfaction	-												36.57	9.64
Constructive thinking total	.32**	-											243.0	25.97
Attributions total	-.67**	-.38**	-										70.98	27.63
Causal attributions	-.63**	-.35**	.95**	-									39.06	13.98
Responsibility attributions	-.65**	-.38	.96**	.83**	-								31.92	14.89
Emotional coping	.28**	.86**	-.38**	-.36**	-.36**	-							47.88	7.77
Behavioral coping	.20**	.66**	-.13	-.11	-.14	.54**	-						62.69	8.62
Superstitious beliefs	.34**	.72**	-.36**	-.34**	-.35**	.53**	.31**	-					26.11	4.66
Categorical thinking	.21**	.76**	-.30**	-.26**	-.32**	.54**	.19**	.52**	-				68.47	9.06
Esoteric thinking	.23**	.38**	-.25**	-.26**	-.22**	.25**	.10	.36**	.21**	-			18.61	3.38
Naive optimism	.14*	.42**	-.19**	-.13	-.23**	.42**	.37**	.19**	.26**	.08	-		43.04	4.37
Defensiveness	.07	.60**	-.19**	-.18**	-.17*	.53**	.22**	.41**	.47**	.07	.31**	-	19.32	3.43

*N = 202, **p<.01, *p<.05*

As seen in Table 1, there is a moderate significant negative relationship between marital satisfaction and attributions (total attributions -.67, causality -.63, responsibility -.65). On the other hand there is a low positive significant relationship between marital satisfaction and constructive thinking and its sub-dimensions (constructive thinking .32, emotional coping .28, behavioral coping .20, superstitious thinking .34, categorical thinking .21, esoteric thinking .23, naïve optimism . 14). There is no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and constructive thinking sub-dimension defensiveness (p>.05). There is a significant low negative relationship between constructive thinking and attributions and its sub-dimensions (total attributions -.38, causality -.35, responsibility -.38). It is seen that all dimensions have significant relationships at the low level in the negative direction excluding the attributions and the sub-scale of constructive thinking behavioral coping (emotional coping -.36, superstitious beliefs -.34, categorical thinking -.26, esoteric thinking -.26, naïve optimism -.13, defensiveness -.18). Significant relationships on the negative side were found between the causality attributions and the sub-dimensions of constructive thinking excepting the behavioral coping and natural optimism (emotional coping -.36, superstitious beliefs -.34, categorical thinking -.26, esoteric thinking -.26, defensiveness -.18). There is a significant negative relationship between responsibility and constructive thinking and its sub-dimensions excepting behavioral coping (emotional coping -.36, superstitious beliefs -.35, categorical thinking -.32, esoteric thinking -.22, naïve optimism -.23, defensiveness -.17).

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The results of multiple regression analysis what extent the constructive thinking predicts attributions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Multiple Regression Analysis of the Effect of Constructive Thinking on Attributions*

Predictive Variable	B	Std error	β	t	p
Constant	176.144	21.072		8.359	.000
Emotional coping	-.778	.32	-.22	-2.430	.016
Superstitious beliefs	-.993	.50	-.17	-1.986	.048
Categorical thinking	-.271	.25	-.09	-1.077	.283
Esoteric thinking	-.964	.57	-.12	-1.695	.092
Naive optimism	-.358	.451	-.057	-793	.429
Defensiveness	.515	.64	.064	.800	.424
$R =.44, \quad R^2 = .20$					
$F= 7.981, \quad p= .000$					

According to the results of the analysis, it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful ($R = .44$, $R^2 = .20$, $F = 7, 981$, $p <.01$). The variables in the model all explain 20 percent of the total variance of attributions. According to the standardized regression coefficient (β), emotional coping (β = -.22, p <.01) and superstitious beliefs (β = -.17, p <.05) have highest contribution to the model. Although there is a relationship between attributions and sub-dimensions of constructive thinking excepting behavioral coping (categorical thinking β = -.07, p> .05, esoteric thinking β = -.11, p> .05, naive optimism β = -.08, p> .05, and in defensiveness, β = -.08, p> .05) did not contribute significantly to the regression model.

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The results of the multiple regression analysis of the third sub-problem of the research on what extent to constructive thinking and attributions together predict marital satisfaction are given in Table 3.

Table 3. *Multiple Regression Analysis of the Effect of Constructive thinking and Attributions on Marital Satisfaction*

Predictive Variable	B	Std Error	β	t	p
Constant	43.427	7.146		6.077	.000
Attributions	-.224	.020	-.643	-11.032	.000
Emotional coping	-.101	.098	-.082	-.1.033	.303
Behavioral coping	.149	.072	.133	2.064	.040
Superstitious beliefs	.238	.142	.115	1.673	.096
Categorical thinking	-.037	.071	-.035	-.526	.599
Esoteric thinking	.127	.161	.045	.790	.430
Naive optimism	-.034	.130	-.015	-.261	.794
$R =.69, \quad R^2 = .47$					
$F= 24.959, \quad p= .000$					

According to the results of the analysis, it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful ($R = .69$, $R^2 = .47$, $F = 24,959$ $p <.01$). The variables in the model all explain 47 percent of the total variance of marital satisfaction. According to standardized regression coefficient (β), causal attributions (β = -.64, p<.01), the total attributions (B = -.43, p <.01)

and behavioral copingfrom sub-dimension of constructive thinking (β = .13, p <.05) have highest contribution on the model.

As seen in the correlation table, although there is a relationship between marital satisfaction and sub-dimension of constructive thinking excepting defensiveness (emotional coping β = -.08, p> .05, superstitious beliefs β = .12, p> .05; categorical thinking = -04, p> .05, esoteric thinking β = -04, p> .05, natural optimism β = -.02, p> .05) were found to be significant they didn't have significant contribution on the regression model.

4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this study, besides the relationships between constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction, the predictive role of constructive thinking on attributions and marital satisfaction was tried to be revealed.

In order to answer the first sub-problem of the research the relationships between all variables were investigated. According to the correlation results, the relationship between the sub-dimensions of constructive thinking (except defensiveness) and marital satisfaction is significant in the positive direction, the relationship between the attributions and marital satisfaction is significant in the negative direction and the relationship between the sub-dimensions of constructive thinking (excepting behavioral coping) and attributions is significant in the positive direction. According to Cognitive Experiential Theory (Epstein, 1973, 2014) "constructive thinking" is a concept of central importance to understanding everyday adaptive and maladaptive behavior. In other words, if we wish to understand people's everyday maladaptive behavior, we have to understand the nature of their constructive thinking. People who are good constructive thinkers automatically think and interpret events in a manner that is helpful for solving everyday problems at a minimum cost of stress to themselves and distress to others, whereas poor constructive thinkers do so in a manner that produces excessive stress for themselves and often distress for others. In marital literature, distressed spouses are hypothesized to make attributions for negative events that emphasize their impact, whereas non-distressed spouses are supposed to make attributions that minimize the impact of negative events. Distressed spouses are more likely to blame the partner for marital problems and to see the partner's negative behaviors as intended and selfishly motivated than non-distressed spouses. When we look from the perspective of Cognitive-Experiential Theory, the attributions are such everyday maladaptive behavior and related negatively with constructive thinking. A good constructive spouse is likely to interpret the events to his own and others' welfare whereas poor constructive spouse is likely to see the negative actions of the partner as intentional, blameworthy and reflecting selfish motivation. In literature it is clear that attributions that emphasize the impact of negative relationship events and minimize the impact of positive relationship events are associated with lower relationship quality (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Bradbury & Fincham, 1992; Fincham, 1994; Bradbury et al, 1996).

According the results of multiple regression analysis what extent the constructive thinking predicts attributions (the second sub-problem of the research), it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful and the variables in the model all explain 20% of the total variance of attributions. According to the results, emotional coping and superstitious thinking have highest contribution on the model. The findings of the current study revealed that emotional coping and superstitious thinking have highest contribution on the model. This result is consistent with Epstein's views on emotional coping and superstitious beliefs (1998, 2014). According to him, the people who are poor in emotional coping tend to be low in self-acceptance, to overgeneralize after unfavorable outcomes, to be excessively sensitive criticism and to dwell excessively on negative outcomes. Also, people who automatically

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think in ways that promote low levels of emotional coping are individuals with adjustment problems in many ways. Low level of emotional coping is associated with emotional stress and unsatisfying interpersonal relationships (Epstein & Meier, 1989). On the other hand, superstitious beliefs refers to the beliefs that allow the individual to prepare for some disappointment by accepting certain things in advance. Those who score high on the personal superstitious beliefs scale are more concerned with defending themselves against danger and unluckiness instead of reaching happiness. Such people are those who are pessimistic, prone to feel helpless, prone to depression, have psychosomatic symptoms, and have control problems (Epstein, 2014). Good constructive thinkers have the self-confidence to face the uncertainties and complexities of reality instead of resorting to superstition or other forms of magical thinking to explain or control their environment. Thus, the spouses who has low emotional coping and high superstitious beliefs are more likely to use causal or responsibility attributions for partner's behavior.

Finally, according to the results of the multiple regression analysis of the third sub-problem of the research on what extent to constructive thinking and attributions together predict marital satisfaction, it is seen that the model as a whole is meaningful. The variables in the model all explain 47% of the total variance of marital satisfaction. Numerous studies reports strong associations between causal and responsibility attributions and marital satisfaction (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Bradbury & Fincham, 1992; Fincham, 1994; Bradbury et al, 1996). Distinctive finding of the current study is that behavioral coping from sub-dimension of constructive thinking have highest contribution on the second model (after causal attributions and total attributions) on what extent to constructive thinking and attributions together predict marital satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the literature on constructive thinking and also attributions. The spouses with low levels of behavioral coping are more likely to think in ways that promote ineffective behavior. They tend to postpone the problem rather than act on it. Generally, they tend not to think in ways that promote effective behavior. Individuals with low behavioral coping are likely pessimistic and emphasize the negative aspects of events, are not inclined to act to solve the problem, and choose the easy path. They tend to obsess over problems or to procrastinate rather than take action, they work less hard and give up more easily than others. It is also significantly associated with emotional and psychosomatic symptoms and with alcohol and substance abuse (Epstein, 2014). In the marital literature, studies have shown support for the hypothesis that attributions for either positive or negative events are related to spouse's behavioral responses. Bradbury and Fincham (1992) found that relatively maladaptive responsibility attributions changed with behaviors that are likely to interfere with conflict solution. For instance, the spouses who made relatively maladaptive attributions for marital problems were less likely to discuss those problems constructively and were more likely to exhibit negative behavior. The findings of the research by Bradbury and Fincham (1992) suggest that maladaptive attributions may contribute to negative behavioral exchanges overtime such as avoidance, blaming, and withdrawal. According to the results of the current study, we can say that the spouses who are poor at behavioral coping are likely to use more attributions so they have low marital satisfaction.

Marriage satisfaction has great importance nowadays the fact that divorce increases rapidly. Therefore, the results of this research show that marriage and couples counseling has great importance. Significant relationships were found between the constructive thinking, attributions and marital satisfaction. In order to increase marriage satisfaction, marriage / family counseling services should be more carefully focused on constructive thinking skills of the spouses.

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Yüklemeler ve Evlilik Doyumunun Yordayıcısı Olarak Yapılandırmacı Düşünme

Amaç

Doyum sağlayıcı yakın ilişkiler, bireylerin hayatına anlam veren temel mutluluk kaynağıdır. Bireylerin tüm yetişkinlik yaşamındaki en önemli yakın ilişkisi evliliktir. Uzun zamandan beri araştırmacılar, her iki eşin de memnun olduğu güçlü bir evliliği oluşturan faktörlerin ne olduğunu ortaya koymaya çalışmaktadırlar. Alan yazında, eşlerin birbirlerinin davranışlarına yönelik yaptıkları açıklamalar ve yüklemeler, evlilik kalitesi ile ilişkilendirilmektedir. Araştırmalar, eşlerin davranışlarına yönelik yaptıkları açıklamalarda, evlilik doyumu düşük bireylerin olumsuz durumlara vurgu yapan yüklemeleri kullandıklarını, diğer taraftan evlilik doyumu yüksek bireylerin olumsuz durumları en aza indirecek yüklemeler yaptıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Mutsuz bir evlilikte eşlerden biri ya da her ikisi de eşinin davranışına ilişkin, çarpıtılmış, önyargılı veya mantıkdışı yüklemeleri de kapsayan pek çok hatalı algıya sahip olacaktır. Yapılandırmacı düşünme, yakın romantik ilişkilerde ve genel olarak diğer insanlarla olan iletişimde daha iyi ilişkiler kurmaya yardımcı olur. Yapılandırmacı düşünme, bireylerin gerçek yaşam sorunlarını çözme biçimini etkileyen bir dizi yapıcı ve yıkıcı otomatik düşünce ile ilişkilidir. Yapılandırmacı düşünme düzeyi yüksek bireyler, başa çıkmayı kolaylaştıran ve yaşam sorunlarına yönelik etkili çözümler olasılığını en üst düzeye çıkaran esnek problem değerlendirmelerini kullanmaktadırlar. Alan yazında, yüklemelerin evlilik doyumunu yordadığı açıktır. Bu çalışmanın amacı yapılandırmacı düşünmenin, yüklemeler ve evlilik doyumu üzerindeki rolünü incelemektir. Kuramsal açıklamalar aracılığıyla değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya koyarak, bu çalışmanın özellikle yapılandırmacı düşünmenin yüklemeler ve evlilik doyumu üzerindeki rolü konusunda alan yazına katkıda bulunacağı düşünülmektedir.

Yöntem

Bu çalışmada ilişkisel desen kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, 142'si kadın, 60'ı erkek olmak üzere toplam 202 evli bireyden oluşmaktadır. Çalışma grubunun belirlenmesinde uygun örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında Yapılandırmacı Düşünme Envanteri, İlişkilerde Yükleme Ölçeği ve Evlilik Yaşamı Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Pearson Momentler Korelasyon Katsayısı Analizi ve Çoklu Regresyon Analizi kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular

Regresyon analizine göre, ilk modelin (yapılandırmacı düşünmenin yüklemeleri ne ölçüde yordadığı) anlamlı olduğu görülmektedir (R = .44, R² = .20, F = 7, 981, p <.01). Modeldeki değişkenlerin tümü, yüklemelerdeki toplam varyansın % 20'sini açıklamaktadır. Standartlaştırılmış regresyon katsayısına (β) göre duygusal başa çıkma (β = -.22, p <.01) ve batıl düşünme (β = -.17, p <.05) modele en fazla katkıda bulunan değişkenlerdir. Davranışsal başa çıkma hariç, yapılandırmacı düşünmenin alt boyutları ile yüklemeler arasında ilişki olmasına rağmen (kategorik düşünme β = -.07, p > .05, esoterik düşünme β = -.11, p > .05, naif iyimserlik β = -.08, p > .05 ve savunmada olma β = -.08, p > .05) regresyon modeline önemli katkıda bulunmadığı görülmüştür.

Analiz sonuçlarına göre, ikinci modelin (yapılandırmacı düşünme ve yüklemelerin evlilik doyumunu ne ölçüde yordadığı) bir bütün olarak anlamlı olduğu görülmektedir (R = .69, R² = .47, F = 24.959 p <. 01). Modeldeki değişkenlerin hepsi, evlilik doyumunun toplam varyansının % 47'sini açıklamaktadır. Standartlaştırılmış regresyon katsayısına (β) göre, modele en fazla katkıda bulunan değişkenler, nedensel yüklemeler (β = -.64, p <.01), toplam yüklemeler (β = -.43, p <.01) ve yapılandırmacı düşünmenin alt boyutu olan davranışsal başa çıkma (β = .13, p <.05) olmuştur.

Sonuç

Alan yazında, yüklemelerin evlilik doyumunu yordadığı açıktır. Bu çalışmada diğer çalışmalardan farklı olarak yapılandırmacı düşünmenin, yüklemeler ve evlilik doyumu üzerindeki rolü ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır. Çoklu regresyon analizi bulgularına göre, yapılandırmacı düşünmenin yüklemeleri ne ölçüde yordadığına ilişkin modelin bir bütün olarak anlamlı olduğu ve modeldeki değişkenlerin tümünün yüklemelerdeki toplam varyansın yüzde 20'sini açıkladığı görülmektedir. Analiz sonuçlarına göre modele en fazla katkıda bulunan yapılandırmacı düşünme alt boyutlarının; duygusal başa çıkma ve batıl inançlarla düşünme olduğu görülmüştür. Bu sonuç, Epstein'ın duygusal başa çıkma ve batıl inançlar hakkındaki görüşleri ile tutarlıdır. Ona göre, düşük düzeyde duygusal başa çıkma, pek çok açıdan uyum sorunu ile ilişkilidir. Düşük düzeyde duygusal başa çıkma duygusal stres ve doyum sağlamayan kişilerarası ilişkiler ile ilişkilidir. Batıl inançlarla düşünme ise bireylerin bazı şeyleri önceden kabul ederek hayal kırıklığına karşı kendini hazırlamasını sağlayan boş inançlarını ifade eder. Kişisel batıl inanç ölçeğinde yüksek puan alanlar, mutluluğa ulaşmak yerine kendilerini tehdide ve şansızlığa karşı savunma ile daha fazla ilgilidirler. Bu tarz insanlar kötümser olmaya, çaresiz hissetmeye eğilimli, depresyona yatkın, psikosomatik semptomlara sahip ve kontrol problemleri olan kişilerdir. Dolayısıyla, bu bulgulara göre, eşlerin nedensel veya sorumluluk yüklemeleri kullanmasının muhtemel nedeni, yapılandırmacı düşünmenin yapıcı boyutu olan duygusal başa çıkma alt boyutunda düşük, yıkıcı boyutu olan batıl inançlar alt boyutunda ise yüksek düşünme düzeyine sahip olmaları olabilir.

Bu araştırmanın bir başka önemli bulgusu, yapılandırmacı düşünmenin alt boyutu olan davranışsal başa çıkmanın ikinci modelde (yapılandırmacı düşünme ve yüklemelerin birlikte evlilik doyumunu ne derece yordadığı) en fazla katkısı olan değişken olmasıdır. Düşük davranışsal başa çıkma düzeyine sahip eşlerin işlevsel olmayan davranışları teşvik eden yollarla düşünme eğilimleri daha fazladır. Problem üzerinde çalışmak yerine sorunu erteleme eğilimindedirler. Davranışsal başa çıkma düzeyi düşük olan kişiler muhtemelen karamsardır ve olayların olumsuz yönlerini vurgular, sorunu çözmek için harekete geçme eğiliminde değildir ve kolay yolu seçerler. Davranışsal başa çıkma düzeyinde düşük sonuçlar, duygusal ve psikosomatik semptomlarla ve alkol ve uyuşturucu sorunlarıyla da önemli ölçüde ilişkilidir. Evlilik literatüründe, araştırmalar, olumlu ya da olumsuz durumlara yönelik yüklemelerin eşin davranışsal tepkileri ile ilişkili olduğu hipotezini desteklediğini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, düşük davranışsal başa çıkma düzeyine sahip eşlerin daha fazla yükleme yaptıkları ve daha az evlilik doyumuna sahip oldukları söylenebilir.

Bu bulgulara dayanarak, aile ve çift danışmanlığı alanında çalışan profesyonellere, danışanların yapılandırmacı düşünme becerilerini arttırmaya yönelik çalışmalar yapması önerilmektedir.