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Parallel Mediation of Difficulty in Emotion Regulation and Fear of Being Single on Negative Experiences and Psychological Resilience

Olumsuz Yaşantılar ve Psikolojik Sağlamlık Arasında Duygu Düzenleme Güçlüğü ve Yalnız Kalma Korkusunun Paralel Aracılığı

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ABSTRACT

The challenges of life elicit a variety of responses from individuals, including the possibility of developing harmful habits or confronting challenges in a resilient manner. People who struggle to control their emotions may find this process difficult. To adapt to challenges and lead a more robust existence, individuals must become resilient in the face of negative experiences. The study aimed to explore the role of emotion regulation difficulties and fear of being single as mediators between resilience and negative experiences. This study was the first to explore previously unexplored relationships between these variables. The researchers surveyed 470 female and 258 male adult participants and structural equation modeling was employed for the mediation analysis. The findings indicated a parallel mediating role between resilience and negative experiences in the form of emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single. The model predicted resilience directly from negative experiences and indirectly from emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of singleness. This illustrates the significance of one's ability to manage their emotions in the presence of negativity. The fear of being single and difficulty in emotion regulation were negative indicators of resilience.

Keywords: Negative experiences, emotion regulation difficulties, fear of being single, psychological resilience

ÖZ

Varoluşun kaçınılmaz zorlukları bireylerde çeşitli tepkiler ortaya çıkarır. Bunlar arasında bireylerin olumsuz semptomlar geliştirmesi ya da zorluklarla dirençli bir şekilde yüzleşmesi mümkündür. Yalnız kalma konusunda endişeli olan ve duygularını kontrol edemeyen kişiler bu süreçte zorlanabilir. Zorluklara uyum sağlamak ve daha sağlam bir varoluş sürdürmek için bireylerin olumsuz deneyimler karşısında daha dayanıklı olmaları arzu edilir. Çalışma bu bağlamda duygu düzenleme güçlükleri ve yalnız kalma korkusunun dayanıklılık ve olumsuz deneyimler arasındaki aracı rolünü araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu çalışma bu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri araştıran ilk çalışmadır. 470 kadın ve 258 erkek yetişkin katılımcı araştırmaya gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Aracılık analizini gerçekleştirmek için Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi

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ÖZ

kullanılmıştır. Bulgular duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusunun olumsuz yaşantılar ve psikolojik sağlık arasında paralel bir aracılık rolü olduğunu göstermiştir. Modelde olumsuz yaşantılar hem doğrudan hem de duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusu dolayısıyla psikolojik sağlamlığı yordamaktadır. Sonuç olarak olumsuzlukların varlığında kişinin duygularını düzenleme becerisinin önemi kabul edilmektedir. Dayanıklılığın olumsuz bir göstergesi yalnız kalma korkusu ve duygu düzenleme güçlüğüdür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Olumsuz yaşantılar, duygu düzenleme güçlüğü, yalnız kalma korkusu, psikolojik sağlık

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Yaşam sürecinde bireyler; doğal afetler, maddi kaygılar, fiziksel rahatsızlıklar, sosyal yaşantıdaki stresler gibi çeşitli olumsuz yaşantılarla karşılaşabilir. Olumsuz yaşantıların, olumsuz duygular ile pozitif yönde; yaşam doyumuyla negatif yönde ilişkili olduğu bilinmektedir (Sumi, 2013; Telef, 2015). Buna göre olumsuz yaşantılar, duygulanımla ilişkisinden kaynaklı olarak duyguların düzenlenmesini gerekli kılabılır. Duygu düzenleme duygusal tepkilerin izlenmesi, değerlendirilmesi ve değiştirilmesinden sorumlu olan dışsal ve içsel süreçleri ifade etmektedir (Thompson, 1991). Duygu düzenleme süreç modeline göre duygu üretim süreci; bireylerin seçilen bir durumu değiştirmesi, dikkatini dağıtması, düşüncelerini değiştirmesi ve verdiği tepkileri düzenlemesi gibi aşamaları içermektedir (Gross, 1998). Buna göre yaşam her ne kadar olumsuz yaşantılar içeriyor olsa da duygu düzenleme süreci sonucunda bireyler seçilen yaşantıya verecekleri tepkiyi düzenleyebilmektedirler. Nitekim yapılan bir araştırma, olumsuz yaşantıların şiddeti arttıkça bireylerin daha fazla duygu düzenleme güçlüğü yaşadığını göstermiştir (Ehring & Quack, 2010). Bu noktada bireylerin sahip olduğu kişisel kaynaklar, stres ve olumsuzluklarla başa çıkma sürecinde önem kazanmaktadır. Psikolojik sağlık, bireyin yaşamın zorlu koşullarına esnek biçimde uyum sağlayabilme ve bu koşulların üstesinden gelebilme kapasitesini ifade eden önemli bir bireysel kaynak olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Öz & Yılmaz, 2009). Yapılan araştırmalar, duygu düzenleme becerilerinin psikolojik sağlamlığı öngördüğüne işaret etmektedir (Mestre vd., 2017; Polizzi & Lynn, 2021). Öte yandan yetersiz sosyal bağlılığın olumsuz duygusal durumlarla ilişkili olduğu bilinmektedir (Blackhart, vd., 2009). Bu nedenle bireylerin zor zamanlarda güven ve rahatlık sağlayacak birine ihtiyaç duymaları insan gelişiminin doğal bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Bu ihtiyaç, bireylerin yalnız kalmaktan kaçınmalarına ve yalnız kalmaya ilişkin korku geliştirmelerine neden olabilir. Yalnız kalma korkusu, romantik bir partnerden yoksun olmanın mevcut veya olası deneyimine ilişkin endişe, kaygı veya sıkıntı olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Spielman vd., 2013). Yalnız kalma korkusunun duygusal zekâ, duygusal tutarlılık, güvenli bağlanma, benlik saygısı, yaşam doyumunu ile negatif yönde ve yalnızlık ve ait olma ile pozitif yönde anlamlı ilişkisi olduğu bilinmektedir (Darba vd., 2023; Dennett & Girme, 2024; Fan vd., 2023). Yalnız kalma korkusu ile ilişkili olan bu kavramların başka araştırmalarda sağlamlık ile ilişkileri ortaya konulmuştur. Örneğin boylamsal bir araştırmanın sonucunda benlik saygısı ve sağlamlığın pozitif yönde ilişkilere sahip olduğu ve sosyal desteğin benlik saygısı ve sağlamlığı güçlendirici bir faktör olduğu ortaya konulmuştur (Liu vd., 2021). Tüm bunlardan hareketle mevcut araştırmanın amacı, olumsuz yaşantılar ile psikolojik sağlamlık arasında duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusunun aracı rolünü incelemek olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu kavramların hepsini bir arada inceleyen araştırmanın literatürde yer almıyor olması bir eksikliğe işaret etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda mevcut araştırma kapsamında incelenecek olan hipotezler belirlenmiştir.

Hipotez 1. Negatif yaşantılar ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasında duygu düzenleme güçlüğü'nün kısmi aracı rolü bulunmaktadır.

Hipotez 2. Negatif yaşantılar ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasında yalnız kalma korkusunun kısmi aracı rolü bulunmaktadır.

Hipotez 3. Negatif yaşantılar ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasında duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusunun paralel aracılık rolü bulunmaktadır.

Araştırmaya 470 kadın ve 258 erkek yetişkin gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. İlgili kavramları ölçmek için Olumlu ve Olumsuz Yaşantılar Ölçeği (Telef, 2015), Duygu Düzenleme Güçlüğü Ölçeği (Ekşi & Erik, 2023), Yalnız Kalma Korkusu Ölçeği (Kırmer-Aydınlı & Küçükömrler, 2024) ve Kısa Psikolojik Sağlamlık Ölçeği (Doğan, 2015) kullanılmıştır. İstatistiksel analiz sürecinde, SPSS, JASP ve AMOS programlarından yararlanılmıştır. Aracılık analizini gerçekleştirmek için YEM uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusunun olumsuz yaşantılar ve psikolojik sağlamlık arasında paralel bir aracılık rolü olduğunu göstermiştir. Model sonuçlarına göre olumsuz yaşantılar, psikolojik sağlamlığı hem doğrudan hem de duygu düzenleme güçlüğü ve yalnız kalma korkusu üzerinden dolaylı olarak yordamaktadır.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Elde edilen bulgular, araştırma kapsamında geliştirilen hipotezlerin doğrulandığını göstermektedir. Son olarak araştırmanın temel hipotezi olan olumsuz yaşantılar ile psikolojik sağlık arasında duygu düzenleme gücü ve yalnız kalma korkusunun paralel aracılığı ele alınmıştır. Bu kavramların hepsini bir arada ele alan herhangi bir araştırma bulunmamaktadır. Ancak bu kavramları ikili olarak ele alan veya bu kavramların aynı kavramlarla ilişkilerini inceleyen birbirinden farklı araştırmaları varlığından söz etmek mümkündür. negatif bir yaşantı olarak değerlendirilebilecek duygusal yalnızlığın, sosyal yalnızlığa kıyasla yalnız kalma korkusuyla daha güçlü ilişkili olduğu belirtilmektedir ve bu durum, yoğun duygusal yalnızlık yaşayan bireylerin yakın ilişkilerinin geleceğine ilişkin daha fazla korku yaşayabileceklerini düşündürmektedir. (Fonseca vd., 2017). Öyle ki duygusal yalnızlık, romantik bir partner gibi daha yakın bir ilişkinin eksikliği ile karakterize edilirken, sosyal yalnızlık daha çok bireyin komşuları veya iş arkadaşları gibi ilgi gruplarıyla yetersizliğine işaret etmektedir (De Jong-Gierveld & van Tilburg, 2006). Yalnızlığın sağlık ve duygu düzenleme ile ilişkileri de hesaba katıldığında literatürdeki bu bilgilerin mevcut araştırma sonuçlarını destekler nitelikte olduğu görülmektedir (Arici-Ozcan vd., 2019; Jakobsen vd., 2020). Yapılan bir araştırma, duygusal zekânın bir duygu düzenleme yöntemi olarak bilişsel yeniden değerlendirme ve sağlık üzerinden bireylerin daha az stres algılamalarını yordadığını göstermiştir (Thomas & Zolkoski, 2020). Ayrıca duygusal zekâsı yüksek olan kişilerde yalnız kalma korkusunun daha az olduğu bilinmektedir (Darba vd., 2023). Farklı bir bakış açısıyla yapılan bir araştırmada sağlık ve sosyal desteğin olumsuz yaşam olayları ve duygusal sıkıntı ilişkisinde araçlar olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır (Thanoi vd., 2010). Öte yandan sosyal destek ve yaşam doyumu arasında duygu düzenleme ve sağlığın aracılığı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır (Azpiazu Izaguirrevd, 2021). Bu durum sosyal desteğin hem doğrudan hem de duygu düzenleme üzerinden sağlığı yordaması ile mevcut çalışmanın bulgusuna katkı sunmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, bireyler olumsuz yaşantılarla karşılaştıklarında yalnız olmaktan daha fazla korkabilirler ancak bu durumda her ne kadar zorluk yaşasalar da duygularını düzenleyebilmeleri onların sağlam olabilmeleri için olumlu bir gösterge halinde değerlendirilebilir. Nihayetinde deneyimlenen zorluklar ile birlikte bireyler, yalnız olmaktan korkmalarına ve olumsuz duyguları bakımından zorlanmalarına rağmen bunları düzenleyebilmeleri ve sağlam olabilmeleri gerekmektedir.

Introduction

Human existence includes both positive and negative experiences. Individuals' cognitive and emotional responses to these experiences, as well as their satisfaction with life, are significant factors in the development of well-being (Diener et al., 2009). The experience of pleasure, curiosity, confidence, and alertness are here understood as positive affect, whereas fear, anger, sadness, humiliation, and hatred are taken as negative affect (Watson & Clark, 1994). Natural disasters, financial concerns, physical maladies, and social stresses are among the many experiences that can elicit negative affect. Researchers widely recognize the positive correlation between negative experiences and negative affect and the negative correlation between negative experiences and life satisfaction (Sumi, 2013; Telef, 2015).

The regulation of one's emotions is necessary for weathering negative experiences and moderating their impacts on one's overall affect. Emotion regulation encompasses the internal and external mechanisms responsible for monitoring, evaluating, moderating, and modifying one's emotional responses that occur in the course of achieving one's objectives in everyday life (Thompson, 1991, 1994). However, emotion regulation may not always be easy for individuals to implement. Okur et al.'s (2025) longitudinal study revealed that difficulties in emotion

regulation predicted lower future resilience in the future and higher levels of psychological distress. Crow et al. (2014) found that emotion dysregulation mediated the relationship between childhood trauma and depression during adulthood. Meule et al. (2021) discovered emotion regulation's association with eating disorders. Additionally, Josefsson et al.'s (2017) longitudinal study indicated that mindfulness, which aids emotion regulation, can improve individual coping. These studies demonstrate the role of emotion regulation in the relationship between a negative experience and a negative outcome.

The process of emotion production encompasses the phases of attention deployment, change of thoughts, and reaction in response to a specific situation (Gross, 1998). Individuals are capable of regulating their responses to a negative experience by intervening in this process. However, Ehring and Quack (2010) found that individuals struggled with emotion regulation more as the severity of the negative experience escalated. The personal resources individuals possess are crucial for managing tension and negativity. The ability to regulate emotion may indicate that individuals are more resilient, which here refers to having the ability to overcome life's challenges (Öz & Yılmaz, 2009).

Furthermore, negative experiences may elicit apprehensions regarding the resilience of individuals due to the unregulated

nature of negative affect. In fact, research suggests that emotion regulation abilities predict resilience (Mestre et al., 2017; Polizzi & Lynn, 2021). From a psychological counseling perspective, intense or persistent negative experiences can challenge an individual’s emotion regulation capacity. Negative experiences may even have a detrimental impact on the behavioral and neurological processes of emotion regulation (Herd & Kim-Spoon, 2021). During an intensely negative experience, the individual may have to cope not only with the experience itself but also with the feelings of loss of control, inadequacy, and vulnerability that arise in response to the experience. This can lead the individual to question both their internal regulatory resources and external sources of security.

Emotion regulation is a prerequisite for adaptive functioning, which in turn is essential for establishing positive relationships with other people. Blackhart et al. (2009) discovered a correlation between negative affective states and inadequate social connections. Individuals who are single tend to report higher loneliness scores and lower levels of life satisfaction and social support (Adamczyk & Segrin, 2015). Moreover, studies have revealed that loneliness tends to indicate less resilience (Akyıl, 2025; Çağlar et al., 2025). Similarly, Liu et al. (2021) demonstrated a positive correlation between resilience and self-esteem, with social support—including from romantic relationships—acting as a determinant of both. Finally, research has indicated that resilience is positively correlated with attachment quality (Darling Rasmussen et al., 2019).

Negative experiences can also impact the meanings individuals attach to interpersonal relationships. Individuals’ needs for closeness, belonging, and emotional support may become more pronounced following experiences involving stress and loss. In this context, the fear of being single may emerge as a reflection of vulnerability and search for security triggered by negative experiences. Most humans desire an individual who can serve as a secure refuge, offering solace and security during periods of adversity (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). This need may create a reluctance or even apprehension among individuals about being single. Individuals who are apprehensive about being single, particularly as attachment figures, are often prepared to accept less to secure a romantic partner or preserve their current relationships (Spielman et al., 2013). The negative experience of being separated from a partner can have various consequences for these individuals. Adamczyk (2017) suggests that the fear of being single and satisfaction with one’s relationship mediate the interactions between well-being and relationship status.

Based on these studies, resilience enables individuals to cope better with negative experiences. Nevertheless, negative experiences are not unavoidable and require individuals to process negative emotions in healthy ways, including through regulation, if they want to maintain their well-being. Social

support, especially from loved ones, is crucial for enhancing resilience and emotion regulation. Lowered resilience and poor emotion regulation may therefore cause individuals to be apprehensive about being single. However, no studies have specifically investigated the mechanisms that tie all these factors together. The current study therefore sought to clarify the exact mediating role of emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single within the relationship between negative experiences and resilience. The following hypotheses were established:

Hypotheses 1. Emotion regulation difficulties will have a partial mediating role on the relationship between negative experiences and resilience.

Hypotheses 2. The fear of being single will have a partial mediating role on the relationship between negative experiences and resilience.

Hypotheses 3. Emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single will have parallel mediating roles on the relationship between negative experiences and resilience.

Methods

Participants and Procedures

The study cohort included 728 adult individuals, with 258 (35.4%) males and 470 (64.6%) females. Of these, 51 (7%) were married, and 677 (93%) were single (Table 1). Multivariate behavioral sciences classify sample sizes of 500 or above as very good to excellent in terms of analytical adequacy in structural equation modeling (SEM) (Chomeya et al., 2024). The present study exceeded these thresholds and thus provided a robust basis for multivariate analyses. All participants were reached through announcements made on social media using the convenience sampling method. The inclusion criteria were that participants must be over 18 years of age and had to volunteer to participate.

On average, participants were 21.78 years old (standard deviation [SD] = 5.44). In terms of educational background, 202 (27%) were university graduates, 505 (69.4%) were high

Table 1. Demographic information.

Variable	Groups	n	%
Sex	Women	470	64.6
	Men	258	35.4
Education level	Elementary school	6	0.8
	Middle school	15	2.1
	High school	505	69.4
	University	202	27.7
Marital status	Single	677	93
	Married	51	7

school graduates, and 15 (2.1%) were middle school graduates (Table 1). The survey administered to participants was designed so that it could not be saved and submitted unless it was completed in its entirety. This ensured that no gaps would be created in the data. Participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw from participating in the survey at any time before it was turned in. Participants were required to check and affirmed their agreement to the informed consent terms prior to participation. The Yıldız Technical University Scientific Research and Ethics Review Board approved this research method on December 8, 2024 (report number 20241204042; verification code f7f6c). Data were collected from December 8, 2024, until January 2025.

Measures

Positive and Negative Experience Scale

Diener et al. (2010) devised a scale to evaluate positive and negative emotions and well-being, which Telef (2015) adapted into Turkish. Two dimensions comprise the scale: positive and negative experiences. The reliability assessment of the scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .88 for the Positive Experience dimension and .83 for the Negative Experience dimension. This study employed the negative experience subdimension. In the confirmatory factor analysis, the fit index values were root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .07, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .04, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .93, normed fit index (NFI) = .96, relative fit index (RFI) = .95, comparative fit index (CFI) = .97, and incremental fit index (IFI) = .97. The 12-item Likert scale was scored from 1 to 5 (1 = never, 5 = always). The two dimensions can be scored separately because they measure two categories of emotions. The total positive and negative scores fall within the range of 6–30. In the Negative Experience dimension, higher scores indicate a greater number of negative experiences.

Fear of Being Single Scale

Spielmann et al. (2013) devised the Fear of Being Single Scale, which Kırimer-Aydınlı and Küçükkömürler (2024) adapted into Turkish. The scale's internal consistency coefficient was .84. The fit indices were $\chi^2(9) = 35.407$, CFI = .96, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .94, RMSEA = .092, 90% CI (.061, .124), SRMR = .037. The scale is a seven-point Likert scale, consisting of a single dimension and six items (1 = not true at all, 7 = very true). Higher scores on the scale indicate a greater fear of being single. The lowest possible score is 6 and the highest is 42.

Brief Psychological Resilience Scale

Smith et al. (2008) devised the Brief Psychological Resilience Scale, and Doğan (2015) adapted it into Turkish. Its fit indices were satisfactory, and the scale was deemed reliable with

a reliability value of .83. A single dimension composes the six-item scale. It is a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all appropriate, 5 = completely appropriate). High scores on the scale suggest that the individual possesses a high level of psychological resilience. The lowest possible score is 6, and the highest possible score is 30.

Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale

This scale, developed by Penner et al. (2023), was designed to understand the difficulties adults experience in emotional regulation. It was adapted into Turkish by Ekşi and Erik (2023). The internal consistency coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as $\alpha = .87$, whereas the internal consistency values for the subscales ranged from .68 to .77. According to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted to assess construct validity, the goodness-of-fit indices were at acceptable levels. The scale consists of 8 items with positive statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = almost never, 5 = almost always). The minimum score that can be obtained from the scale is 8, and the maximum is 40.

Data Analysis

SPSS, JASP, and AMOS were used for the analyses. Initially, descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and normality analysis were implemented. SEM occurred after the discovery of significant findings, at which point the researchers employed a two-stage SEM following Kline's (2011) recommendations. The initial stage was designed to determine whether the measurement model was confirmed. The model examined the relationships between the indicator and latent variables. After the validation of the measurement model, the hypothetical structural model was evaluated.

The results of the SEM were assessed using the goodness-of-fit indices recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999). The desired chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) was less than 5; the GFI, RFI, CFI, NFI, IFI, and TLI values were greater than .90; and the SRMR and RMSEA values were less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Browne and Cudeck (1993) used the AIC and ECVI tests along with the chi-square difference test to find the best model among several models in SEM. The optimal model was the one with lower AIC and ECVI values.

The item parceling method was used in SEM because the measurement tools for resilience, the fear of being single, and negative experiences were all one-dimensional. The use of the packaging method in one-dimensional measurement tools allows the measurement model to be tested in a simpler structure by ensuring that latent variables are represented by more stable indicators rather than numerous individual items. Nasser-Abu Alhija and Wisenbaker (2006) say that the

parceling method used in personality trait concepts reduces the number of variables that need to be observed, improves reliability, and makes it easier for the scales to show a normal distribution. This approach contributed to more reliable, stable parameter estimates by reducing the effect of measurement error; it particularly helped to evaluate the fit indices more consistently in SEM. Two dimensions were established for negative experiences: resilience and fear of being single through parceling.

Bootstrapping was implemented to substantiate the significance of the mediation and provide a robust addition to SEM (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). During bootstrapping, the sample size was increased to 5,000, and the bootstrap value was used to produce confidence intervals (CI). The importance of the tested mediation was shown by the lack of zero between the CIs.

Results

This section presents the findings of the reliability, correlation, normality, and descriptive statistics analyses, followed by the results of the measurement and structural models and the outcomes of the bootstrapping process. The skewness (between .036 and .313) and kurtosis (between $-.704$ and $.643$) of values were normal because they were within the ranges of ± 2 for skewness and ± 7 for kurtosis (Table 1) (Finney & DiStefano, 2006). There were substantial positive correlations between emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single ($r = .36$; $p < .001$), between emotion regulation difficulties and negative experiences ($r = .44$; $p < .001$), and between fear of being single and negative experiences ($r = .25$; $p < .001$). These relationships are examined in Table 1. There is a substantial negative correlation between resilience and emotion regulation difficulties ($r = -.42$; $p < .001$), resilience and fear of being single ($r = -.32$; $p < .001$), and resilience and negative experiences ($r = -.34$; $p < .001$).

The measurement model was initiated following the identification of significant relationships between the concepts. There are four latent variables in the measurement model: resilience, fear of being single, emotion regulation difficulties, and negative experiences. Additionally, there were ten observed variables associated with each latent variable.

The first structural model allowed the testing of H3. Negative experiences did not directly impact resilience in the fully mediated model. However, negative experiences indirectly predicted resilience through the mediation of emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single. The second structural model tested H1–2. The partial mediation model mediated the direct path between resilience and negative experiences through emotion regulation difficulties and the fear of being single. Table 2 provides both models' fit values, which were

within an acceptable range (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The AIC and ECVI values, as well as the results of the chi-square difference test, were used to determine the appropriate model.

The chi-square difference test results demonstrated that the direct path between resilience and negative experiences substantially contributes to the model ($\Delta x^2 = 10.171$, $SD = 1$, $p < .001$). This was done to determine which of the full or partial mediation models were correct. The model in which emotion regulation problems and fear of being single acted as partial mediators between negative experiences and resilience was chosen because it had lower AIC and ECVI values than the full mediation model. The AIC and ECVI values of the full mediation model were 188.04 and .259, respectively, and the AIC and ECVI values of the partial mediation model were 179.87 and .247, respectively. Figure 1 provides the path coefficients for this model.

Bootstrapping demonstrated that all direct path coefficients were statistically significant, which served to bolster and reinforce the research. Table 3 contains these findings. Table 4 contains the direct, indirect effects, and 95% CIs for the model. The findings revealed that resilience and emotion regulation difficulties partially mediate the relationship between negative experiences and emotions. Furthermore, the fear of being single and emotion regulation difficulties were parallel mediators.

Discussion

Negative experiences can reveal a person's ability to handle challenges (Diener et al., 2009). Adverse life events result in immediate negative repercussions and can even affect one's life years later (Seery & Quinton, 2016). Despite the prevalence of losses or potentially traumatic occurrences in individuals' lives, they often maintain a positive affect, exhibiting only mild or transient functional deficits (Bonanno, 2004). Examining this resilience is important because it plays a significant role in helping individuals recover from adverse experiences. Negative affect stemming from adverse experiences may suggest that individuals encounter challenges in emotion regulation. Moreover, adverse experiences may instill a fear of remaining single in individuals. Based on the pertinent literature, the aim of this study was to examine how emotion regulation difficulties and fear of being single mediate the association between negative experiences and resilience. The findings indicated that negative experiences both directly and indirectly predict resilience through challenges in emotion regulation and the fear of singleness. The hypotheses established for this study were examined in relation to the pertinent literature.

The study first investigated the partial mediation of difficulties in emotion regulation between negative experiences and

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlation values of variables.

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Emotional regulation difficulties	—	—	—	—
2. Psychological resilience	-.42**	—	—	—
3. Fear of being single	.36**	-.32**	—	—
4. Negative experiences	.44**	-.34**	.25**	—
Mean	19.80	17.98	20.87	17.04
Standard deviation	7.00	4.47	9.15	4.63
Skewness	.313	.036	.230	.085
Kurtosis	-.342	.643	-.704	-.106
McDonald ω	.859	.719	.826	.769
Cronbach's α	.857	.717	.823	.763
Guttman λ_6	.850	.703	.804	.778

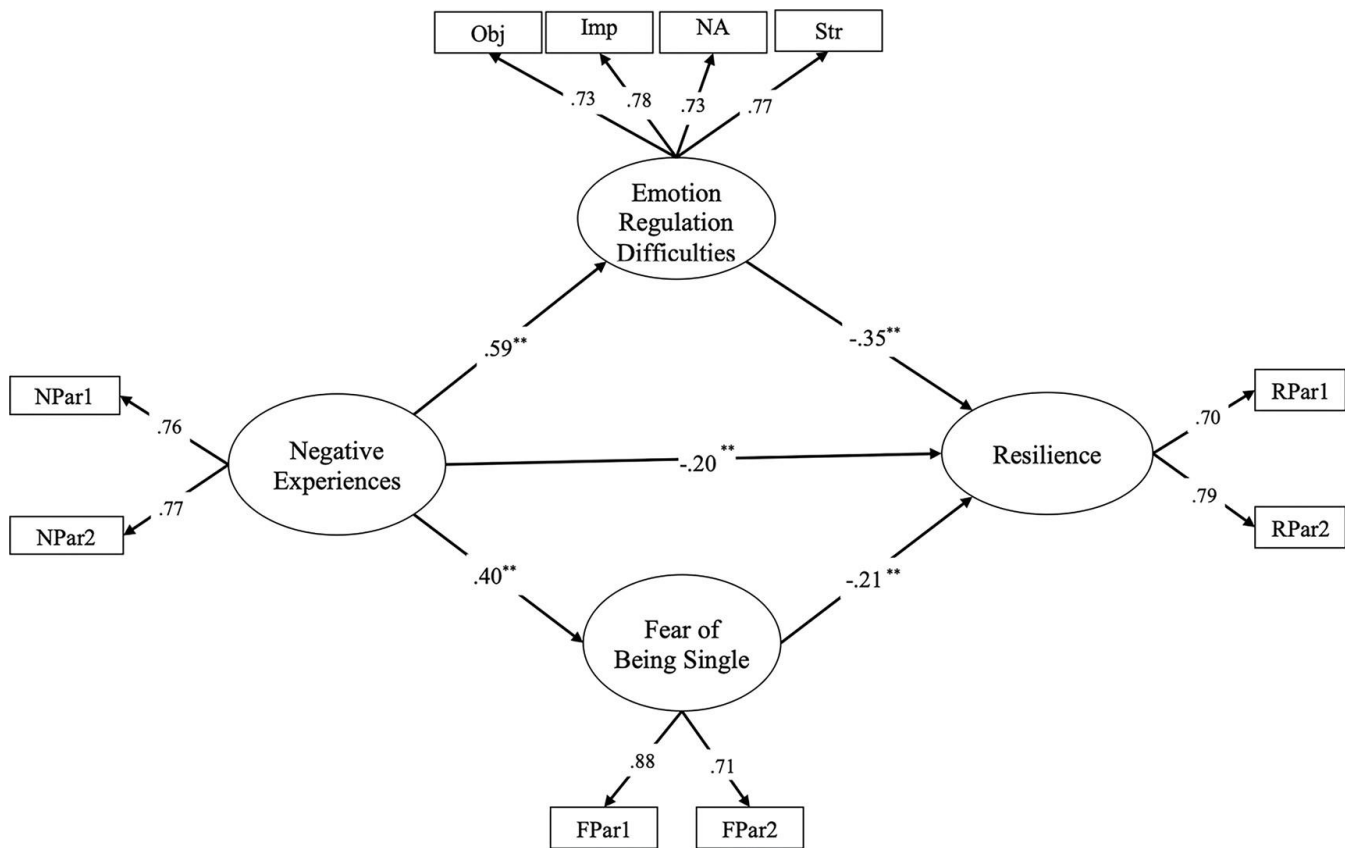


Figure 1. Standardised factor loadings for the partially mediated structural model. $N = 728$; $p < .001$; NPar parcels of negative experiences; FPar parcels of fear of being single; RPar parcels of resilience.

resilience. The results indicated that negative experiences could predict resilience directly and indirectly via emotion regulation. Prior SEM indicated that earlier pleasant experiences can be predictors of resilience (Kocatürk & Çiçek, 2023). However, resilience has a significant negative correlation with negative life events and partially mediates the relationship between these

events and well-being (Faircloth, 2017; Gao et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2023). Significant positive correlations exist between emotion regulation and resilience (Mosavi et al., 2021). Furthermore, an intervention study showed that cognitive and metacognitive emotion regulation enhanced resilience (Behrouian et al., 2021). Self-blame, catastrophizing, and

Table 3. SEM fit indices.

	CMIN/DF	GFI	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Measure	2.991	.979	.967	.949	.978	.965	.978	.052	.023
Partial mediator model	4.329	.967	.950	.926	.961	.942	.961	.068	.056
Full mediator model	4.517	.965	.947	.922	.958	.939	.958	.070	.057

CFI = comparative fit index; CMIN = chi-square minimum discrepancy; DF = degrees of freedom; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; NFI = normed fit index; RFI = relative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index.

Table 4. Direct, indirect effects and 95% CI for the model.

Model pathways	Coefficient	95% CI	
		LL	UL
Direct effect			
Negative experiences → fear of being single	.39**	.29	.49
Negative experiences → emotion regulation difficulties	.59**	.51	.67
Negative experiences → resilience	-.20**	-.35	-.05
Fear of being single → resilience	-.20**	-.31	-.10
Emotion regulation difficulties → resilience	-.35**	-.48	-.21
Indirect effect			
Negative experiences → (fear of being single – emotion regulation difficulties) → resilience	-.29**	-.39	-.20

p < .001. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.

ruminating are all unhealthy ways of controlling one’s emotions that can determine the link between difficult and stressful life events and depression symptoms (Stikkelbroek et al., 2016). Past research thus corroborated the outcomes of the current study. Consequently, it can be inferred that adverse experiences hinder individuals’ ability to regulate emotions, rendering them more susceptible to issues.

The study also examined the hypothesis that the fear of being single would partially mediate the relationship between negative experiences and resilience. The analyses validated the partial mediating effect of the fear of remaining single. This suggests that adverse experiences can predict resilience through the fear of being single, which also directly influences resilience. Negative affect favorably correlated with adverse experiences, whereas life satisfaction inversely correlated with them (Sumi, 2013; Telef, 2015). Satisfaction with one’s life exhibits a negative correlation with the fear of being single and a positive correlation with resilience (Dennet & Girme, 2024; Wang et al., 2022). When used to evaluate adverse experiences, negative affect positively correlated with well-being; however, the fear of being single inversely correlated with well-being (Adamczyk, 2017; Afzal et al., 2014; Telef, 2015). Resilience exhibited a negative correlation with adverse life experiences and depression, whereas adverse life events demonstrated a positive correlation with depression. Moreover, resilience partially modulated the relationship between adverse life experiences and depression (Liu et al., 2019). Spielman et

al. (2013) found a significant correlation between depression and the fear of being single. Adamczyk and Segrin (2015) found that single participants exhibited elevated loneliness and diminished life satisfaction and social support relative to those in relationships. Resilience was similarly associated with loneliness, social support, and life satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2021). Previous research supports this conclusion. Nevertheless, the exposure to negative experiences indicated that individuals may develop a fear of being single, thereby diminishing their psychological resilience.

The study investigated the simultaneous mediation of challenges in emotion regulation and fear of singleness on the relationship between negative experiences and resilience, which formed H1. No prior research addressed all these concepts collectively. Nevertheless, several studies addressed these concepts in pairs or investigate the interrelation between these concepts and identical notions. Perceived as a negative experience, emotional loneliness more closely aligned with the fear of being single than social loneliness, which implies that individuals experiencing heightened emotional loneliness may harbor a greater apprehension about the future of their intimate relationships (Fonseca et al., 2017). Emotional loneliness was defined by the absence of intimate relationships, such as a love partner, whereas social loneliness pertained to connections with groups like neighbors or colleagues (De Jong-Gierveld & van Tilburg, 2006). The literature indicated that the links between loneliness, resilience, and emotion regulation corroborate the findings of the present study (Arici-

Ozcan et al., 2019; Jakobsen et al., 2020). Thomas and Zolkoski (2020) demonstrated that emotional intelligence enables individuals to experience less stress via cognitive reappraisal and resilience as strategies for emotion regulation. Individuals with elevated emotional intelligence exhibited reduced apprehension over singleness (Darba et al., 2023). According to Thanoi et al. (2010), the relationship between negative life events and emotional discomfort is mediated by social support and resilience. Conversely, Azpiazu Izaguirre et al. (2021) determined that emotion regulation and resilience mediated the association between social support and life happiness. This supports the current study's finding that social support predicts resilience directly and via emotion regulation. Consequently, individuals may exhibit heightened fear of being single in the face of negativity. Nevertheless, despite challenges, emotional regulation serves as a favorable indicator of resilience. Individuals should therefore seek to cultivate their emotion regulation and resilience despite fears of being single and difficulties related to negative emotions.

Conclusion

The present study found that emotion regulation and the fear of being single partially mediated the relationship between negative experiences and resilience. Enhancing individuals' emotion regulation abilities may enable them to sustain their resilience despite encountering adverse experiences. Conversely, negative experiences may also signify a fear of being single, which may jeopardize resilience. Consequently, one can cultivate greater individual resilience by addressing the fear of being single, avoiding loneliness, receiving sufficient social support, and fostering intimate relationships.

Limitations and Future Research

While the current research has made significant contributions to the literature, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. One constraint emerged from the utilization of self-report scales for data collection. This indicates that the concepts analyzed in the study can be elucidated within the parameters of the employed scales. A future study may employ observation, interviews, and peer review. Another limitation of the study was the unequal gender distribution in the sample, with a higher proportion of female participants. This may have limited the generalizability of the findings across genders.

Despite the use of SEM, which yielded robust quantitative results, and the application of bootstrapping in the study's methodology, the cross-sectional nature of the sample warrants caution when inferring causal relationships from the findings. Longitudinal and experimental studies are needed to confirm the cause-and-effect link.

The study also limited its scope to specific variables. Additional factors that predict resilience should be explored. Besides

emotion regulation and fear of solitude, other variables may affect the relationship between adverse experiences and resilience. Conversely, initiatives to enhance psychological resilience may be developed, or the efficacy of mindfulness-based programs for emotional regulation may be examined.

Implications

The findings of this study indicated that emotion regulation and the fear of being single are important psychological mechanisms in determining resilience in the face of negative experiences. In clinical practice, it is important that psychological counseling and psychotherapy processes focus not only on accepting negative experiences or coping with them but also on strengthening individuals' ability to regulate their emotions. Interventions targeting emotional awareness and regulation skills may be a valuable method for supporting and protecting resilience.

At the policy level, the focus should be on the development of emotion regulation skills in mental health services and psychoeducational programs and on imparting life skills that support resilience regardless of individuals' relationship status. Preventive and developmental programs that can be implemented in settings like universities and community mental health centers could help increase individuals' capacity to cope with negative experiences. Furthermore, individuals establishing relationships at the societal level could help mitigate fears of being single.

Future research should include longitudinal and experimental studies to establish the causal relationships between these variables. Furthermore, testing this research model on different age groups, cultural contexts, and clinical samples and incorporating additional variables like social support and attachment patterns into the model would broaden the scope and generalizability of the findings.

Ethical Statement

It is hereby declared that all rules specified in the Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive were followed in this study.

Ethics Committee Approval

Ethics committee approval was obtained by the decision of Yıldız Technical University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee dated 08.12.2024 and numbered 2024.12.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declare that they have no competing interests. Funding No financial support was received for this research.

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