

Investigation of Relationship Between Parental Acceptance and Psychological Adjustment Among University Students

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ABSTRACT

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Objective: In this study, it is aimed to test the relations between parental acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment variables by using structural equation modeling. Another aim of the study is to investigate the study variables in terms of gender.

Method: The sample of the study is formed by 271 females, 135 males out of 406 students aged in 19-36 who are studying at Ankara University. Demographic Information Form, Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ), and Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) have been conducted to the participants in this study.

Results: When the perceived acceptance/rejection from the mother was examined, it was seen that males perceived their mothers more rejective than females in terms of sub-scales of warmth/affection, hostility/aggression, indifference and total maternal acceptance/rejection. When the perceived acceptance/rejection from the father was examined in terms of sub-scales, in all sub-scales (warmth/affection, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect and undifferentiated rejection) and in total scores males perceived their fathers more rejective than females. In terms of sub-scales of psychological adjustment; in sub-scale of hostility, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy and emotional unresponsiveness males scored higher; but in the sub-scale of dependence females scored higher. In the analysis, it was found that the suggested hypothetical model is valid. In the structural model, the latent variables of parental acceptance/rejection predict the psychological adjustment latent variable.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the findings have proven that parental acceptance/rejection predicts the psychological adjustment consistent with the theory of Parental Acceptance/Rejection (PARTheory) and the studies in literature. The results of the study have been discussed within the context of PARTheory and the studies in the literature.

Key words: Parental acceptance/rejection, parental acceptance/rejection theory, psychological adjustment



ÖZET

Üniversite öğrencilerinde ebeveyn kabulü ile psikolojik uyum arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi

Amaç: Bu çalışmada, anne-baba kabul/reddi ve psikolojik uyum değişkenleri arasındaki ilişkilerin, bir yapısal model bağlamında test edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın bir başka amacı da her iki değişkenin cinsiyet açısından incelenmesidir.

Yöntem: Araştırmanın örneklemini Ankara Üniversitesinde öğrenim gören 19-36 yaş arasındaki 271'i kadın, 135'i erkek 406 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada yer alan katılımcılara, Ebeveyn Kabul/Red Ölçeği (EKRO) Anne ve Baba Formu, Kişilik Değerlendirme Ölçeği (KİDÖ) ve kişisel bilgi formu uygulanmıştır.

Bulgular: Anneden algılanan kabul/reddede bakıldığında; erkeklerin sıcaklık, düşmanlık, kayıtsızlık alt boyutları ve toplam anne kabul/reddi açısından annelerini kadınlardan daha reddedici algıladıkları görülmüştür. Babadan algılanan kabul/red alt boyutları açısından bakıldığında; tüm alt boyutlarda (sıcaklık, düşmanlık, kayıtsızlık ve ayrılmamış red) ve toplam puanlarda erkeklerin babalarını kadınlara göre daha reddedici algıladıkları bulunmuştur. Psikolojik uyum alt boyutları açısından bakıldığında; düşmanlık, olumsuz özsaygı, olumsuz öz-yeterlilik ve duygusal tepkisizlik alt boyutlarında erkeklerin; bağımlılık alt boyutunda ise kadınların daha yüksek puan aldıkları görülmüştür. Yapılan analizde önerilen hipotetik modelin geçerli olduğu bulunmuştur. Yapısal modelde, anne ve baba kabul/reddi örtük değişkenlerinin psikolojik uyum örtük değişkenini yordadığı görülmüştür.

Sonuç: Sonuç olarak bulgular, Ebeveyn Kabul/Red (EKAR) Kuramı ve literatürdeki araştırmalarla tutarlı olarak ebeveyn kabul/reddinin psikolojik uyumu yordadığını göstermiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, EKAR Kuramı ve literatürdeki araştırmalar çerçevesinde tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ebeveyn kabul-reddi, ebeveyn kabul/red kuramı, psikolojik uyum

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INTRODUCTION

Individuals who live in a part of the environment, from the moment he was born remains under the influence of the environment. Children, especially around the first years of their life are affected by the mother and father as being nearest person. Since the psychology is an independent branch of science, over a hundred years, one of the main issues examined were the effects of parents on their children. The first theory about parent-child relationship in childhood is theorized by Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory. Freud, emphasizing the importance of mother-child relationship in childhood years, argued that the foundation of personality established as a result of the relationships with parents in childhood. In subsequent years, many theorists such as Bowlby, Sullivan, Baumrind and Rogers, emphasized the importance of the mother-father-child relationship in childhood years in their theories.

Bowlby (1) states that the attachment styles which occur in childhood have an effect on the mental health of individuals in adulthood. According to the interpersonal theory proposed by Sullivan (2), personality occurs as a result human relations, especially as the product of interactions with important figures in the environment. Sullivan (2) have emphasized the importance of early childhood experiences in the development of adult personality, he has also highlighted one's perception of self in later life as good or bad depending on the past. Baumrind (3) have suggested that the three parenting style (democratic, authoritarian and permissive) are associated with different developmental outcomes. Children, who have grown in families which have democratic attitude, have internalized the values of their parents and psychological development and adjustments in those children have found positive. All of the theorists mentioned above indicated that the quality of parent-child relationship, in the first years of life, will be a significant impact on individuals in the following years.

The Parental Acceptance/Rejection theory (PARTheory) proposed by Ronald P. Rohner (4,5) asserts that the childhood of human is essential in terms

of the social, personality development and psychology of human. PARTheory is a socialization theory, which attempts to explain and predict the effect of parent-child relationship in the child's perceived reasons for acceptance or rejection on child or adult's behavior and personality. According to this theory, the emotional, behavioral and social-cognitive development is affected by the acceptance or rejection by parents in childhood (5).

PARTheory is based on the assumption that all the people around the world need to get a positive response, in other words, feel the temperature by people who are important to them (6). It has been reported that this need can be found in the internal needs of all humanity regardless of culture, race, physical property, social status, language, geography and many other restrictive condition (5,7,8).

According to Rohner acceptance is the feeling of parents against their children such as their love, warmth, care and support. An accepting attitude can include physical behaviors which show that the parents accepted their children, such as kissing, hugging, embracing, smile or verbal show of affection such as praise, saying beautiful words. Rejection attitude, however, occurs in the situations where absence of verbal and physical demonstrations of affection, ignored individuals, physical or psychological traumatic experiences and the situations where the child is unwanted by the parents (6).

In the PARTheory perceived acceptance/rejection from the mother or father, has four dimensions. The dimensions are defined as warmth, hostility, indifference and indifferentiated rejection. According to PARTheory, impact of childhood experiences are continuous lifelong (9). In the development of personality and behavior of the people, environmental factors and the first years of life is of great importance. Starting from the first years of the child, attitudes and behaviors of parents constitute the most important environmental factors that how he would interpret and perceive his personality development, self-perception, events, environment and himself (10). It is not possible to think the development of personality independent from interaction with parents and the first years of life.

Concept of personality in the PARTheory is described as the behavior of people in various environments or life situations, for reacting relatively stable tendencies (emotional, cognitive, perceptual and motivational) and the resulting (observable) behavior (11). According to the personality subscale of PARTheory, adult's emotional safety and wellbeing are affected by the perceived acceptance and rejection by their parents in childhood (6). PARTheory suggested that in cases of rejection, the people are located at the negative end of the, hostility, abuse, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability and negative worldview (12).

Parents' accepting and rejecting behaviors have an impact on individuals' psychological adjustment. Related studies have shown that the rejection has negative detrimental effect on psychological adjustment (13-15). Rohner and Britner (16) have also suggested significant relationship between general psychological adjustment and parental acceptance/rejection in their studies of reviewing related researches of parental acceptance/rejection around the world.

Researches conducted in Turkey and abroad related to PARTheory and many researchers related to the effects of parents on the children's personality development, indicate a relationship between parent's acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment. Although, parent's acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment are interrelated concepts, studies in the literature are quite limited which handle and evaluate related psychological structures in the context of structural models. In this respect, it has been considered necessary to address the relationship between parental acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment in the light of researches and the theoretical discussions in the literature on the context of a structural model. In the theoretical model, maternal acceptance/rejection and paternal acceptance/rejection are related to each other and both are predicted to be associated with psychological adjustment.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the model revealed by benefiting from literature related to parental

acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment and to examine variables in terms of gender. For this purpose, the following questions have been sought primarily:

1. Is there a significant difference in terms of gender for the perceived level of parental acceptance or rejection?
2. Is there a significant difference in terms of gender for the psychological adjustment?

Hypotheses related to the model in the research are as follows:

1. Perception of maternal acceptance or rejection significantly predicts general psychological adjustment of people.
2. Perception of paternal acceptance or rejection significantly predicts general psychological adjustment of people.

METHOD

Sample

Participants of the research, constitutes 406 individuals studying at various colleges of the University of Ankara. 271 of the participants are women (66.7%) and 135 (33.3%) of them are men. The age range of study group is 19-36 (\bar{X} =21.55, SD =1.95). All participants in the study have joined voluntarily to study group. Participants regarding the educational level of their parents as follows; 58.1% of mothers are primary school graduates or abandoned, 8.9% of them are secondary school graduate, 20.4% of them are high school graduate, 10.8% of them are under graduate level, 0.7% of them are graduate level (MSc and PhD), and fathers education level as follows, 29.3% of them are primary school graduates or abandoned, 15.3% of them are secondary school graduate, 26.1% of them are high school graduate, 27.1% of them are graduate level. When looking at the income level of the respondents, 23.6% of them have 1000 TL and less, 62.1% of them have between 1000-3000 TL, 13.3% of them have incomes between 3000-5000 TL.

Measures

The Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire adult form, Adult Personality Assessment Scale and demographic information form was used to obtain some personal information in this study.

Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire adult form (Adult PARQ): PARQ was developed in 1978 by Rohner et al. (17) in order to evaluate perceived parental acceptance/rejection. PARQ, which has sixty items, consists of four subscales. These subscales are warmth, hostility/aggression, neglect/indifference and undifferentiated reject. All items in warmth subscale are scored as reverse.

“PARQ total score”, which is obtained by sum of the four subscale scores, gives quantity of general measure of the perceived acceptance/rejection level related to the individual’s relation between mother or father. Items included in PARQ are answered on a scale of four Likert type, as “almost always true” (4), “sometimes true” (3), “rarely true” (2), “never true” (1). Total scores can be obtained from PARQ are changes in the range from 60 to 240. Sixty show the highest perceived acceptance level score, 240 show the highest perceived rejection level score. It is found that the internal consistency coefficients of the original form of the questionnaire range from 0.86 to 0.95 (17).

Adult PARQ reliability and validity studies in Turkey were made by Varan (cited in Unubol) (18). Accordingly, it has been observed that the Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency coefficient of both mother and father subscales of adult PARQ form range from 0.86 to 0.96, and the internal consistency coefficient of the total score obtained from PARQ mother and father scale is 0.97. In this study, it has been found that the Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency coefficients of both mother and father subscales related to adult PARQ form is ranging between 0.81 and 0.97, and internal consistency coefficient related to the total score obtained from PARQ mother and PARQ father scales are 0.96 and 0.97, respectively.

Adult Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ): PAQ is developed as a complementary

questionnaire to PARQ by Rohner et al. (19). in order to evaluate the impact of parental acceptance/rejection perception on individual. PAQ can also be used as independent scale. It has been thought that perceived parental acceptance/rejection is related to the personality and behavioral structures measured by PAQ and it reflects the general psychological adjustment of person. According to the PARTheory, seven personality traits that are most affected by parental acceptance/rejection constitute subscales of PAQ. These subscales are hostility/aggression, addiction, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability and negative worldview.

Items included in PAQ are answered on a scale of four Likert type, as “almost always true” (4), “sometimes true” (3), “rarely true” (2), “never true” (1). There are two separate forms of PAQ, including “Child PAQ” and “Adult PAQ”. Each of the seven personality traits mentioned in adult PAQ are measured with 9 items, hence there are totally 63 items in the Adult PAQ. The total PAQ score thought to reflect general psychological adjustment is determined by summing the seven subscale scores and the adults PAQ score range from 63 (minimum) to 252 (maximum). Low scores indicate the overall psychological adjustment of person as “healthy”, while high score indicate as “unhealthy”. It has been found that the internal reliability coefficient of original form of PAQ ranges from 0.73 to 0.85 (19).

Adult PAQ reliability and validity studies in Turkey were made by Varan (cited in Unubol) (18). It has been found that internal consistency coefficient related to subscales of adult PAQ ranges from 0.68 to 0.82, and the total scores obtained related to internal consistency coefficients is 0.91. In this study, it has been observed that the Cronbach’s alpha internal coefficients of adult PAQ subscales range from 0.77 to 0.90 and the total scores obtained from scale related to internal consistency coefficient is 0.94.

Statistical Analysis

In this study, the differences between groups were analyzed by independent samples Student t test. The relationship between parental acceptance/rejection and

psychological adjustment are tested with structural equation model. In testing of the relationship between variables discussed in this study, it has been investigated that whether hypothetical model, which is established by utilizing theoretical ground, representing the relationship pattern has been verified by data. After testing the validity of the hypothetical model with structural equation analysis, significant relationships between latent variables have been evaluated.

RESULTS

Results of Perceived Parental Acceptance Rejection and Psychological Adjustment in Terms of Gender

In accordance with the first research question of the study, it has been investigated whether the obtained score differs according to the gender, with independent samples Student t test. Student t test results of mother acceptance/rejection scores are presented in Table 1. In terms of sub-dimensions from the perceived maternal

acceptance/rejection; warmth, hostility, indifference sub-dimensions and maternal acceptance/rejection total scores are differentiated in terms of gender (Table 1).

In warmth subscale, it has been observed that the mean scores ($\bar{X}=32.34$) of male participants is higher than the mean scores ($\bar{X}=30.19$) of female participants ($t=2.06$, $p=0.04$), and this difference is statistically significant. In hostility subscale, it has been observed that the mean scores ($\bar{X}=23.01$) of male participants are higher than the mean scores ($\bar{X}=21.71$) of female participants ($t=1.98$, $p=0.049$), and this difference is statistically significant. In indifference subscale, it has been observed that the mean scores ($\bar{X}=22.49$) of male respondents are higher than the mean scores ($\bar{X}=20.87$) of female participants ($t=2.61$, $p=0.009$), and this difference is statistically significant. In undifferentiated rejection subscale, there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of male participants and female participants. From the perspective of maternal acceptance/rejection total scores, the mean scores ($\bar{X}=92.44$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=86.72$) of the female participants

Table 1: Student t test results comparing males and females on Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) Mother form

	Gender				t	p
	Female (n=271)		Male (n=135)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Warmth	30.19	9.88	32.34	10.03	2.06	0.040*
Hostility	21.71	5.55	23.01	7.46	1.98	0.049*
Indifference	20.87	5.67	22.49	6.40	2.61	0.009*
Undifferentiated rejection	13.95	3.52	14.59	4.74	1.54	0.125
Total	86.72	21.88	92.44	25.30	2.35	0.019*

*Statistically significant, SD: Standart deviation, t: Student t test

Table 2: Student t test results comparing males and females on Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) Father form

	Gender				t	p
	Female (n=271)		Male (n=135)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Warmth	33.25	12.35	38.87	14.05	4.12	<0.001
Hostility	20.82	7.40	23.92	9.03	3.70	<0.001
Indifference	25.02	6.48	27.45	4.81	3.32	0.001
Undifferentiated rejection	13.58	4.76	15.40	5.62	3.41	0.001
Total	92.68	27.11	105.64	31.76	4.28	<0.001

SD: Standart deviation, t: Student t test

Table 3: Student t test results comparing males and females on Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) scores

	Gender				t	p
	Female (n=271)		Male (n=135)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Hostility	17.34	4.56	18.49	5.19	2.301	0.02
Addiction	26.72	4.78	23.50	4.78	-6.39	<0.001
Negative Self-esteem	15.89	4.72	16.91	4.66	2.06	0.04
Negative Self-adequacy	15.29	4.76	16.57	5.32	2.44	0.02
Emotional unresponsiveness	16.01	4.83	17.91	5.08	3.66	<0.001
Emotional instability	21.74	5.12	20.83	4.84	-1.71	0.09
Negative worldview	17.06	5.88	17.32	6.00	0.42	0.68
Total	130.05	24.23	131.53	26.36	0.56	0.57

SD: Standard deviation, t: Student t test

($t=2.35$, $p=0.019$), and this difference is statistically significant. Considering these findings, it has been observed that the female participants perceive their mother as warmer, less hostile and less indifferent than male participants, in general perceived maternal acceptance of female participants is more than that of male participants.

T-test results for paternal acceptance/rejection scores in terms of gender are given below (Table 2).

As seen in Table 2, it has been observed that in terms of perceived paternal acceptance/rejection sub-dimensions; all sub-dimensions (temperature, hostility, indifference, and undifferentiated rejection) and total scores differ in terms of gender.

In warmth subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=38.87$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=33.25$) of female participants ($t=4.12$, $p<0.001$), and this difference is statistically significant. In hostility subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=23.92$) of male participants are higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=20.82$) of female participants ($t=3.32$, $p=0.001$), and this difference is statistically significant. In indifference subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=27.45$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=2.25$) of female participants ($t=3.32$, $p=0.001$), and this difference was statistically significant. In undifferentiated rejection subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=15.40$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=13.58$) of female participants ($t=3.41$, $p=0.001$), and this difference was statistically significant. From the perspective of paternal acceptance/rejection total scores,

it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=105.64$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=92.68$) of female participants ($t=4.28$, $p<0.001$), and this difference was statistically significant. Considering these findings, it has been observed that the female participants perceive their father as warmer, less hostile and less indifferent than male participants, in general perceived paternal acceptance of female participants is more than that of male participants.

In accordance with the second research question of the study, t-test results for the psychological adjustment scores in terms of gender are given in Table 3. In terms of psychological adjustment subscale; it has been observed that the subscales hostility, dependence, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy and emotional unresponsiveness differs in terms of gender (Table 3).

In hostility subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=18.49$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=17.34$) of female participants ($t=2.30$, $p=0.02$), and this difference is statistically significant. In dependency subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=26.72$) of female participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=23.50$) of male participants ($t=-6.39$, $p<0.001$), and this difference was statistically significant. In negative self-esteem subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=16.91$) of male participants is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=15.89$) of female participants ($t=2.06$, $p=0.04$), and this difference was statistically significant. In negative self-adequacy subscale, it has been observed that the mean score ($\bar{X}=16.57$) of male participants is

higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=15.29$) of female participants ($t=2.44$, $p=0.02$), and this difference was statistically significant. In emotional unresponsiveness subscale, it has been observed that the mean score of male respondents ($\bar{X}=17.91$) is higher than the mean score ($\bar{X}=1.16$) of female participants ($t=3.66$, $p<0.001$), and this difference was statistically significant. In another words, males are more hostile, felt more negative self-esteem and negative self-adequacy, emotionally more unresponsive than females; it has been observed that females are more dependent than males. The mean scores of male and female participants have not shown statistically significant difference in subscale of emotional instability, negative worldview and total scores on psychological adjustment.

Testing of Hypothetical Structural Model

According to parental acceptance/rejection theory, psychological adjustment is predicted by the acceptance/rejection of mother/father. The maternal warmth, maternal hostility, maternal indifference and undifferentiated rejection subscales constitute latent variable of mother acceptance/rejection. The paternal warmth, paternal hostility, paternal indifference and undifferentiated rejection scales constitute latent variable of father acceptance/rejection. The hostility, dependency, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability and negative worldview scales constitute latent variable of psychological adjustment.

In the literature, two-stage process for testing the structural model is proposed. Accordingly, in the first stage, all the variables involved in the structural model, are subjected to a measurement model test. Thus, it is analyzed by the data whether the measurement model is verified. After obtaining desired fit indexes at this stage, second stage of the data analysis is performed. In the second stage, structural model is tested (20). Therefore, in this study, first the measurement model was tested, in order to observe the relationship between study variables. Then, hypothetical structural model was tested. For the analysis in this study, Chi-Square goodness, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit

Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) fit indexes are used.

After testing the measurement model, analysis results proposed eight parameters to be added to model. In this respect; the error covariance is added between “maternal warmth” and “maternal indifference”, “maternal warmth” and “paternal warmth”, “maternal warmth” and “paternal hostility”, “undifferentiated maternal rejection” and “paternal undifferentiated rejection”, “paternal warmth” and “paternal indifference”, “hostility” and “emotional instability”, “dependency” and “emotional instability”, “dependency” and “emotional unresponsiveness” to the measurement model. Afterwards measurement model is tested again. According to obtained results, chi-square=291.17 ($df=79$, $p<0.001$). Reviewing the fit indexes of the model, values of GFI (0.92), NFI (0.94) and CFI (0.95) are above 0.90 and RMSEA value is found as 0.08. The results indicate that the measurement model between parental acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment variables are valid (20,21).

In the next step, hypothetical model represents relationship between the latent variables was tested. The structural model was tested using the Maximum Likelihood Estimation method. Fit indexes obtained after testing structural model are given in Table 4.

As seen in the table the chi square/df ratio (3.68) is less than 5, and this is an acceptable value (22). All of the fit indexes are above 0.90 and it show good fit. RMSEA value also appears to be within acceptable limits. Standardized coefficients related to the test of structural model are presented in Figure 1. In the literature, in general the concepts related to the PARTheory used in the form of acceptance/rejection

Table 4: Fit index of structural model

Fit index	Value
Chi square	291.17
Chi square /Degrees of freedom	3.68
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.92
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.95
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.94
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.08

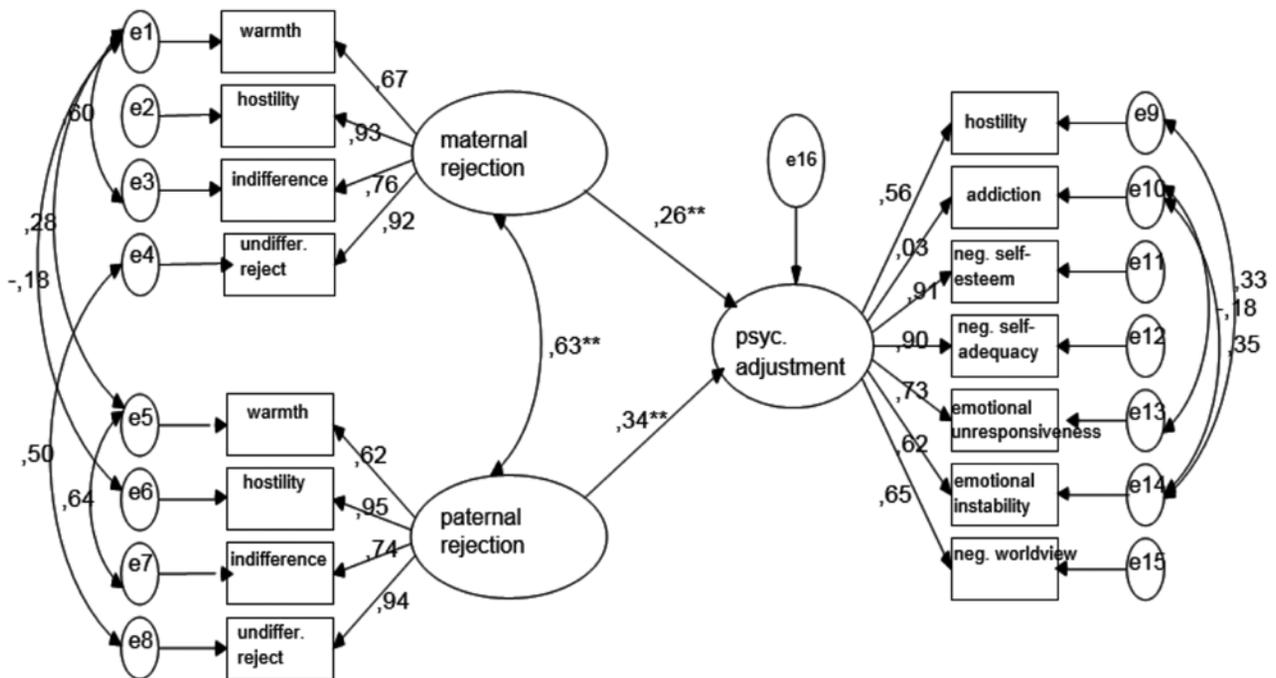


Figure 1: Standardized coefficients among latent variables of structural model, **p<0.01

together, in model representation, the terms are expressed as “maternal rejection” and “paternal rejection” to avoid conceptual confusion.

When fit indexes of the model are evaluated, it can generally be stated that the model has good values. When the parameters between the latent variables are reviewed, it has been observed that the maternal acceptance/rejection ($\beta=0.26$) and the paternal acceptance/rejection ($\beta=0.34$) predicts psychological adjustment statistically significant ($p<0.001$).

DISCUSSION

In this study, whether the university students’ retrospective perceived parental acceptance or rejection in their childhood and psychological adjustment in their adulthood differ according to gender and the relationship between these variables are examined. When the individuals perceived parental acceptance/rejection are generally examined, it has been observed that warmth scale scores of mean parental acceptance/rejection are closer to “acceptance” end of the continuum both in male and female students, in another words, it has been

observed that individuals perceive their mother and father as warm and loving. These findings are consistent with the studies conducted in Turkey (15,18,23,24) and abroad (8,25,26) related to parental acceptance/rejection.

In general, the high level of perceived acceptance from mother and father is consistent with the Kagitcibasi’s (27) definition of Turkish family, where it is defined as a structure in a culture and the caring and commitment come to the foreground. It has been observed that since 1960s and 1970s, the Turkish culture and Turkish families passing through a rapid change, accordingly; the traditional, rural and patriarchal Turkish culture becomes modern and egalitarian society in an increased way (28). In Turkish culture, according to Fisek (29), as the distance based on power reduced, the distance created by respect and caring is preserved and the high proximity family model have increasingly became evident.

In the study conducted by Kagitcibasi (27), with the socio-economic changes took place over the last 30 years in Turkey, systematic changes observed in the values attributed to children, the sharp increase in

psychological value of the children are determined while their economic/utilitarian values decreases. Individuals in this study, consistent with these studies related to Turkish family systems conducted by Kagitcibasi (27) and Fisek (29), has thought they are loved and valued by their mother and father and perceived their mother and father as “accepting”.

Regarding the relationship between perceived maternal acceptance/rejection level and gender, the difference in terms of gender has been found in the total scores of warmth, hostility, indifference subscales and total scores of maternal acceptance/rejection. It has also been observed that the females perceived their mother as warmer, less hostile, and less indifferent and generally perceived their mother as more accepting than males.

Regarding the relationship between perceived paternal acceptance/rejection levels, the difference has been found in all subscales (warmth, hostility, indifference and undifferentiated rejection subscales) and in paternal acceptance/rejection total scores in terms of gender. Females perceive their father as warmer, less hostile, less undifferentiated and less undifferentiated rejected than males and generally females perceive their father as more accepting.

It is noteworthy that the different results are obtained in the relationship between parental acceptance/rejection, and the child’s gender in the related literature. Consistent with this study, it is observed that generally perceived rejection of father by males is higher than perceived rejection of females in the results of the studies of Orun (30), Unubol (18) and Kabaoglu (31). However, in Salahur (32) and Eryavuz’s (33) studies, there is no difference parental acceptance/rejection in terms of gender.

Women’s perceiving both their mothers and fathers more accepting than men could be explained as the fact that girls could set up closeness and identification, especially with their mothers, by taking responsibilities at home due to the gender roles, but boys could have less shares with their mothers.

In terms of psychological adjustment subscales, difference between females and males observed in hostility, dependency, negative self-esteem, negative

self-adequacy and emotional unresponsiveness. Female participants are more dependent than males, while male participants are observed as more hostile, negative self-esteemed, negative self-adequate and emotional unresponsive than females.

When examining the literature, different results has been observed in the studies, where gender and psychological adjustment variables handled together. Erkmen and Rohner’s (23) study of Turkish adolescents and Yoon and Miller’s (34) study in the Canadian Chinese adolescents, there was no difference in psychological adjustment in terms of gender.

Consistent with the research findings, Kitahara (7) found a significant difference in the dependency subscale of psychological adjustment in terms of gender, it has been concluded that the females are more dependent. According to the theory, the dependency is an emotional confidence to a person who is important to an individual for peace, approval, guidance, support, or decision-making (11). Women’s need to hear more positive feedback from other people; attempt to get positive feedback from people who are important to them can be related to the cultural structure in Turkey.

Additionally in Turkish society the idea, generally associated with women, saying “woman don’t need to study or work” can make one think that gender roles attributed on women like child care, the responsibilities of husband and layout of household (35) may suggest that women cannot see themselves as individuals standing on their feet but as dependent on parents and dependent on spouses in adulthood. It has been known that both in the World and in Turkey, sex discrimination against women cannot be fully removed. Before entering a work, in social life; the role distribution related with sex, the inequality in access to educational opportunities, existing stereotypes and attitudes towards women lead to discriminatory practices (36). As for working life, women face more explicit obstacles compared to male counterparts (37).

One of the personality dimensions, hostility which has been affected by being rejected by parents is defined as the person’s deliberate harm to someone, a thing or

to oneself or to be perceived as deliberate harm in PARTheory (5). In the study, males have been found more hostile than females. Unubol (18), similarly, found a difference between genders in hostility sub-dimension and concluded that males have been more hostile than females.

According to the theory, the children rejected by their parents are tend to be ill-tempered and angry. If the way of parents' rejection surfaces as hostility and aggression, rejected children are inclined to feel hostility, be aggressive or passive offensive (5).

Another finding of the study is that males have more negative perception of self-esteem and self-adequacy. According to PARTheory if the person perceives himself as someone who does not like or approve of himself, who feels he has lower or no value and feels that he deserves to be accused and sees himself inferior, that means negative self-esteem (5). Self-adequacy includes one's own self-assessment about his own competencies. Negative self-adequacy is all about feelings and thoughts, such as, the individual's feelings of inadequacy, and feeling inadequate to meet the demands of daily life and feeling that he has not struggled enough for the things he wants (11).

The children who feel inferior and feel that they deserve criticisms can easily generalize these feelings with personal inadequacy and incompetence. As a result of gender roles, there are expectations from males who are supposed to work and earn a living for the family due to traditional values attributed to children from a young age (35). In accordance with these expectations, males can see themselves inadequate to meet the expectations of parents and society, and it can be thought that the perception of inadequacy can damage their self-esteem.

According to PARTheory, emotional unresponsiveness represents the ability of an individual's expressing his feeling freely and clearly. How easy and natural does a person respond emotionally or, no matter a child or an adult, how can a person form close, warm, durable and non-defensive emotional ties are related with his emotional sensitivity (5). According to Rohner (5),

emotional unresponsiveness emerges as a result of the perceived rejection in order to save himself from more pain by locking up oneself emotionally.

In the study, male participants have been found to be emotionally more unresponsive than female participants. This finding can be related with the roles attributed to males and females in the society and the expected behavior patterns. Gender roles are the roles defined by the society and expected to be performed by the individuals. In the process of socializing, girls and boys learn how to distinguish games, objects, jobs and personality traits as "appropriate" or "inappropriate" (38). In other words, gender roles defines the appropriate personality traits for women and men. Gender roles are basically restrictive for women, and bear negative results for men, as well.

It has been stated that males experience restrictiveness in three fields regarding gender roles. These are success/status norm, not being feminine norm and power norm (38). Males are expected to be strong both physically, mentally and, emotionally by the society, in other words, except anger, males are expected not to express their feelings as they are. The broadly accepted male type is the one who, unlike women, does not express his feelings through hugging, or speaking lovingly (38). As a result of this study, the emotional unresponsiveness of males when compared to females is consistent with the findings in the literature.

Discussion of the Results of Hypothetical Structural Model

PARTheory, which claims that rejection of parents affects the seven dimensions of personality, evaluates these personality traits with the individual's overall psychological adjustment (5). Accordingly, in this study, the test of model has been done about the relation between parental acceptance/rejection and the individual's overall psychological adjustment. When the results of the model between parental acceptance/rejection and overall psychological adjustment are investigated, there is a significant relation between both mother and father acceptance/rejection and

psychological adjustment.

It has been found in the studies carried in various countries in the world that the relation between the psychological adjustment in adulthood and parental acceptance/rejection ranges between 0.41 and 0.64 (16). The studies in Turkey have revealed that the relation between the psychological adjustment in adulthood and parental acceptance/rejection ranges between 0.23 and 0.46 (18,23,39).

Another finding is that there is a strong relation between the perceived acceptance/rejection from mother and father. The studies in the existing literature support this finding (18,23). While Bowlby (1) states that the nature of relationship established with mother in the childhood (primary attachment object) have an

effect on a person's quality of life today, Veneziano and Rohner (14) reported that paternal love, sometimes independent from the influence of mother, has a great influence on the child's development and it can predict distinctive results on the child's personality. Similarly, Lamb (40) also argues that despite the differentiation of role of father among the cultures, fathers have an important role on child development.

When the findings are examined, it can be seen that hypothetical model proposed in the context of this study is valid. In other words, in the study, parallel with the studies carried out in different countries and sub-cultures around the World, the relation between parental acceptance/rejection and psychological adjustment has been tested and validated.

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